Special Issue – Models and Sitters: the Art and Aesthetics of Posing

Constructing and Using the Portrait Sitting as an Art-Historical Research Object

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Abstract: Portraiture is said to have evolved in the twentieth century from a collaborative social practice to an artist-centric one. I challenge this view by focusing on the portrait sitting: the interaction between artist, sitter, and others from which portraits are produced. To support systematic analysis of twentieth-century sittings, I develop a portrait-sitting ontology, a formal specification of the constitutive elements of sittings, and a portrait-sitting database – information about 60+ sittings, expressed using the terms from this ontology. I do so with reference to works in London's National Portrait Gallery, given that the gallery's emphasis on noteworthy sitters is conducive to rich interpersonal exchanges during sittings. An approach from my portrait-sitting database illuminates the contributions of sitters, as well as artists, to portrait production. It calls attention to shared social and cultural ideas behind particular types of portrait production. Moreover, in doing so, the approach supports new interpretations of portraits and new periodisations of portraiture.

I. UNDERSTANDING PORTRAITURE THROUGH DATA MODELLING

As the art historian John Gage observed in 1993, there are, broadly speaking, two ways of approaching portraiture in art history.[1] The first is an artist-centric approach, which focuses on the contributions made by individuals to artistic progress. Both the history of portraiture and the broader history of art are treated as histories of artists. Another, more recent, approach to portraiture is the socio-historical one, pioneered by Marcia Pointon.[2] This approach acknowledges that the portrait is not only a work of art, which is of interest because of the aesthetic effect that the artist creates; it is also a social document, which is valuable because it communicates information about the sitter and their position in society. Typically, it attests to the sitter's worth, understood in terms of birth, wealth, achievement, or other forms of social and cultural capital. The former (artist-centric) approach is exemplified by Tate's interpretation of Frederick Etchells' *The Big Girl* in terms of the artist's relationship to modernism, and the latter (socio-historical approach) by the National Portrait Gallery's (hereafter: NPG) framing of Edna Clarke Hall's *Benjamin Waugh* in terms of the construction of the sitter's legacy by the portrait's donors. Excerpts from these portraits' online entries appear below.

> ... Etchells was well acquainted with the Continental avant-garde .... [including] Picasso, Braque, and Modigliani. In London, he formed a friendship with Roger Fry and ... members of the Bloomsbury Group. Later he gravitated towards Wyndham Lewis and the Vorticists. ...[The] painting ... is not a formal portrait but rather a study in mood and style. The broken touches of paint and soft, Fauve-like colouring show how close Etchell's [*sic*] work was to Duncan Grant's ...[3]

> [The portrait] was offered ... by Waugh's ... daughters, who were eager to see their father represented within the collection. ... [Its display soon after its acquisition] ... prompted ... correspondence in relation to the [accompanying] inscription ... which initially read 'A Founder of the National Society for The Prevention of Cruelty to Children'. Mrs Hobhouse [one of Waugh's daughters] was concerned that this designation could allow [Waugh's colleagues] ... to [also] claim this title ... In due course the offending 'A' was removed ...[4]

Different approaches to, or theories of, portraiture can be expressed using data modelling. Models are (often, if not always) abstracted representations of real-world objects. For example, Figures 1 and 2 are models of the portraits by Etchells and Clarke Hall. Models are selective as they are designed to be useful. If Figures 1 and 2 were to include ten times as much information

about the portraits they represent, they would be more comprehensive, but also less quickly and easily understood. Thus, the process of modelling entails making judgements about which information is and is not worth representing. The NPG's model of portraiture reflects the gallery's remit – 'to maintain a collection of portraits of the most eminent persons in British history' – insofar as it includes (and, in fact, foregrounds) the identity of the sitter.[5] This remit is itself a product of various factors surrounding the gallery's foundation in 1856, for example, the renegotiation of British national identity in the Victorian era, which has since been called the 'nationalisation of culture'.[6]

ARTIST	Frederick Etchells 1886–1973
MEDIUM	Tempera on board
DIMENSIONS	Support: 749 × 629 mm frame: 888 × 760 × 57 mm
COLLECTION	Tate
ACQUISITION	Purchased 1958
REFERENCE	T00192

Figure 1: Structured data about Etchells' *The Big Girl*, supplied by Tate Gallery, UK.

Benjamin Waugh
by Lady Edna Clarke Hall
oil on canvas, circa 1904
15 in. x 13 in. (382 mm x 330 mm) overall
Given by Lady Edna Clarke Hall, 1954
Primary Collection
NPG 3909

Figure 2: Structured data about Clarke Hall's *Benjamin Waugh*, supplied by National Portrait Gallery, London, UK

II. TWENTIETH-CENTURY BRITISH PORTRAITURE

It is often argued that portraiture – at least, in the sense of a social document that attests to a sitter's worth – 'died out' by 1925.[7] For example, the art critic John Berger wrote, in 1967:

> It seems to me unlikely that any important portraits will ever be painted again. Portraits, that is to say . . . in the sense of portraiture as we now understand it . . . [Future 'portraits'] will have nothing to do with the works now in the National Portrait Gallery.[8]

The driving force behind arguments such as Berger's is reverence for international modernism (particularly, Francophile, formalist modernism) among scholars of British art in the 1960s. Whereas the subject (the sitter) in portraiture was of primary importance, modernists were more interested in shape, space, and colour.[9] And whereas portraitists had generally sought to please their establishment patrons, modernists valued bohemianism and avant-gardism.[10] Thus, Berger wrote of a transition from portraiture which 'underwrite[s] and idealise[s] a chosen social role of the sitter ... [for example] monarch, bishop, landowner, merchant' to one in which 'the ... role of the sitter is reduced to *that of being painted*' and in which 'it is not [the sitter's] personality or ... role which impresses us but the artist's vision'.[11] Essentially, he downplayed the role of the sitter in order to reconcile portraiture with a modernist, artist-centric narrative of British art.

In doing so, Berger is joined by art historians Robin Gibson and Norbert Lynton, among others. Gibson writes of the quintessential modernist artist Paul Cézanne's being 'almost unaware of his subject [in this case, the art dealer Ambroise Vollard] ... see[ing] him only in terms of pictorial problems', while Lynton not only echoes this view of Cézanne's portraiture; he also finds no meaningful difference between works which were titled as representing named sitters (and can therefore more easily be classed as portraits) and those whose subjects were anonymous (and which therefore might rather be described as figure paintings).[12]

III. THE PORTRAIT SITTING

I critically assess this narrative of change in twentieth-century portraiture – from a particularly social practice to a more artist-centric one – by focusing on the portrait sitting: the moment of interaction between artist, sitter, and sometimes others, from which a portrait is typically produced. The sitting has rarely been used by art historians as an object of study. Nevertheless, Angela Rosenthal has argued for its importance, writing:

> Rather than a reproduction of a pre-existing self, the portrait is seen as the production of sitter and artist, and of the relation between them determined by mobile factors such as class, race, age, and gender. Attention is shifted from the stasis of the supposedly finished work towards the intersubjective encounter from which it emerged...[13]

To paraphrase, Rosenthal focuses less on the portrait *object* than on the *process* of portraiture, which involves social and economic relations between participants. The portrait sitting is the site of these relations. It is an individual event in the sense of involving particular people – each with their own interests and anxieties – and specific circumstances. However, it is also a socially and culturally situated event insofar as it takes place in a society

with pre-existing shared ideas about, for example, the artistic profession, and gender roles.[14]

How might we design a model of portraiture, which focuses on the sitting? One way of doing so is to work empirically and iteratively from examples of portrait sittings, or, more accurately, examples of evidence of sittings. Textual accounts of sittings have been produced since antiquity and appear in sources including biographies, diaries, and correspondence. They give insight into the reasons for producing a portrait; the duration and cost of portrait production; the times, dates, and locations of sittings; the thoughts and feelings of participants and so on. These topics comprise an indicative list of the constitutive elements of sittings.[15] Another way of modelling the portrait sitting is from the 'top down'.[16] In this case, the model derives from existing theories about portraiture. For example, from Rosenthal's and Joanna Woodall's work on this subject, I developed an understanding of the portrait sitting as a contract between artist, sitter, and patron, whereby identity is constructed or reinforced, in exchange for money.[17] In both cases (bottom-up and top-down modelling), there are judgements to be made. For example, if a so-called sitting does not involve an exchange of money, should I broaden my definition of the sitting in order to include this event, or should I conclude that the event is not, in fact, a sitting?[18]

The purpose of the model guides these judgements about which information to include (as was implied earlier with respect to Tate and the NPG's interpretations of portraits). The purpose of modelling the portrait sitting was, for me, to revise and extend existing ideas about twentieth-century British portraiture. If – as Berger and others have argued – 'traditional' portraiture (pre-1925) performed an agreed social function whereas 'modern' portraiture (post-1925) was more experimental and artist-led, we can surely expect a corresponding evolution in the sitting: from a social and commercial transaction to a more informal and artist-centric arrangement. Frances Spalding and Elizabeth Cayzer have argued as much. According to Spalding, modern portraiture was no longer so much a 'bargain' between parties as a 'creative meeting', the product of which might not '[follow] custom or accepted style'.[19] Similarly, Cayzer notes that before 1914, there were several 'well-established "names" [i.e. artists] . . . [who] understood the requirements and pit-falls or portrait commission'.[20] Thereafter, she implies, portrait production held less certainty for the prospective patron. In other words, the traditional sitting was a social and commercial contract with defined expectations, whereas the modern sitting was an informal arrangement with no such guidelines.

I tested this theory by designing a model of portraiture which addresses not only the visual and material properties of portrait objects – as existing models do, but which also addresses questions of collaboration and exchange in portrait production.[21] A full list of questions, which served as the model's requirement specifications appears here.

1. Authorship and contribution – Who contributes to portrait production?

   - Whose participation is active and whose is passive?
   - Who has influence over the appearance and materiality of the portrait?
   - Who can affect the logistics of portrait production?
   - Who is responsible for physically making the portrait?
   - In all cases, what is the extent of their influence/responsibility?
   - Who is the recognised artist of the portrait? Who is the recognised sitter?

2. Qualifying criteria – Which events qualify as portrait sittings?

   - Which activities were part of the portrait sitting?
   - Which activities were part of portrait production more broadly?
   - Were artist and sitter in the same space at the same time?
   - Was there an agreement or contract?
   - Was there correspondence between artist and sitter?

3. Participation – Who participates in portrait production?

   - Whose participation is actual and whose is anticipated or imagined?
   - What relationships exist between participants?
   - Whose participation is optional and whose is essential?
   - Whose participation is intentional and whose is incidental?

4. Power relations – Who is in a position of power?

   - Who is involved in decision making?
   - Who controls what happens to the portrait?
   - Who initiates portrait production?
   - Who owns a resource that is used in portrait production?[22]
   - Who has privilege because of their class, race, nationality, or gender?

5. Psychosocial context – How normative was the interaction?

   - Does the interaction disrupt everyday life?
   - Do the participants know each other prior?
   - What class or cultural differences exist between them?

- In what kind of environment does the interaction take place?
- Is the interaction habitual or novel?
- How important is the interaction? What is at stake?
- How do participants feel about the interaction?

6. Credibility – How credible is the portrait-sitting account?

   - What is the account's intended purpose?
   - How removed is the account from the sitting?
   - How credible is the author more generally?
   - What is the extent of agreement with the artwork?

7. Profit and motivation – Who profits from portrait production?

   - Who gains money from portrait production?
   - Who gains an artwork from portrait production?
   - Who gains social or professional status from portrait production?
   - Who gets enjoyment from or is flattered by portrait production?
   - Who gives their time to portrait production?
   - Who expects something from portrait production?
   - Whose, and which, expectations are met?

8. Defining the portrait

   - What were participants' intentions for the work?
   - How was the artwork received/understood?
   - What is the social status of the sitter?
   - What was/is the title of the artwork?
   - How is the sitter represented?

9. Cross-disciplinarity – How multi-faceted is the portrait sitting?

   - Are there overlaps with existing resources e.g. DBpedia?[23]
   - Is the account relevant to the domain of e.g. history?

10. Object properties – What do portraits look like, where are they, and how did they get there?

    - What is the format and style of the portrait?
    - What is the provenance of the portrait?
    - Where has the portrait been exhibited?

- Where has the portrait been reproduced?

The outcomes of this modelling process were a portrait-sitting ontology and database.[24] An ontology is 'an explicit specification of . . . the objects, concepts and other entities that are assumed to exist in an area of interest [in this case, portrait sittings] and the relationships that hold among them'.[25] It is effectively a vocabulary and guidelines, used to compile structured data about sittings. Each term in the vocabulary corresponds to one or more of the foregoing questions around such themes as authorship, participation, and so on. Thus, data which is formally expressed according to the vocabulary can be searched, analysed, and compared with respect to these themes.

In fact, I developed the ontology co-dependently with a database of 65 portrait sittings, predominantly, sittings for portraits in the NPG. By 'co-dependently', I mean that I worked both 'upwards' from textual accounts of sittings for portraits in the NPG to a model of portrait production, and 'downwards' in the sense of identifying a collection which is well placed to challenge dominant artist-centric narratives about twentieth-century British portraiture. Because of the gallery's focus on sitters who have contributed to British history and culture, textual accounts of sittings for NPG portraits seemed to me especially likely to document the agency of sitters (as well as artists) and to situate portrait production as part of not only a history of art (or a history of artists) but also social, political, and national histories.

IV. USING THE PORTRAIT-SITTING DATABASE IN A STUDY OF BRITISH PORTRAITURE 1900-1960

IV.I The role of the sitter

Two outcomes of using my portrait-sitting database in a study of British portraiture 1900-1960 particularly highlight sitters' contributions to portrait production. The first has to do with the commission, which is the agreement or contract, whereby an artist constructs a sitter's identity in exchange for money. It is understood by Rosenthal and others to be the root of the obligation existing between artist, sitter and patron.[26] Yet my analysis showed that it is just one of many exchanges involved in portrait production. At least within the 65 sittings in my sample, participants not only gave portraits (or rather their agreements to produce portraits) in exchange for money; they also traded 'objects' such as books, food, business opportunities, advice, and cigarettes. I described or *qualified* these objects using the terms 'Tangible Object' (of which sub-classes include 'Book', 'Food and Drink', and 'Cigarette or Cigar') and 'Intangible Object' (of which sub-classes include 'Business, Opportunity, or Exposure' and 'Advice, Expertise or Instruction') in my ontology. And I measured or *quantified* exchanges of these various objects by querying my database.

Doing so not only led me to question the importance of the commission – over and above other types of exchange – in determining the balance of power

between participants in portrait production. It also revealed the surprising frequency with which participants exchanged 'Personal Objects' – that is, objects such as self-made works and signatures, which symbolise a particular person in some way. Seven of the 65 sittings involved exchanges of signed objects and more than 20 others involved exchanges of other 'Personal Objects', including portraits.[27] For example, at the conclusion of the writer G. K. Chesterton's sitting to the medallist Theodore Spicer-Simson in c.1922, the sitter gave the artist a copy of his book, *Orthodoxy*, inscribed 'To T. Spicer-Simson, who modelled me', in exchange for a portrait medallion.[28]

My reading of such exchanges is as attempts by sitters to assert their own expertise as equal to artists'. A particularly clear example is found in the sittings of Prime Minister Winston Churchill to Graham Sutherland for a 1954 portrait. According to an account of the sittings by Sutherland's biographer, Churchill – who was an artist himself (albeit not a professional one) – proposed to match Sutherland's portrait of him with his own portrait of Sutherland's wife.[29] He also showed Sutherland his own artwork, insisted that he (Sutherland) use his (Churchill's) studio and advised the younger artist as to which paints to use.[30] Furthermore, the Prime Minister purportedly told Sutherland, in the context of the sitter's request to see his portrait-in-progress: 'Come on, be a sport. Don't forget I'm a fellow artist'.[31] In other cases, too, artists and sitters exchanged knowledge and expertise alongside personal objects, adding weight to my interpretation of such exchanges in terms of professional identity. For example, the writers Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad and the artists Spicer-Simson and Jacob Epstein discussed the similarity of portrait production to creative writing, in sittings for portraits of 1921 (Hardy and Spicer-Simson) and 1924 (Conrad and Epstein).[32]

The agency of sitters in portrait production is demonstrated not only by their frequent contribution of autographed objects and expertise but also by the extent of their decision making. The terms in my ontology that I use to describe the latter include 'Decision Maker', meaning a person who determines some factor in portrait production, and 'Initiator', meaning a person who instigates portrait production, and thus determines whether it takes place at all. Further terms describe the factors in portrait production about which decisions are made, for example, the cost of the portrait and the schedule for portrait production – which I class as 'Logistical Factor[s]'; the subject, setting, and size of the portrait – which I class as 'Design Factor[s]'; and the purpose of the portrait – called 'Purpose' in the ontology. As such, the ontology enabled me to record who was responsible for each aspect of portrait production – the named artist, named sitter, or a third party (for instance a patron, assistant, or intermediary) – and how this changed over time. By doing so, I ascertained that the decision-making remits of artists, sitters, and third parties were relatively stable. Third parties consistently acted as the initiators of portraits and determined their purpose; artists were consistently the designers of portraits; and sitters controlled the logistics of

portrait production. Thus, my data supports an understanding of the portrait sitting as a collaboration, throughout the period in question. It undermines the suggestions that before 1925 portraitists were not decision makers, but rather service providers, and that the agency of sitters diminished after this same date.

IV.II   Collaboration and social function in the 'presentation portrait'

My findings with respect to decision making in portrait production also led me to rediscover the understudied 'presentation portrait' type. A presentation portrait is one which was commissioned by a committee and funded by multiple fee-payers (or subscribers), who were usually friends or colleagues of the sitter. It was typically then presented to the sitter or an institution on an occasion such as a birthday or anniversary. Sutherland's *Churchill* (for which Figure 3 is a study) is one such portrait. It was commissioned by the committee responsible for Churchill's 80th birthday celebrations, funded by Members of Parliament, and intended both for presentation to Churchill and for display at the Palace of Westminster.[33] The portrait is notorious for its negative reception and subsequent destruction. Sutherland apparently believed that his remit was to depict Churchill as he usually appeared to colleagues in the House of Commons. However, Churchill is said to have expected a grand representation of his authority.[34] The finished portrait – which emphasised the elderly Prime Minister's physical body, not the prestige of his office – has been positioned alongside similarly revealing portraits by Stanley Spencer and Lucian Freud as part of a modernist existentialist narrative.[35] It is generally discussed in terms of Churchill's being offended by Sutherland's uncompromising approach, without mention of any other participant in portrait production.

Modelling the portrait's production according to my ontology offers an alternative perspective. It expresses the fact that the portrait was of a type – the presentation portrait – which was particularly collaborative in the sense of involving multiple commissioning agents (called 'Initiator[s]' in the ontology) and multiple funders. More generally, the presentation portrait type is one which challenges dominant artist-centric narratives in several ways. Not only did the production of presentation portraits involve a high number of contributors; it also often entailed exchanges of personal objects, of the type I discussed above. As in the case of Sutherland's *Churchill*, presentation portraits were sometimes given alongside books or albums containing the signatures of subscribers.[36] In others, each subscriber received a portrait reproduction.[37] In this sense of formalising a relationship between admirers (who donated the portrait and who were represented by their signatures) and the admired (who received and was represented by the portrait), the production and use of presentation portraits were particularly social practices.

Figure 3: Study for a portrait of Winston Churchill by Graham Sutherland © National Portrait Gallery, London

IV.III The presentation portrait and the NPG

Quantitative analysis of collections and exhibition data shows that an increase in the number of presentation portraits produced and exhibited coincided with the beginnings of the foundation of the NPG (the idea for a national portrait gallery first being raised in Parliament in 1846).[38] (See Figure 4) This may be explained by the similarity of the function of the presentation portrait to that of the 'authentic' portrait, as it was understood by Thomas Carlyle, an advocate for the foundation of the NPG. As the art historian Paul Barlow notes, Carlyle drew a connection between 'regard' in the sense of observation or attention and 'regard' in the sense of esteem.[39] This relationship was then leveraged by the gallery for the purpose of constructing national identity, as it was thought that the 'authentic' portrait – one which is lifelike and which is made in the sitter's lifetime – communicates the artist's regard for their sitter (an historical event) to a viewer of the portrait in the modern day.[40] Additionally and relatedly, both NPG portraits and presentation portraits construct shared histories. In the NPG, portraits of selected individuals function collec-

tively as an expression of shared cultural achievements and values. Similarly, presentation portraits were typically produced in recognition of a lifetime's work by the sitter and often with the expectation of acquisition by an institution. Thus, the subscribers to these portraits shaped biographical and institutional histories in much the same way as the Trustees of the NPG.
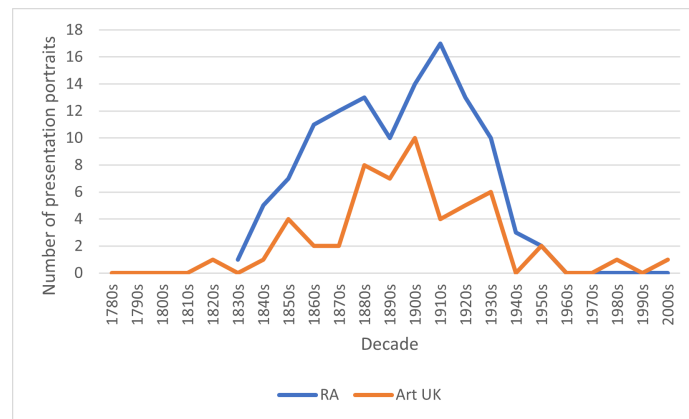

Figure 4: The chronology of presentation portraits

More broadly, the chronology of the presentation portrait suggests that the period 1840-1940 was one in which ideas about the individual, society, and 'regard' – which are a common denominator of both presentation portraits and portraits in the NPG – were somewhat consistent. The fact that the period extends approximately from the start of Queen Victoria's reign in 1837 to the start of the Second World War in 1939 strengthens the credibility of this suggestion. However, given that the presentation portrait appears to have declined after 1940, there remains a question of whether the NPG faced a similar decline and whether it maintained its ideals. The most significant evidence that the gallery's understanding of portraiture has adapted – in practice, if not in policy – in order to accommodate significant *artists* as well as significant *sitters* is the introduction in 1980 of a commissioning programme targeted at producing and acquiring portraits by 'a variety of good artists', including 'more established artists who may not [typically] undertake portrait commissions'.[41] There are several parallels between the production of portraits that have been commissioned by the NPG and the production of Sutherland's *Churchill*, which have led me to suggest that both bridge the gap between portraiture as an offshoot of official culture and portraiture as an arena for experimentation.

Firstly, just as artists commissioned by the NPG are not always professional portraitists, Sutherland was better known as a landscapist when he accepted the commission to paint Churchill. Secondly, portrait artists commissioned by the NPG have spoken of the immense impact that such commissions have had on their careers. For example, the artist Justin Mortimer

is reported to have told his sitter: 'my whole career is at stake here'.[42] Similarly, Sutherland showed his insecurity as a portraitist by seeking approval of Churchill's portrait-in-progress from others.[43] Finally, a preliminary meeting – an event that I identified by modelling sittings from the 'bottom up', and one in which there is, at least, a semblance of consultation between artist and sitter – is common to both. At such a meeting between Churchill and Sutherland, the two men discussed 'how the sittings should be done, how many there should be and so on'.[44] Similarly, a commission by the NPG for a portrait of Chief Medical Officer Sally Davies by Daphne Todd began with a meeting, of which Davies reports: 'The conversation started with: who was I; how should I be; where would I be done; what would I be wearing?'.[45] Thus, it would seem there are particular modes of portrait production which endured in the mainstream from about 1840 to 1940 but which continue beyond that point within the specific context of the NPG.[46]

V.   FUTURE USES OF THE PORTRAIT-SITTING ONTOLOGY AND DATABASE

Having summarised my use of the portrait-sitting ontology and database in a study of twentieth-century British portraiture, I nevertheless want to acknowledge that there are a number of other possible applications of these resources. In recognition of this fact, I invited contributions from other scholars (primarily art historians; however, a consultation with other potential database users such as archivists and museum professionals would also have been instructive). I did so by conducting a series of interviews, during which participants were given short extracts from portrait-sitting accounts to read. They were asked questions about the sittings described by the accounts, and the accounts themselves. And they were encouraged to reflect on their experiences of portrait-sitting accounts, both at interview and in their own research. The epistemological questions that I addressed in this way were: Do you think that these accounts are useful? If so, what do you think is useful about them? What might limit their use, for you?[47]

Most importantly, the art historians whom I interviewed saw value in constructing a portrait-sitting ontology and database. One participant commented: '[T]hese kind of accounts are so important and ... so rich in terms of the information that they contain ... the more we collate [portrait-sitting accounts] and add them to the record ... the better for everyone'.[48]

Participants also conceived of several potential uses for portrait-sitting data, which join my own ideas.[49] Future uses include as a standard for collecting information about present-day portrait sittings, particularly by portrait-commissioning institutions such as the NPG. Portrait-sitting data could also be used in conjunction with assessments by conservators to give insight into how portraits were amended both during and after their production. The database of sittings could underpin a new approach to how portraits are dis-

played; for example, it could inform the curation of an exhibition based on shared portrait-sitting experiences. It could also support a larger project that collates experiences of interacting with portraits in different ways, not only as participants in sittings, but also as viewers ourselves.[50]

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ENDNOTES

1. 663-664 Gage 1993, He makes this observation in the context of a book review.
2. See e.g. Pointon 1993.
3. Tate 2010.
4. Heath, n.d.
5. National Portrait Gallery 2018.
6. The term 'nationalisation of culture' originates with the historian Janet Oppenheim (formerly Janet Minihan). It is used by Pointon and others in relation to the NPG. See, for example, Pointon 1993, 231.
7. The death of portraiture is usually dated to 1914 or 1918, the start or end of the First World War, or 1925, the death of the last canonical professional portraitist, John Singer Sargent. This can be argued explicitly or it is implied by an end date to a survey. See, for example, Cohen 2008, 71, and Simon 1987 respectively.
8. Berger (1967) 2016.
9. According to the art critic Clive Bell, 'To appreciate a work of art we need . . . [only] a sense of form and colour and a knowledge of . . . space . . . [R]epresentation is irrelevant'. Bell 1916, 27–28.
10. As literary scholar Paula Marantz Cohen has argued, the modernist's inclination to confound expectation and the portraitist's obligation to satisfy expectation, are incompatible. She makes this argument with respect to the portraiture of John Singer Sargent. Cohen 2008, 68–69.
11. Berger (1967) 2016.
12. Lynton 2000, 15; Gibson 1978, 8.
13. Rosenthal 1997, 148.
14. See, for example, Eaker 2018 for the artistic profession and Rosenthal 1997 for gender roles.
15. It is nevertheless important to note that textual accounts of sittings are cultural objects in themselves. They were produced according to particular conventions, published and disseminated for particular purposes. There is therefore a balance to be found between the credibility of the accounts and the usability of the information they contain.
16. For top-down and bottom-up approaches to modelling, see Flanders and Jannidis 2016, 12-14.
17. Rosenthal 1997, 150–151; Woodall 1997, 7, 20.
18. Julia Flanders and Fotis Jannidis discuss this decision-making process using the example of modelling a poem. Flanders and Jannidis 2016, 12–14.
19. Spalding 1991, 387.
20. Cayzer 1999, 104.
21. At present, there are very few cultural heritage models that focus on events as opposed to objects. There is also no (formal) model that is tailored to portraiture, as distinct from other art forms.
22. This may be a physical resource, for example, a canvas, or a non-physical resource, for example, expertise in painting.
23. https://www.dbpedia.org/
24. Kanter 2023.
25. Gruber 1995.
26. Rosenthal 1997, 150–151; See also, e.g., Cohen 2008, 64.
27. Kanter 2023.
28. Spicer-Simson 1962, 127.
29. Berthoud 1982, 190.
30. Berthoud 1982, 185–187.
31. Berthoud 1982, 186.
32. Spicer-Simson 1962, 72; Epstein 1955, 75.
33. Berthoud 1982, 183-4.

34. Berthoud 1982, 184, 193–194; Schama 2015, 11.
35. John Cooper writes of Sutherland's 'dispassionate view of Churchill as an ageing human being' (2009, cited in National Portrait Gallery, n.d.) while the artist himself described his practice in somewhat phenomenological and existentialist terms. In his words: '[To make a portrait is not to "make a copy" but] an interpretive *paraphrase . . .* [It is] an art of letting the subject . . . reveal himself unconsciously so that by his voice and gaze as well as by his solid flesh your memory and emotions are stirred . . . [In] order to obtain the flavour . . . [and] essence [of the subject] . . . [you] have to be . . . absorbent . . . patient and watchful. . . ". Barber 1964, 51–52.
36. Berthoud 1982, 194.
37. See, for example, the portrait of Harold Lee-Dillon by Sydney Carline and that of Edward Sharpey-Schafer by Charles d'Orville Pilkington Jackson. Holmes 1936, 301; Blackett-Ord, n.d.
38. See supporting data (Presentation portraits), Kanter 2023. For the foundation of the NPG, see National Portrait Gallery, n.d.
39. The double meaning of the word 'regard' in this context is my own (as opposed to Barlow's or Carlyle's). It has nevertheless been used by others before me, for example, Mooney 2020.
40. Barlow 1997, 227–228.
41. Additional evidence may be found in the aforementioned remarks on twentieth-century British portraiture by National Portrait Gallery, n.d.; Gibson 1978, 8; Lynton 2000, 15. At their respective times of writing, Gibson was an NPG curator and Lynton a former NPG Trustee.
42. Pinter 1999 cited in Cooper 2014, 248.
43. Berthoud 1982, 183–200.
44. Berthoud 1982, 185.
45. *Portrait Commission: Chief Medical Officer Dame Sally Davies* 2017
46. Although Sutherland's portrait of Churchill dates to 1954, I have explained that the presentation portrait type that it represents was more commonly found between 1840 and 1940. This portrait is an exceptionally late example, which bridges a type of portraiture that is closely associated with social function (the presentation portrait), and the modern existentialist portraiture of a new generation of artists.
47. The interview questions, transcripts, and a summary of the findings are available as supporting material in Kanter 2023.
48. Kanter 2023.
49. See report on interview findings in Kanter 2023.
50. This paper presents aspects of my doctoral research, entitled 'Collecting and connecting portrait sittings: a re-evaluation of portrait-sitting accounts in enhancing knowledge and understanding of British portraiture 1900-1960'. A presentation of this research to the Digital Humanities Congress 2022, which focuses on the digital methodology, is published in the conference proceedings.

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