

“Ideas for a Depth Study”
KA*719 – Advanced Phenomenological Inquiry
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I’ve thoroughly enjoyed this Advanced Phenomenological Inquiry seminar. The introduction to psychological and sociological phenomenology has helped me to become more consciously situated in my “lifeworld,” you might say. At the same time, I’ve experienced a perceptible transformative effect in my apprehension of that same lifeworld: somehow I’m more observant – in a freshly detached sort of way – of the multi-variant stimuli impinging upon my senses. I am a consciously feeling and meaning-making meta-organism!

I already had an idea what I wanted to investigate when registering for the seminar. The momentum of my doctoral studies has been gradually and persistently pushing me in the direction of “neurophenomenology.” My particular interest in phenomenology, per se, stems from wanting to understand how various environments are perceived by the ‘users.’ I’ve already conducted informal studies moving through various environments, taking note how my body-mind was affected by the experience. For example, moving through the grid of downtown Seattle is accompanied by a certain somatosensory feeling response. Moving through the winding streets of a Tuscan hill-town brings a very different sort of somatosensory feeling response. I’ll restrain myself from posing an initial judgment here.

During my KA*702 studies, I came upon “Environment-Behavior” research. One startling discovery of this study was the notion that neural configuration or neural patterning is directly influenced by the quality of the environment in and through which the organism conducts itself; that is, neural patterning does not come as a ‘given,’ predetermined at birth, but rather is continually rearranged and reoriented in response to environmental conditions. With this understanding, naturally I’m wondering what is happening to my neural patterning as I move through the square grid versus the organic form.

Neurophenomenology will help me to more thoroughly comprehend these phenomena. As such, I propose to focus on an investigation of the neurophenomenology literature as the basis of my KA*719D study. I’m not sure exactly what the final result will be; though I’m certain I will be able to produce 30+ pages weaving together these various interests. All my papers are meant to be of practical use for “village designers,” and so “design criteria” surely will be included. It’s quite possible this study will be the portal to my dissertation research...

Please find below a preliminary bibliography. Many of these listings have been included in my concurrent KA*704 study, which was basically an investigation into the phenomenology of beauty, so there is a bit of an overlap. Further recommendations will be greatly appreciated.

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