

A Multi-sensory and Embodied Understanding of Wine Consumption

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A Multi-sensory and Embodied Understanding of Wine Consumption

In this paper, we investigate the complex multi-sensory responses required to experience and evaluate wine. We suggest that wine tasting be recognized as an aesthetic experience that allows individuals to enlarge their understanding of wine and experience pleasure. Through interviews, observations, and wine tastings with novices and experts, along with metaphor and blending analysis, we interpret similarities and differences, with the concept of taste referring not only to flavor but also to culture capital. Embodiment processes in wine consumption can be understood at the conscious level using Merleau-Ponty's concept of perception and virtual enactments. We argue that while the structure of perception is given by imagination, fanciful imaginings—in particular those used by experts—to identify wine in blind tastings can also be understood through the foreground/background effect. The perceiver and imaginer are the same; what links them is the imagining body. At the unconscious level, we use conceptual metaphors and conceptual blending processes to elaborate on embodiment to understand the taste regime processes associated with wine. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of embodiment processes through the application of Merleau-Ponty's theory of perceptions/virtual enactments, as well as through metaphor and conceptual integration analysis.

Keywords: wine tasting; taste regimes; experts vs. novices; sensory pleasure; sense and sense-making; conceptual integration and metaphor

Introduction

In any pleasurable experience, our senses open like flowers to the sun. Wine tasting, an exercise in pleasure, rewards such openness, flooding the senses of taste, smell, sight, and texture. In this paper, we unpack the differing elements comprising the experience of wine tasting, through the lens of the complex, multi-sensory responses experienced by our research participants. Through interviews, observations, and wine tastings with wine novices and experts, and by employing metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) and blending analysis (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), we interpret similarities and differences, with the concept of taste referring not only to flavor but

also to culture capital (Bourdieu, 1984). Further, using Merleau-Ponty's concept of perception and virtual enactments, we identify and define embodiment processes in wine consumption.

Literature review

Merleau-Ponty's (1962) theory of embodiment explains the body's centrality in experiencing wine, in defining the experience itself and how it is experienced. Experiencing any event involves the continuously shifting fabric of sensory and bodily awareness and action that *just happens*, what Merleau-Ponty calls the 'perceptual field' (Steeves, 2004). Our lived awareness is not the sum of all isolated sensory inputs, but rather a dynamic co-mingling of sensory possibilities (Seamon, 2014).

Film theory provides the concept of motion to identify the process of embodied simulation (Coegnarts & Kravanja, 2012; Deleuze, 2000). In the context of experiencing wine, movement is synesthetic: the eye recalls the sensations experienced by the nose and mouth. Merleau-Ponty (1964) argues that we can understand the movement only through the 'possibilities motrices' (pp. 118–119). With conceptual blending, Fauconnier and Turner (2002) highlight the nuances involved in mapping the body in terms of logical thought.

Steeves (2001) describes virtual embodiment—how we rethink and reshape our bodies through imagination—as a process through which we focus on our incremental physical skills achievement. This process can be applied to aesthetic experiences as well (Joy & Sherry, 2003). Lakoff and Johnson's (1999) theory of image schemas aptly describes how we experience through the body, and how our thinking is accordingly affected. The authors argue that our ability to engage in complex thinking and understanding is possible only through a deeper, subconscious process of embodiment. They identify two spaces, the source and target domains, explaining complex metaphors through more primary metaphors relating to the body. An image-

schema, according to Johnson (1987), is 'a recurring, dynamic pattern of our perceptual interactions and motor programs that gives coherence and structure to our experiences. They are based on our direct experience of a kinaesthetic nature' (p. xiv). Lakoff and Johnson (1999) have sorted these image schemas into those directly related to the body, such as the container schema; front-back, part-whole schemas, and more abstract versions that deal with our orientation in and relationship to the world, such as the source-path-goal schema or the journey schema (Saslaw, 1996). Fauconnier and Turner (2002) introduce more spaces: the source, target, generic, and blended spaces. Using blended spaces highlights the flexibility with which we think, the impact of culture on how we think, and the complexity associated with thinking.

Embodied cognition and emotion are central categories of study for experimental consumer researchers (Krishna, 2012); anthropologists (Arnould & Price, 1993; Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Celsi *et al.*, 1993; Desjarlais & Throop, 2011; Esrock, 2001; Joy & Sherry, 2003; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2010; Joy & Venkatesh, 1994); and neuroscientists (Freedberg & Gallese, 2007; Gallese, 2011; Gallese & Di Dio, 2012). In this study, we investigate the roles of embodiment, emotion, multi-sensory stimulation, and levels of accrued knowledge in how consumers experience wine.

Methodology

The data were collected over two years (2014–2016) in a wine-growing region in Canada. In the first year, we investigated how novices respond to wine using a variation of the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (Zaltman, 1997), since our novice participants found describing wine consumption challenging. They were asked to gather approximately ten images that exemplified their experience of wine, to rank their images by importance, and to group them into three categories based on their own criteria. They then described how any two categories related

to each other, but differed from the third, as a whole and within each category. Novices focused on the social, celebratory, and physical outcomes of relaxation and/or intoxication, and the historical/religious aspects of wine, a phenomenon noted as characteristic of non-experts by Jefford and Draper (2007, p. 215).

In the second year, we focused on wine experts, conducting in-depth interviews. We began with general questions about wine consumption and regional wineries, and then, as in phenomenological interviews, moved to topics raised by our participants (Thompson, 1989). With our participants' permission, most interviews were recorded. Table 1 lists all participants.

To enhance our understanding of wine consumption, during the research period one of the authors took extensive wine education courses; most attended monthly wine tastings, and all read regional wine blogs, *The Wine Spectator*, and the website of noted wine critic Robert Parker (<https://www.erobertparker.com/entrance.aspx>); we further participated in winery visits, tastings, and tours, and regional wine festivals. We drew on observational and textual data to supplement our interview data (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994).

Novices were chosen from participants who had consumed wine and were of legal age, and based on their self-categorization of their novice status, confirmed by their responses when asked to name three different wines and the types of grapes from which they were made. Wine experts included vintners, wine educators, and winery staff. We interviewed seventeen novices and thirteen wine experts during winery visits, and conducted follow-up interviews with five novices and two experts. Genders were relatively equally represented; ages ranged from twenties to fifties. We maintained notes and a field diary of all observations and interviews.

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

Findings

In our study, while the palate is important, appearance, aromas, and touch are highly correlated to the tasting process; through virtual enactments, a synesthetic understanding of wine consumption is possible (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Steeves, 2004). In particular, smell is central to taste. While objectively teasing out differences among the sensory perceptions experienced by an individual using different modalities is challenging, differences in embodied experiences based on knowledge and familiarity with wine are clear. Just as a curator of art has a different embodied experience from a casual visitor, so too does a wine connoisseur from a novice (Joy & Sherry, 2003), based on their respective abilities to discriminate and appraise, through the practice of acquiring taste (gustatory), and taste as cultural capital. It is important to note the distinction between enjoyment and evaluation (Shapin, 2012). Professionals primarily deal with the latter, while enjoyment is for all.

As we interviewed wine novices and experts, overt themes emerged: appearance and color perceptions, taste and aroma, mouth feel and terroir (the environmental elements, such as soil, climate, shade, and elevation, that shape a wine's site-specific taste profile), wine evaluations, imagery and the wine-tasting process, anthropomorphism and winespeak, conceptual metaphor, and conceptual blending. For novices, a predominant theme was their inability to de-contextualize the drinking situation and to identify major taste components. Some could distinguish only among white, sparkling, rose, and red wines. Nonetheless, novices had distinct preferences. Merleau-Ponty's theory of embodiment recognizes three levels: how the physical body (e.g., size and shape) is essential in understanding an object; skill acquisition (the more experience you have with an object the more it becomes second nature); and the fact that these skills are acquired and modified within specific cultural contexts.

Appearance and color

Color is an essential element of experiencing wine. As Linda, a novice participant, pointed out: 'The color [of a rose wine] is beautiful... with this color, you expect a particular odor, feel, and taste in your mouth... delicate and fresh... in... an ill-lit restaurant, [the wine] exudes deeper hues...now you expect a different flavor.'

Linda's reference to expecting a different taste from the same wine depending on its color suggests the affordances (Gibson, 1966) that wine in this context provides, and the intimate links between seeing, smelling, feeling, and tasting. When she focuses on seeing, other sensory modalities recede in importance, a process Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. 383) describes as a dimension of a virtual body existence. Steeves (2001) further refines this process as an act of imagination, by which alternate perspectives can be generated on the body. Imagination is central to perception and is embodied. The perceived experience of consuming wine, for the novice as for the expert, is created by relationships among and between the various senses, which conforms to Merleau-Ponty's concept of perceiving color: What we see is never merely the color of an object, but is also always the color as viewed and experienced within a given context (Kelly, 1994).

Chris, a wine expert, recalled an Alsace gewürztraminer:

The color is intense—yellow with golden highlights... seeing something beautiful enhances your anticipation of what is yet to come, the aromas and flavors... The longer the feelings and sensations last, as color stays in your eyes, the more you get out of it.

Chris employs the in-out imagery central to the container schema. The body is the container; before the wine enters the body, the colors enter through the eyes and then spread, making the

individual desirous of what is coming to the nose and palate. The transformation is on the inside, which causes great pleasure.

The implication of color is even deeper (Merleau-Ponty 1962). Individual colors are first recognized as modes of embodiment. The relation of the qualities in a perceptual object can thus be seen as the relation of the various modes of embodiment. For the object to be seen as an object, it must appear within the structure of foreground and background, with one quality the focus and the others receding—a zoom lens effect (Joy & Sherry, 2003). When one of our participants focused on one sense—for example, seeing a wine's color—other attributes, such as taste and texture, faded temporarily into the background. The synthesis of the object is 'effected, then, through the synthesis of one's own body; it is the reply or correlate to it' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, pp. 205–237).

Nose and palate

Clear differences among novices and experts were readily apparent. Liz, a novice, was concerned whether imbibing might impair her driving. Experts, unlike novices, distinguish between 'tasting' (not becoming inebriated, because tasters spit rather than swallow) and 'drinking' (becoming tipsy is a possibility). Liz noted that she could smell grassy and herbaceous aromas in a glass of sauvignon blanc, an ability she attributed to the fact that she regularly mows her lawn, and selects fruit based on smell. However, when she tasted a particular malbec wine, while she was quick to note fruity odors and flavors, she was unable to smell any smokiness or violets (both were present). The conflation of nose and eye in terms of assessing aromas is key. The discipline of tasting is not currently in her repertoire; her knowledge is insufficient to develop long-standing wine-related imagery in memory.

For wine experts, the nose and palate are essential. As a participant, Sylvia, reported regarding a cabernet sauvignon: 'On the nose it is clean and the intensity is pretty high. I smell deep rich aromas of black fruit: black cherries, plums, some tobacco, and chocolate.' After considerable practice, she brings a focus and deliberation that maximize the pleasure she experiences in wine consumption. As with experiencing a favoured piece of music, with each listen distinct from others due to context and memory (Crane, 2007), so drinking the same wine, its intrinsic value notwithstanding, will also provide unique properties. Returning to a wine, as to any aesthetic pursuit, is a search for both understanding and pleasure.

Mouth feel, terroir, and time

For experts 'mouth feel' is a driving force in their sensory response to wine. As our participant Rose, an expert, explained:

Mouth feel is what it [wine] feels like—the interaction between tannicity and acidity, the elusive characteristics, the depth and sweetness in the mouth... the finish... Balance is when acidity equals tannicity. Structure is a balance [among] all these characteristics in a wine. Body is related to structure because it is dependent on the level of alcohol in the wine as well as its acidity and tannins. So it can be full-, medium- or light-bodied.

Terroir is also essential. Ian, a wine-maker, was trying to produce characteristics of a particular terroir in his pinot noir. A pinot noir wine from a specific region, noted Ian, 'will have a calling card, a quality of expressiveness, of distinctiveness that will... make you desire it...'

Recognition of time—past, present, and future—along with terroir plays a key role in the wine consumption experience. As Robert, a wine-maker, said, 'We look at what... [a bottle of wine] was, what it is now and what it can be.' For Robert, taste within the context of time is paramount; for the novice consumer, flavor is all. Part of the similarities between novice and

expert relate to the context. Whatever one has learned about wine resides in memory, to be recalled whenever wine is encountered. Such cues as ratings, wine discussions, the use of a cork versus a screw top, wine variety, terroir, and price will each play a part in establishing context. Novices clearly will have less developed schemas and scripts, but even experts will differ in their evaluation of a wine, since, inevitably, expectations color perceptions. To an expert, the perception of a young malbec wine as having a wonderful mouth feel with violets, red fruit, plums, and minerality will trigger thoughts of how this wine will age, while to a novice, such flavors may be imperceptible—the wine might even taste acidic—and any thoughts of a possible future taste will necessarily remain unexplored. As a novice participant, Shirley, reported: 'I can't taste the "leather and tar flavors" of a barolo. It [is] definitely bitter.' Among our participants, some novices could not tell if a red wine had strong tannins and acids. By contrast, an expert, Will, was well aware that '...a cabernet sauvignon is supposed to be full-bodied and textured, especially when it warms up. A merlot, especially one from Bordeaux, has a medium body and alcohol.'

Wine evaluations

For experts such as wine-makers or educators, rating systems are significantly useful. Our expert participants routinely referenced the rankings of their wines in relevant competitions as mechanisms by which they evaluated both their own and others' wines. Many of our novice participants also used a rating system when purchasing wine, including whatever rating scales were available in the store. As a novice, Matt, said: 'I often talk to the store assistant about the different wines... If there is a number beside the wine, I [discuss that] as well... rating systems...save me time.'

Imagery and the tasting process

Martins (2004) observes that a study of the imaginary of consumers must begin with a consideration of their background. Likewise if, as Lakoff and Johnson argue, image schemas are central to our abstract thought processes and are dependent on embodiment, then nonverbal phenomenon such as visual imagery can also be understood using image schemas (Forceville & Jeulink, 2011).

Many of our participants had methods for assessing wine. Our novice participant Liz, for example, identified a fruity aroma by inhaling the aroma and focusing on the color of the wine. Other novice participants could not come up with a system to identify the various sensations they were experiencing. To know something you need to be close enough to see the details, but not so close as to miss the overall shape of things (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 239).

Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. 205) discusses how the object is synthesized through one's own body and, like the body, partakes of the virtual as well as the actual. Various sensory modalities conflate, even though great effort is made by the expert to separate the sensory perceptions of each modality. David, one of our experts, had his own wine assessment routine: '... there are arrays and images that come up in my [mind's] eye.' First he closes his eyes as he sips, visualizing a color chart with many shades of yellows, reds, purples, garnets, and browns. He evaluates wine methodically, his eyes moving from left to right as if scanning the chart and eliminating colors until he reaches the correct one, each color receding as the next comes forward, until he has identified what kind of white, red, or rose wine he is dealing with. Then his nose comes into play: Images of fruit appear until he settles on the appropriate one, again scanning left to right. He searches for the sources of other aromas, flowers, herbs, or vegetal smells. For earthiness, he visualizes rocks and earth. Oak, especially American oak, has smoke

smells along with vanilla, and is easy for David to pick out. Leather and gamey smells are also identifiable, he reported. For David, the arrays of fruit, flowers and the like move from left to right, like a film strip. He summons these images using the 'ideas are manipulable objects' and 'remembering is retrieval' schemas.

For a wine educator, John, the process of wine evaluation takes time and requires not only identifying the various characteristics systematically, but also eliminating others. He referred to himself as a detective, starting with his observation of the wine. 'By closing your eyes and ...focusing on what is in your mouth, you bring to the fore the information that you have stored in memory... [simultaneously] a physiological and cerebral process...'

John described himself as an intuitive taster rather than a critic, looking for pleasure rather than flaws. He described his wine identification process as 'using [imaginary] sticky notes with arrows linking the various elements.' Notably, he uses the 'thinking is object manipulation' schema along with 'ideas are manipulable objects,' where sticky notes allow him to go through the different ideas, and the process of elimination is a process whereby 'knowing is smelling.' The slurping he does and the gurgling in his mouth allows the wine to be aerated and in the process liberate the aromas, which then help in the identification process. Slurping and gurgling are essential to the pleasure that an individual gets.

Each of the above examples features an awareness of self-enacting the process. The script used after several attempts of learning and experience allows the experts to simulate the process of drinking even if s/he were only looking at the wine's clarity and color. Such simulation is easier after several years of experience, and recalls Merleau-Ponty's concept of virtual embodiment. Evaluation is systematic, and includes learning to hold wine in the mouth for a short while to saturate the taste buds and to slurp. These acts of pausing and focusing during each

step distinguish wine tasting from simply drinking wine. For novices, this kind of script may not be developed; rather, rudimentary schemas come into play because of prior knowledge of red fruit or specific kinds of herbs.

Although imagination plays an important role, the connection to the real world remains in the background of conscious experience. Each participant conjured an imaginary space where everything within that space was intensified. Merleau-Ponty argues that there is only one space—the primordial space of the body that has entered a fanciful world, but that the perceptual world is at the margins. The imagining body connects the two (Steeves, 2004, p. 85), which allows the person to move between being the perceiver and the imaginer.

Conceptual metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson's (1999) theory of metaphor identifies a source and target domain, such that what is unknown is connected to what is known. When we describe wine as a 'living being,' the reckoning of the relationship between a person and wine arises from what we know about what it is to be human. Table 2 summarizes the metaphorical expressions used by participants (novices and experts).

[INSERT TABLE 2 HERE]

The example provided by a novice participant, Anthony, when asked to describe what a champagne looked, felt, tasted, and smelled like is instructive:

A bottle of champagne looks lively and full of action like New Year's Eve. It smells like New Year's Eve. It feels like weightlessness, flowing out of the glass. It tastes like a first kiss. It sounds like a sports car.

New Year's Eve evokes celebrations associated with high spirits (in this case, literally), using the image schema of verticality. The sensory dimension is heightened by food and wine.

The subjective judgment involves 'seeing is understanding' and 'smelling is understanding.' The verticality and intensity schema is brought to the fore. In the intensity schema, the bubbles are greater than in a still white wine and flow over. Tasting like a first kiss suggests a lingering gentleness and anticipation. Auditory understanding is also registered (a sports car with its unmistakable revving engine). The subjective judgment is 'hearing is understanding.'

An expert, Rhonda, described a bottle of champagne, her responses clearly grounded in emotion:

...[when poured, it] looks like a grand waterfall. It feels like a vacation to a tropical island with soft white sand. It smells like a fresh bouquet of flowers. It tastes like homemade velvety chocolate cake, and it sounds like a Ferrari.

When she refers to a rush of water, she references both the force and scale schemas. The subjective judgment is related to the idea that 'forces have impacts' and to the 'scale of objects.' A grand waterfall is by definition powerful, in motion, and loud.

We experience objects as having varying degrees of intensity. The more-or-less aspect of human experience is the basis of the scale schema, which is also a common image schema used by individuals (Joy & Sherry, 2003, p. 267). Seeing, hearing, smelling, and then tasting equal understanding. Metaphors and metonyms are cross-modal, applicable across the four senses. What is appreciated by the mouth is also recognized by the nose, eye, and touch.

Conceptual blending

The image schemas provide a detailed understanding of how the logic of the body affects our thinking; conceptual blending provides additional input. As one wine expert, John, observed:

I think of wine tasting [as] a process: entry [the container schema], attack [the intensity schema], and finish [balance schema]. Entry deals with assessments of whether the wine is sweet or dry, tannic or not, has chemical aromas, bitterness and so on. The attack deals with the body and the structure of the wine: Is it balanced? What is the texture? How does it feel in the mouth? Exit deals with what the finish is like: Is it long, medium, or short? Is it intriguing because of the complexity of the wine? What is the ageing potential of this wine?

Our participant uses the path schema: There is a starting point, a direction, and an end point that Lakoff and Johnson term the source-path-goal schema.

Individuals continually create blends and live in blends that are culture-specific (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). The blended space is a living entity, engaged in attack and contributing to a positive or negative outcome. For examples of conceptual blending, we turn to the central ethos of two renowned wineries in the Okanagan Valley, Cedar Creek Estate Winery and Quail's Gate Winery.

Our wine is our word

The commitment by Cedar Creek implicit in the tag line 'Our wine is our word' [<https://www.cedarcreek.bc.ca/our-story/our-history/>] is a solemn promise that consumers will receive the highest quality of wine. 'Our wine' encompasses wine and all the processes of making wine, such as viticulture and quality definitions, with 'is' as the internal connection. The second input space features 'our word'—a frame of a reliable and truthful individual with whom a relationship built on trust can be forged. Two causally related actions are implied, with one preceding the other: all actions taken to seek truth in wine—i.e., the creation of quality wines—precede 'This is our promise.' The phrase 'the word' is laden with a multitude of weighty connotations: Our word, as the phrase goes, is our bond. The use of 'our word' incorporates biblical references ('In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word

was God' (John 1:1), even as it also serves as a memorable marketing tag line. The generic space includes an agent, quality control, actions and results that provide a basis for cross-space mapping between the two input spaces and the selective projection from the input spaces into the blended space. In this case, wine corresponds to human beings, the high quality of a wine to a sincere human being, such that wine stands for human being. The three principles of conceptual integration are composition, completion, and elaboration (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002).

By cross-mapping selective elements into the blended space—an authentic high-quality wine equals a sincere and dependable human serving as the first step of conceptual integration—'composition' is completed. To keep one's word—and to create a quality wine—takes time and effort. Thus, the second step of 'completion' is over because the focus is on building relationships over time, which equals creating quality wine over time. Elaboration, which is the third step of conceptual integration, happens when the wine speaks for the human—it 'is our word.' The wine speaks for itself and for the winery staff.

On the company website, the company further states that, 'We seek truth in wine' [<https://www.cedarcreek.bc.ca/our-story/our-history/>]. The statement is a twist on the ancient Latin phrase *in vino veritas* ('In wine, truth'), which suggests that an inebriated person, free of inhibition, will be truthful. In Cedar Creek's version, the winery seeks to be truthful deliberately rather than from sloppy carelessness. Seeking truth in wine, by implication, precipitates a greater understanding of the components and processes involved in making a great wine—starting with an understanding of terroir and use-appropriate and site-specific viticulture practices. The meanings of making wine are cross-mapped with the object of seeking 'truth.' The input spaces and meanings are bounded by conceptual frameworks—the semantic relations among concepts. In the first input space are wine and the making of wine, including processes that start in the

vineyard. In the second input space, the frame is 'truth' and the attributes of truth, such as 'truth will always win.' The generic space outlines structural elements shared by input spaces—in this case, processes that lead to truth, on a path that is difficult. Such structural similarities allow cross-mapping to occur. Ultimately, these relations generate new meanings in the blended spaces that emerge in the process of conceptual integration. In the end, the outcome could be that the wine produced will be splendid (Cedar Creek has won international acclaim for its wines) just as truth is victorious.

Family farmed since 1956

Our second example is the Quails' Gate Winery, whose tag line is 'Family farmed since 1956' [<https://www.quailsgate.com>]. The reference to agriculture reflects that the family is involved in growing grapes and making wine. Vineyards are thus included in the first input space; the second input space features the frame of the family—kinship ties, friendship, collaboration, sharing, solidarity, and commitment. Because the choice to engage in family farming reflects deeply held beliefs and traditions regarding work and how to live one's life—family farming can be more than a professional occupation—such farming is also a way of living, one that fosters greater independence over food quality, diversity, and availability. Quails' Gate Winery's tag line emphasizes provenance and values related to both family and community. By giving the information 'since 1956' in its tag line, Quails' Gate provides a sense of generational history.

The generic space connects community values in the first input space with family behavior in the second. Completion as a process allows for the blending of family and community values; collaboration in the family can lead to cooperation in the community. Food security challenges vanquished by family farms bolster the viability of families, communities, and regions. Thus, actions taken by families leading to shared values mirroring those in the

community also lead to community harmony and collaboration, both economically and socially. Ideally, there are no unexpected results if the frames of the two spaces match.

Conclusions

Merleau-Ponty's concept of embodiment is central to our argument that participants experience wine in a synesthetic fashion. Aesthetics defined as emotions, feelings, and shared passions are applicable to wine tasting, and thus blur the boundaries between art and life. A tasting subject not only sees but also smells and savors wine before drinking it. Feel and taste are intrinsic to our participants' understanding of color. Although the senses and the sense quality appropriate to a particular sense modality are distinct, this separation facilitates the synesthetic process. Each quality is invisible, and becomes the hidden dimension of another quality. The idea of figure and ground is a significant advance over the concept of perception as a passive process of reception; we cannot understand perception simply as the sum of all sensory qualities, but must also consider the entire context in which we perceive color, shapes, and sounds. In multi-sensory processes, any sense quality can only be understood in relation to all other senses (Steeves, 2004, p. 43). The observer's body is central, as the individual perceives the world in terms of their actions and behaviors; the perceived object and its synesthetic structure present to the body the different ways of relating to the world.

Virtual enactments are conscious actions/motions taken by individuals to understand objects. Bodily skills and enactments are learned over time and within specific cultural contexts, such that they are taken for granted as embodied processes. Merleau-Ponty emphasizes the importance of an individual's ability to act in the world, exemplified in the phrase 'I can' (Joy & Sherry, 2003, p. 263). However, skill acquisition to act in the world is a continuous process, one that Merleau-Ponty terms the 'intentional arc,' combined with the concept of 'maximal grip,'

whereby a release from focusing on a goal (because skill acquisition is goal-oriented) is possible when an individual has mastered a skill and experiences flow, as exemplified by our expert participants David and John. The body, in this process, achieves a particular gestalt that it tries to improve over time. The expert's grasp of the glass, swirling of the wine, inhaling its aroma, slurping the wine and then actually tasting the contents provide the sense and feel of tasting a wine. Each activity is methodically parsed, allowing an individual to follow the process step by step. Nonetheless, tasting is multi-dimensional rather than linear. Tasting without smelling cannot happen in the wine consumption process. Novices such as Liz, with her focus on aroma, have the potential of becoming knowledgeable over time.

Merleau-Ponty disputes the body-subject dichotomy; consciousness implies embodiment and is primarily perceptual rather than linguistic or reflective; one is one's body (Crossley, 2001). The body schema is an incorporated bodily practical sense; a perspectival grasp upon the world from the point of view of the body (Crossly, 2001, p. 123). The corporeal schema extends to social interaction, where our embodiment enables us to instinctively and unreflectively interpret social context and norms.

Motion is important to this analysis as well (Coegnarts & Kravanja, 2012; Deleuze, 2000). In the context of moving imagery used by some participants, understanding movement is possible because of movement in the body (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, pp. 118–119). Imagery implies an imaginer, but, according to Merleau-Ponty, the line between perception and imagination is slender. The links between the two require an imagining body. Thus, while exploring a wine's possibilities through imagery is a fanciful imaginative activity, perception focused on the world at hand persists on the margins. The spatiality of imagination is continuous with the spatiality of perception, since both are grounded in the imagining body.

While reflection is necessary to comprehend the world of objects, how we act is prompted by our unconscious. Understanding abstract phenomena requires a metaphorical coupling with concrete phenomena. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) and Fauconnier and Turner (2002) both view the body as the basis on which we reason and understand complex concepts. Lakoff and Johnson's (1999) discussion of conceptual metaphor theory presupposes that we can conceive abstract thoughts: 'Mind is body.' Embodied cognition arises from this concept, with reasoning rooted in the functioning of the body, as was clearly the case as our participants recalled the taste of a wine. For Liz, a novice, malbec was 'fruity,' whereas experts not only experienced a wider and more specific range of taste, but also imaged how that taste would evolve over time. For the novice, the present is all that matters, whereas for experts, the past, present, and future are all essential in evaluating taste. While we can use the source-path-goal image schema to understand our participant John's entry, attack, finish approach to taste, Fauconnier and Turner's concept of blending provides the full implications of such a description, going beyond the source and target domain to create new spaces—generic and blended—to define why John's battlefield metaphor is useful in understanding the transformative process that occurs in the mouth of the taster. The example of 'Our wine is our word' is complex and requires conceptual integration in order to unpack its meaning, as is also true of Quails' Gate's tag line, 'Family farmed since 1956.'

There are several inherent limitations to this study. We acknowledge the uneven samples across categories and the need for more in-depth analysis of the imaging process across the three consumer categories. Additionally, the study focuses only on wine consumption in one region in Canada. Comparisons of wine consumption in other wine regions, both in Canada and around the world, would undoubtedly extend this area of research.

How individuals anticipate, experience, and recall multisensory experiences is an area ripe for further research. A better understanding of such embodied experiences will allow marketers to develop more comprehensive experiential marketing campaigns to connect with consumers possessing varying levels of knowledge regarding a given product. The implications of such studies will be far-reaching in our understanding of the role of aesthetics—such as in enjoying a glass of wine—in everyday life.

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Table 1. List of participants

	Name	Age	Novice/ expert	Long/short interview		Name	Age	Novice/ expert	Long/short interview
1	Norma	22	Novice	Long	22	Brenda	25	Novice	Short
2	Linda	33	Novice	Long	23	Ross	45	Wine expert	Long
3	Shirley	22	Novice	Long	24	Chris	35	Wine expert	Long
4	Todd	23	Novice	Long	25	Ian	45	Wine expert	Long
5	Brad	24	Novice	Long	26	Rose	50	Wine expert	Long
6	Chris	24	Novice	Long	27	Rhonda	45	Wine expert	Long
7	Liz	55	Novice	Long	28	Robert	40	Wine expert	Long
8	Richard	23	Novice	Long	29	Will	50	Wine expert	Long
9	Rina	22	Novice	Long	30	Tony	55	Wine expert	Long
10	Joseph	24	Novice	Long	31	Wendy	55	Wine expert	Long
11	Matt	23	Novice	Long	32	David	55	Wine expert	Long
12	Sandra	40	Novice	Long	33	John	57	Wine expert	Long
13	Wendy	23	Novice	Long	34	Sylvia	45	Wine expert	Long
14	Cameron	24	Novice	Long	35	Richard	40	Wine expert	Long
15	Anthony	23	Novice	Long	36	Rick	45	Wine expert	Long
16	David	22	Novice	Long	37	Linda	48	Wine expert	Long
17	Rick	24	Novice	Long					
18	Vanessa	27	Novice	Short					
19	Christa	32	Novice	Short					
20	Broke	35	Novice	Short					
21	Brittany	30	Novice	Short					

Table 2. Examples of metaphors used by novices and experts: French champagne

<i>Type of participant</i>	<i>Looks like...</i>	<i>Smells like...</i>	<i>Tastes like...</i>	<i>Feels like...</i>	<i>Sounds like...</i>
1. Novice	A champagne looks like New Year's eve... with all the razzle-dazzle	Smells like New Year's eve... a celebration of festive food and drinks	A first kiss... (surprise element)	Feels like weightlessness flowing out of the glass...	A sports car
<i>Subjective judgment</i>	<i>Over-awed by presentation style</i>	<i>Smelling is knowing and Smell as a powerful physical force</i>	<i>Tasting is knowing and Attraction and compulsion</i>	<i>Not contained (Container schema-it flows out of the glass)</i>	<i>Listening is knowing</i>
<i>Sensory-motor domain</i>	<i>Bodily agitation and motion</i>	<i>Olfactory sensations</i>	<i>Gustatory sensations and Bodily orientation</i>	<i>In-out schema</i>	<i>Auditory sensations</i>
2. Expert	Grand waterfall... It is clear, light with lots of bubbles gushing out. . .	Fresh cut flowers... with notes of green apple, caramel and yeastiness	Home made velvety chocolate cake. . .	A vacation to a tropical island with white sandy beaches...	A Ferrari
<i>Subjective judgment</i>	<i>It is not contained, because it pours out of the bottle like a waterfall. Scale of objects 'grand'(more or less aspect of experience)</i>	<i>Smelling is knowing</i>	<i>Tasting is knowing... Scale of intensity-'Higher' amount of acidity</i>	<i>Passage of time</i>	<i>Listening is knowing and Causes are forces and Forces have impact</i>
<i>Sensory-motor domain</i>	<i>Container schema and 'More' or 'less' aspect of experience</i>	<i>Olfactory sensations</i>	<i>Gustatory sensations and 'More' or 'less' aspect of experience</i>	<i>Motion schema</i>	<i>Auditory sensations and Exertion of force</i>
<i>Sensory-motor domain</i>	<i>Visual sensations</i>	<i>Olfactory sensations and Force schema</i>	<i>Gustatory sensations and 'More' or 'less' aspect of experience</i>	<i>Bodily motion and Balance schema</i>	<i>Auditory sensations</i>