

“Executive Summary”
KA*719 – Advanced Phenomenological Inquiry
E. Christopher Mare
3 April 2011

Dear David and Valerie,

The KA*719 Advanced Phenomenological Inquiry seminar was a very rewarding experience and a significant contribution to the long liturgy of preliminary studies in preparation for the dissertation stage of my doctoral program. As I mentioned in my introductory letter, I had already been exposed to some phenomenology through my own readings. I also believe that I had been practicing phenomenological-type perception before I was aware of the *techne* of the epoche, possibilizing, typifications, horizons, etc. Suspending internal dialogue and preconceptions so that openness to a fuller ‘whole body awareness’ may be achieved is a technique I have practiced while navigating through built environments. The KA*719 seminar succeeded in expanding this understanding of phenomenology to include psychological and sociological parameters. With this more complete range, I now feel comfortable in saying that I am a budding “phenomenologist.”

I think the significance of the current study was facilitated by the unique setting in which I found myself this past Winter: I had recently moved into a studio apartment, living in solitude for the first time in a long time, without the need to go out for external employment; thus I was in a rather self-contained, cocoon-like environment. This feeling of enclosure was amplified by the fact that it was an especially harsh and stormy Winter, so there was not much desire to go anywhere. Within this setting, I entered what I called “an inquiry into the ‘phenomenology of consciousness.’”

My alarm was set for 5am; this is because I have an ideal of getting up and meditating for an hour or two before sunrise. Sometimes I am actually able to do this for a stretch, though many times I would turn off the alarm and go right back to sleep, in which case I finally would get up with just enough time for a half-hour or so of meditation before the shower – nevertheless, my discipline and desire seem to grow with each passing season. For the first couple months, I would read for about 12 hours a day, on most days, before finally retiring for a closing meditation from about 10:30-11:15pm. Sometimes I would feel motivated to add another meditation before making dinner. I also might note that my reading spot is a couple of cushions plus blankets, with stacks of books laid out before me. Thus, close to the ground like this, I can practice sitting in a full lotus, or the half lotuses, while I am reading. When the legs become too cramped I can stretch them out, of course, or simply sit cross-legged, yet I try to maintain a vertical spine and steady breath throughout. In this way, I am making my reading a yogic

practice. After completing a chapter, I will sit in contemplation for awhile, then to do some chanting or pranayama before picking up another book to read another chapter. I also kept a dream journal during this period, attempting to become 'lucid' in the dream state. Finally, for the last couple of months (with a simultaneous KA*704 study), as deliverables started becoming due, I would write through the day while reserving the evening for reading.

I recount all this here because the 'advanced phenomenological inquiry' experience was for me very much an immersion or an intensive into the 'phenomenology of consciousness.' Because of the unique situation, I was able to give almost complete attention to the phenomenology of changing states of awareness as they would move in and out through the three stages: active reading with the attentive mind, detached observation with the meditative mind, and the fluid states of imagination with the dreaming mind – these were all facets of the same mind! Because I was in the midst of a phenomenology study, I adopted the attitude of a researcher actively witnessing the dynamics of the various shades of consciousness. As a result of this intensive, I can sense, though not quite yet articulate, inherent connections between phenomenology and spirituality – spirituality meaning here access to integrative dimensions of experience not readily available to normal waking consciousness. This, then, was my most important learning from the seminar: phenomenology can be used as a window into the study of consciousness, and may facilitate the discovery of integrative states of awareness that could be called spiritual. I hesitate to claim that the new learning indicates a "transformation" has occurred. If anything, the past Winter provided an intensified period of an ongoing transformation: if, as Valerie suggests, increasing awareness *is* a transformation, then ever since I decided to take spiritual practice seriously, awareness seems to increase with each passing season. I guess that's what I mean by saying life itself is a transformative experience.

Before I provide an account of my postings, I would like to express:

- 1) Thanks for being such knowledgeable guides on this amazing journey!
- 2) I will be very interested in participating in the Somatics seminar in the Fall of 2011 – though technically, after this 719, I'm finished with all my KAs and must devote full attention to the dissertation. Maybe it would be better to do it this Summer?
- 3) If either one of you has suggestions on how to translate a phenomenological study of settlement morphology into a manageable dissertation proposal, please share. Additionally helpful would be understanding how to frame such a study as an expression of 'phenomenological phenomenography.'

Annotated List of My Postings to the KA*719 Seminar

Module 1: "Towards a Phenomenology of Reading Phenomenology: Notes on a Required Text"

Since this was an advanced phenomenology seminar, I wanted to jump write into the practice of writing phenomenologically. Therefore, after reading Wagner's interesting book, instead of

simply relaying an account of the contents, I thought I would try to describe the phenomenological experience of actually reading the book. Of course, much of my description would be relevant to reading *any* book – how I engage with the text with a personal notation system, how my mind starts to wander if the material is losing interest, etc. – however, there were particulars about Wagner’s text that were accompanied by an especially vivid feeling-tone. I theorized that these were content that some part of my awareness recognized as being constitutive to my ongoing Project. In comparison, when I got to the part of the book introducing sociological phenomenology, the feeling-tone subsided, the notations became more infrequent, and I had to apply discipline to keep my mind focused on the text.

Module 2: Posting 1: “Reporting on Max van Manen’s *Researching Lived Experience*”

The first thing I noticed about van Manen’s book was what I thought to be a similarity in tone with Wagner’s: I speculated on how the European continental tradition of phenomenology had been transplanted by these and other writers, thus giving it and the associated texts a special character. I thought I sensed a sort of “grandfatherliness” in their care. I was especially touched by van Manen’s treatment of pedagogy. Instead of simply a teaching method, for him it is more like a way of being in the world (which is a characteristic phenomenological statement). I hope I have integrated van Manen’s important lesson that all the research and writing and study, all this time invested wanting to grow competent, it all comes to a point of validation when finally sitting across from someone in one’s care and being able to act with “tact.” For all these reasons, I was motivated to label my first posting to Module 2 “a heartfelt contribution.”

Module 2: Posting 2: “Processing L’*intuition de Madame Alexander*”

During the conference call prior to this second posting, I was intrigued by Ann Alexander’s intuition that there is a connection between phenomenology and emotional intelligence. This ‘felt’ right to me too, so after contemplating the connection, I thought I would share a few thoughts in that direction. With an ongoing interest in neurophenomenology, I wondered if I could explain the neural correlates to Ann’s intuition. I described the phenomenological reduction as a temporary suspension of input from the anterior neo-cortex, associated with rational reasoning, so that input from older basal structures of the brain could predominate. Since the older basal regions, otherwise known as the limbic system, are associated with emotional processing, Ann’s intuition would seem to have some merit. I also made a connection between the pattern recognition of the right brain and desired states of phenomenological apprehension in contrast to the linearity of the left brain, finally claiming that greater use of phenomenology could very well lend some balance to a civilization that has for too long relied on rational, linear thinking.

Module 3: “Book Report – “Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research”

This Module’s assignment was a little more structured, so there might not be as much to say about it. Instead of writing to the seminar group, I thought I would act as if my audience would be the readership of the New York Times literary page, or something like that. Thus, the Book Report had a different voice than the previous postings. Some of the things I mentioned in the Report relating to IPA were how it seemed that the IPA research method entirely depended on the willingness of ‘subjects’ to divulge highly personal and often sensitive material; thus I raised concerns about issues of trust. Even so, it seemed to me that IPA was a method for tapping into some very deep and stirring human testimonies that other research methods would not be able to access; thus, there was a very humanizing aspect to IPA. All in all, the best part about Module 3 was the energetic dialogue that ensued on the forum.

Module 4: “Transformative Phenomenology”

There was a bit of time concern expressed by the group prior to this Module, so the assignment came a little abbreviated. I did end up reading the whole book, though only reporting on three of the contributions. I thoroughly enjoyed this book. One of the most satisfying aspects of the book was seeing all the Fielding grads in there who had used phenomenology in their dissertations. In my posting, I wanted to raise a question about whether phenomenology is *causal* in transformative experiences or rather whether it is *associative* – that is; does phenomenology *lead* to transformation or is it better conceived as a meaningful way to interpret a life *already in* transformation? This question won’t be answered here; I was able to affirm, however, that there does indeed seem to be a connection between phenomenology and transformation (as well as with spirituality, as mentioned above). We’ll have to wait for further experience.

Copies of Two of My Postings to the KA*719 Seminar

Posting 1: “Towards a Phenomenology of Reading Phenomenology: Notes on a Required Text:”

I’d like to include this piece in the Executive Summary because I still find it to be fresh with new discovery – and it remains my only extant piece of phenomenological description. It’s written in such a way that it can be posted on my website:

The required text in question is Helmut Wagner’s “Phenomenology of Consciousness and Sociology of the Life-world,” an excellent account tracing the evolution of thought of Alfred Schutz, Wagner’s mentor. The book is adapted from a couple of seminars given in a university setting; thus it has the character of a perspicuous, sequential unfolding of terms, concepts, and theories as they are needed in the process of arriving at the grand synthesis of ideas that marks the culmination of Schutz’s thought.

Since this is my first formal introduction to “phenomenology,” that is, the study of “what is experienced inside consciousness” (p. 9), I thought it would be appropriate to describe my experiencing of the book as I was experiencing it. In this way, I might hope to gain an understanding of the activities of consciousness while involved in this kind of activity.

First of all, I like to ‘engage’ with a book like this, so full of good ideas, not simply ‘read’ it. Engaging means having a pen in hand while moving through the text, underlining those sentences or passages that appear to me particularly well-stated. Sometimes a whole paragraph will meet this criterion, or perhaps said paragraph will be a summation of a significant train of thought, in which case it will be accented with a bracket alongside, so as to bypass the need to underline every single sentence. Sometimes a sentence or phrase will appear so important that a block arrow is placed alongside, pointing to that particular conception so as to give it added prominence. In very special cases – and these appear to be those that are poignantly contributing to the ongoing evolution of my own thought processes – a conception will deserve to have a star placed beside it; only a few times in my life, two stars have been placed! Meanwhile, notes are added in the margins, or at the top or bottom of the page: these could be questions that were raised, references to other texts or authors, or sometimes the graphic re-articulation of a new word or phrase that I especially want to remember. I also have a yellow and an orange highlighter close by in case additional emphases are desired.

I take the time to describe all that here because the resulting pages amount to a record of the workings of consciousness as I move through the text. When I said above that certain moments in the reading will “appear” to be important than others, these moments are accompanied by a palpable cognitive-feeling event, a state of heightened awareness that causes me to focus extra attention on the ideas being presented. These moments no doubt require a more careful second or third reading until a desired state of comprehension has been achieved – this comprehension probably being the *integration* of the new ideas into *existing* consciousness. Needless to say, pages without much marking did not register significantly. For whatever reason, attention did not deem that discussion worthy of integration. During these times, I find myself half-reading, often with wandering thoughts or a kind of ‘split’ attention with one half going through the motion of reading the words while the other half is working on some other problem – until such time, that is, another moment of heightened awareness rises and I need to re-focus single-mindedly on the new material being presented.

With that kind of background, I can say that Wagner’s book has a fair amount of deliberate markings (i.e. significant engagements with consciousness) – especially Chapter 2: Approach to a Phenomenology of Consciousness. Here, I finally found the articulation of ideas that only had been alluded to before. For example, on a page with three arrows, I learned this important conception: “Conscious mental activity replaces spontaneity whenever it is necessary to correct apperceptive errors. Apperception, then, yields to deliberate appraisal, to a redefinition of the object...Neither the eyes nor any other sense organs are the human window to the world: apperception is. What is perceived is but the raw material to be utilized selectively in fashioning apperceptive images” (p. 54). This is exactly the kind of language I was looking for to support my ongoing project of attempting to describe the effects on consciousness of people moving through various environments – so no wonder it got three arrows! My notes wonder if it might be possible to *educate* for apperception? This ties in with a simultaneous argument in this section,

that of Gestalt: “[C]onfiguration itself is organized in such a way that its whole is perceived prior to all its details. Its parts are determined by the whole, but the whole is more than the sum of its parts. We get the *Gestalt* immediately. Details have to be sought out in a more or less deliberate effort” (p. 52). Perhaps you can imagine how important this conceptualization is for a designer of the built environment? Another one of my notes asks if it is possible to educate for the Gestalt? I guess I was thinking that if people had some understanding behind the purpose of an environmental ensemble they would more readily identify its meaning and so turn their attention to the awareness of finer details – all this influencing the consciousness of the perceiver at ever more subtle levels.

Many other ideas in this chapter offer useful contributions to the competence of a designer: “eidetics,” “intentionality,” “vantage point,” “life-world,” “multiple worlds,” etc. I only hope I read these specific sections enough times that they were indelibly integrated into consciousness! If not, there are ample markings on the pages to redirect me to my points of concern. In that sense, the subtitle of this posting, “Notes on a Required Text” is a literal statement!

In closing this introductory posting, I would like to mention that as Wagner moved into the chapters introducing sociological phenomenology, the markings on the pages grew more infrequent. This is not necessarily to confess that I was only half-reading these pages (!); it’s simply a record that consciousness was piqued more in the earlier presentations of phenomenological psychology and transcendental phenomenology – and consciousness, we are told, is invariably a subjective experience. I take this piquing, then, as a subjective direction marker. I will return to an overall assessment of Shutz’s thinking in a follow-up essay.

Keywords: design, phenomenology of reading

Posting 2-2: “Processing L’intuition de Madame Alexander:”

I like this piece because it represents a new line of thinking and one of my first efforts at integrating neurophenomenology into a description. For me, I believe this will be the wave of the future; thus, I mark here my first step into a new domain, a pronouncedly feeling domain:

During the on-line Forum for Module 2, I was intrigued by Ann Alexander’s hypothesis that there is a relationship between “emotional intelligence” and phenomenological inquiry. Since that time, I have had a chance to ponder this possibility. I offer here a few thoughts in this direction.

From what I understand, the phenomenological reduction – the *epoché* – is an effort to arrive at pure perceptual experience before it becomes filtered (i.e. distorted) by conceptual prejudice. This conceptual prejudice, we could say, is a structure of accumulated mental deliberation – prior habits of thought, opinions, rationalizations, internalized theories and concepts, etc. – that acts as a screen to any specific new perceptual experience. For example, “scientific realism” – the belief that there is an external world of discrete objects whose essential

properties can be measured empirically – is one such conceptual prejudice. While a convenient structure of consciousness, in effect assuring that there is consistency of perception over time, the conceptual prejudice actually inhibits the freshness, and in fact authenticity, of each new perceptual experience.

For the purpose of this argument, let's assume that the mental activity that generates conceptual prejudice, in all its forms, is a function of the posterior neo-cortex of the brain, the frontal lobe that accommodates deliberate rational reasoning. If this is true, then the *epoche* could be considered as an effort to suspend for a moment the contribution of this part of the brain. Taking this a step further, suspending the contribution of the neo-cortex conceivably could permit greater influence from the older, basal regions of the brain – what is often referred to as the limbic system, *the seat of emotions*. If all this is true so far, then the phenomenological reduction is seeking perceptual input from more primordial regions of the brain, and Ann's hypothesis would seem to have some merit: there *is* a relationship between emotional intelligence and phenomenological inquiry.

Mark Johnson, in his most recent book, concurs explicitly:

I contend that [the] mainstream, and still dominant, [philosophical] tradition has only the most meager resources for dealing with the deepest sources of human meaning. Consequently, much contemporary philosophy focuses exclusively on abstract conceptual and propositional structure, leaving us with a very superficial and eviscerated view of mind, thought, and language. These philosophers have developed elaborate conceptual schemes for identifying the so-called cognitive, structural, and formal aspects of experience, thought, and language, but they lack adequate philosophical resources to plumb the depths of the qualitative feeling dimensions of experience and meaning. Although some phenomenological traditions do address these affective dimensions, phenomenology has been marginalized within mainstream Anglo-American philosophy and has consequently not had the salutary influence on our conceptions of human understanding that it deserves (2007, p. x).

Switching localities, there is another way of looking at neurophysiology in relation to the phenomenological reduction. As is generally known, the left hemisphere of the brain is configured so as to accommodate linear, causal, rational thinking, as exemplified by the use of language; whereas the right hemisphere of the brain is more intuitive, wholistic, relying on pattern-recognition-type understanding.

There are places in the book *Understanding Phenomenology* (Hammond, et al., 1994) where the authors seem to suggest that phenomenological inquiry is an act of pattern recognition. Especially when discussing the existential phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1962), a body-based form of knowing is adduced – *pre-conscious* and *pre-language*:

In Part One of the Phenomenology of Perception, 'The Body,' [Merleau-Ponty] argues not only that this is not an 'object' (as defined by objective thought, and as both empiricists and intellectualists assume), but that instead it should be understood as a 'subject': more specifically, as the subject of action ('in-the-world'). But its subjectivity is not the kind envisaged by intellectualists or idealists. In particular, although like the intellectualist's subject it possesses both knowledge and intentionality, it does so in an essentially practical and 'pre-conscious' form (p. 151).

How interesting to think of phenomenological inquiry as an attempt to return to a pre-language, pre-conscious, *body*-based understanding of the world. The body doesn't decompose phenomena "into supposedly discrete, independently identifiable (and determinately describable) elements, to each of which a physiological cause is described" (p. 138) – no, this is the analytical work of the rationalizing intellect, the languaging left brain. With body-based understanding, we are more likely to compose perception as inter-relationship: "For what is perceived is a 'whole' which is not thus decomposable into discrete parts [...] these parts are not fully separable from one another. The specific character of each is influenced at least to some extent by its relations with the others in constituting this particular whole" (p. 143). We could say this work is more aligned with the processing of the right brain.

Though whole-brain inter-communication and interaction is ideal, there has been a tendency recently to over-rely on the linear processing of the rationalizing left brain – as well as the abstract symbolizing of the neo-cortex – and this over-reliance has tended to skew our civilization in a certain direction. Phenomenological inquiry, therefore, with its preference for descriptions of the life-world that come from pre-analytic modes of perception – indeed, from primal emotive sources – may very well be a perspective that could lend some balance.

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Copies of Two of My Commentaries to Other Students' Postings in the KA*719 Seminar:

I'd like to first include my commentary to Jo-Anne Clarke's posting to Module 1. I thought she was very good at introducing ethereal or numinous subjects in a straightforward, no-nonsense manner. In particular, she raised the all-important question of meditation in relation to phenomenological perception.

Posted 11 February 2011, 1:06 pm:

Hi Jo-Anne, I've been wanting to reply to your posting since you touch on something that could bring some depth to this phenomenology of consciousness discussion, and especially in its relationship to a sociology of the life-world. From what I could ascertain, you seem to negotiate a thoughtful balance between, in the language of the book, the "pragmatic" and the "transcendental." I'm so glad you introduced "meditation" because that's the first thing I thought about as I read the Phenomenology section of the book. Isn't that what meditation is? Observing the contents of consciousness? Isn't that the very purpose of phenomenology? In such a practice, are we not "researching" our own inner subjective states? I think these questions are poignant considering that all the cognitive psychologists that we've reviewed have examined their own internal states and have used these discoveries as the bases for their theories. In effect, they are assuming that other people will have similar processes - or they have to at least ask this question to begin a discussion. It seems that all the sociologists were doing the same thing: looking closely at their social relations and assuming that other people's will be similar - or at least they are asserting this by the development of their theories. Yet how do you account for discrepancies in the reporting? This brings up the question that Don raised about "types." Yet what if one of the discrepancies is the very foundation for a string of theories? For example, James assumes that there is a "stream" of consciousness and others build their theories based on this assumption. Varela, Thompson, and Rosch in "the Embodied Mind," however, convincingly question this assumption. Using the first person accounts of experienced Buddhist meditators, they say consciousness is not a stream at all; rather, mental content will appear to rise into awareness, will seem to linger for awhile and then will pass, after which time new content will arise, etc. It is only if we engage with the content that it will appear to have any continuity. Thus your introducing meditation adds an important perspective to this discussion, for what could be more phenomenological than sitting quietly and observing the mind? Maybe James was thinking at his desk when he noticed a "stream?"

I also had a question about your opinion that "there is often a big gap between personal consciousness and social action" - for isn't that what the phenomenologically influenced sociologist were attempting to claim, that social action inescapably arises from subjective experience? It makes me wonder how personal consciousness can influence the 'context' of social action. For example, if you've been meditating for 30 years, I imagine there must be a palpable sense of calmness or serenity permeating your home place. From a vibrational perspective, conflict would have a difficult time arising in such a place, simply because there is nothing for it to feed on. In that sense, I would propose that you ARE effecting social change, everywhere you go, perhaps for the whole planet itself, just by sitting there attending to your personal consciousness. I like Bart's observation to your thinking, that "striking a balance between these polarities represents a fruitful area for further exploration."

This is what your posting made me think about....

Next I wish to add my commentary to Lee Knobel's posting to Module 3. I thought Lee did a very thorough job reporting on the IPA book. I also had a question whether IPA style is more culturally meaningful in the UK, and since Lee is a Londoner, I wondered if I might imply the

association. I also wanted to make a connection with Lee because she seems to have the dream job – flying back and forth among all the capitals of Europe. Where did she find the time to transpose such a thorough report? I was happy that Lee responded with thoughtful replies to my questions.

17 March 2011, 12:38 pm

Dear Lee,

I was quite impressed with your thorough exposition of the IPA book. Indeed, if I had available your summary beforehand, I could have saved myself the hours that it took to read through the book! You seem to cover all the key concepts, pointers, connections, etc. in a concise and knowledgeable manner.

I observe that you, like Don, took notice of the image of 'unfurling' as in "an unfurling of perspectives and meanings which are unique to the person's embodied and situated relationship to the world." When I first saw this word I wondered if it had special British significance?

I thought you were perspicacious in identifying this key preliminary: "The authors remind us that the primary reason for choosing IPA over other qualitative approaches should be because it is consistent with the epistemological position of your research question." I'm glad that you pointed this out because, as a doctoral student, without an established research agenda, I tend to think the other way around; that is, let me find a research tradition that I can feel comfortable with, and then I will articulate a question that can be explored from that tradition! It's curious to think, especially after reading Valerie's review, that the authors wouldn't recommend IPA for someone who was specifically looking for phenomenological data (realizing now that not all first person accounts are necessarily phenomenological).

You also clarified a fuzzy point in my understanding with the following analysis: "Secondary research questions may be used to explore theory driven questions...they can only be answered at the later, more interpretative stage...due to the nature of the qualitative data collection process, you can never be sure that you will be able to ask them. A second tier research question infers something about the meaning of the account which is external to the account itself." This seems to be a vivid portrayal of the hermeneutic circle; yet, I wondered, since at each turn of the circle we are moving further away from the actual lived experience, does not hermeneutics tend to progressively diverge from phenomenology? In other words, is not hermeneutics best employed at the incipient stage, as a method to grasp the intuitive flash of understanding that may come in the aftermath of a significant lived experience? Maybe here I also diverge...

I also very much appreciated your recounting of the Interview Process.

So thanks again Lee for your thorough way of approaching this book review. Having read the book, your review helps me to identify the essential content. Now that this content has been identified, I'm left with more questions than ever before as I continue to move around the hermeneutic circle....

I have one parting question: what do you think of the idea of a hermeneutic "spiral?" Whereas the image of a circle suggests we keep going round and round in the same context, a spiral might convey the image of growth at each new turn...

Best Wishes,

EC Mare in Bellingham

A Paragraph or so of My Most Important Learnings from the Forum

I intended to respond to this prompt in my introduction section above. I can emphasize here that my most important learning cannot be removed from the immersion context in which it was generated.

Plans for My In-Depth Paper to Come

Previously posted on the forum:

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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