

*Consciousness and the Prospects of Physicalism* is a well-executed book that comes highly recommended. Ideas are explored with notable precision and efficiency and presented with great sensitivity to the contemporary and historical literature. A variety of original contributions are offered and, though many claims require further support, Pereboom successfully shows that the prospects for physicalism are hopeful.

**Shaun Gallagher**

*Phenomenology*

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Husserl referred to most of his published works as introductions to phenomenology, modelling for his followers the importance of repeatedly returning to phenomenology's point of departure and rearticulating its aims. For those writing introductions to phenomenology today, the task entails an added responsibility: serving as a point of access to a complex philosophical tradition. To accomplish this in a concise manner is an even greater challenge. A high degree of pedagogical skill is required in order for the material to be accessible for novice students without neglecting or oversimplifying essential philosophical ideas. In other words, the task of writing a good introduction is *to-make-the-essential-accessible-to-the-beginner*.

Two recent and popular introductions to phenomenology are already available: one by Dermot Moran (2000), the other by Robert Sokolowski (2000), both entitled *Introduction to Phenomenology*. Moran takes the reader chronologically through some of the major contributors to the tradition, whereas Sokolowski tackles the main concepts of phenomenology more directly. Gallagher and Zahavi's (2012) *The Phenomenological Mind* ought also to be mentioned: a long-anticipated text, it made phenomenology accessible at an introductory level while fostering dialogue with empirical cognitive science research.

Gallagher's (2012) *Phenomenology* parallels *The Phenomenological Mind* both in terms of its structure and its content. Nevertheless, there is also an important difference: Gallagher's new book is

broader in its scope, offering an introduction that is even more accessible to those who are encountering phenomenology for the first time. Having used the three earlier texts mentioned above in introductory phenomenology courses, I would say that *Phenomenology* (2012) is not a substitute for the other three but, rather, the first text I would propose students read.

Gallagher grounds each chapter in classical phenomenological thought and then dialogues with contemporary phenomenology and empirical cognitive science research. Each chapter is in a sense ‘front-loaded’ with Husserl or Merleau-Ponty’s ideas, which are then explored in the contemporary context. Following the structure of Gallagher’s book, I will explore the text in three sections: Part 1 of *Phenomenology* discusses the nature of phenomenology and its methods, Part 2 concerns its basic concepts, and Part 3 addresses existential and interpersonal issues.

### Part 1

Merleau-Ponty’s (1962, p. vii) preface to the *Phenomenology of Perception* is his famous effort to answer to the question ‘*What is Phenomenology?*’. Thus it does not come as a surprise that Gallagher uses the same title for his first chapter. Gallagher reviews some of the definitions of phenomenology, including those of Sokolowski and Moran, and provides an historical account of the movement. This is a challenging task; however, Gallagher addresses it by focusing on the differences between Husserl and Heidegger, a helpful approach for students. A history of phenomenological philosophy makes up the main part of the chapter, including the ups and downs of the movement in the twentieth century and its revival in relation to the cognitive sciences in the 1990s. Gallagher does not discuss phenomenological philosophy’s impacts on clinical or research psychology (see, for example, Spiegelberg, 1972; Cloonan, 1995; Giorgi, 2009); as interesting as it would have been to the psychologist, addressing the phenomenological psychological movement in Europe or the United States is beyond the scope of this book.

In introducing phenomenological philosophy it is customary to first distinguish it from naturalism and then proceed to describe Husserl’s philosophical method. Gallagher does just that in chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2, ‘*Naturalism, Transcendentalism and a New Naturalizing*’, addresses the dispute regarding whether phenomenology can be naturalized or not. Gallagher introduces Husserl’s important argument against naturalism and his proposal of a phenomenological psycho-

logy. The chapter appropriately includes an introduction to the work of Marbach and of Varela, and finally of Gallagher's own work with 'front-loading'. Front-loaded phenomenology builds on the idea that phenomenological insights can be integrated into the process of experimental design, providing for a collaborative view (between the empirical scientist and the phenomenological philosopher) of how to naturalize phenomenology (pp. 37–9). Naturalization is still the *first issue* for phenomenology and Gallagher shows its relation to contemporary cognitive neuroscience.

In chapter 3, '*Phenomenological Methods and Some Retooling*', Gallagher introduces central methodological concepts such as the *epoché*, the phenomenological reduction, and eidetic variation. Having addressed these fundamentals Gallagher turns to the importance for philosophers of challenging purely philosophical findings through an exploration of the fruits of empirical psychological research. He writes, 'Most real-world phenomena, and living bodies in particular, especially those with highly developed brains, are often too complex, unpredictable, non-linear, and so forth, for us to imaginatively vary them in an exhaustive and adequate manner' (p. 51). After acknowledging the empirical sciences, Gallagher returns to a focus on Husserl with the cautionary note that 'It is never certain that experimental controls introduced for good scientific reasons don't change the phenomenon under observation. This is, once again, the problem of factual contingency, which Husserl tried to avoid by having recourse to pure imagination' (p. 51).

Gallagher then discusses how simulation methods (as employed in, for example, evolutionary robotics) might supplement the method of eidetic variation. He closes the chapter with an introduction to the first-person approach to knowledge (and how this is different from first-person as subject matter). By the end of chapter 3 the careful reader will have acquired a clear sense of the phenomenological position regarding naturalism as well as a sense of the phenomenological philosophical method.

## Part 2

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 address the classic topics in phenomenology such as intentionality, embodiment, and time. In the chapter on intentionality (chapter 4), Gallagher reviews Brentano's work, and the well-known passages in Husserl's *Logical Investigation*, and summarizes the differences between the American West Coast and East Coast phenomenological camps regarding the meaning of the *noema*. Gallagher

also offers an alternative interpretation of intentionality, drawing upon research into embodied cognition, and presents the enactive approach, anticipating the transition to chapter 5 on embodiment.

In chapter 5, Gallagher takes on the meaning of hyletic data in Husserl and the contemporary rejection of qualia from functionalist and extended mind theorists. Gallagher describes the position of enactive theorists and the anti-representational view. He concludes, ‘What it is like *for me*, the embodied agent engaged in the world, to experience X — this is surely something that calls for further phenomenological investigation’ (p. 99, italics in original).

In chapter 6, Gallagher highlights a favourite phenomenological topic, the concept of lived-time. Appropriately he front-loads Husserl’s analysis, including the irreplaceable example of listening to a melody. As in previous chapters, Gallagher relates the topic to an enactive approach. In one particular passage Gallagher makes a distinction in regard to action that could help a beginning student understand the difference between objective time (in terms of its relation to causality) and lived-time. Gallagher states, ‘If... we reframe the question in terms of the intrinsic temporality of action, it is not something in the past that causes or determines my action; it is some anticipated possibility of the future, some goal that draws me out of my past and present circumstances and allows me to transcend, and perhaps to change, all such determinations’ (p. 113).

### Part 3

The last part of Gallagher’s text is concerned with existential topics such as the self, narratives, the lifeworld, and intersubjectivity. In chapter 7 Gallagher examines persistent inconsistencies regarding of the notion of the Self in the phenomenological literature. Gallagher guides his reader through the complex disagreements between the movement’s founders, arriving finally at the phenomenon of the minimal self. As in his recent work with Zahavi (in *The Phenomenological Mind*), the distinction between agency and ownership becomes the main focus of attention. The chapter ends with a discussion of the embodied self, including a contemporary discussion on robotics. This chapter effectively ties together themes introduced earlier in the book such as the first-person perspective and embodiment.

Chapter 8 introduces the reader to the foundational concept of the lifeworld (that was briefly mentioned in the book’s opening passages). Gallagher provides a cogent introduction to the phenomenological conception of the lifeworld, drawing upon both Husserl and

Heidegger: ‘The scientific world is a theory about the world — in the same way that metaphysics offers theories about the world. But before we try to explain the world in any kind of theoretical fashion, we are living in the world’ (p. 160). He returns to the exploration of self-agency but now in the context of action, all to set the stage for an introduction to the idea of the narrative self. In chapters 7 and 8 Gallagher is able to successfully integrate the book’s primary themes while saving the ‘big issue’ for last, the greatest *a priori* of all: intersubjectivity.

Chapter 9 opens with a discussion of transcendental intersubjectivity in Husserl’s work. The question of the possibility of knowing the other merges with more fundamental question of how we are capable of knowing anything at all. By working through Husserl’s concepts of apperception and pairing, in the context of the phenomenology of empathy, Gallagher addresses the misconception that Husserlian phenomenology is guilty of solipsism. Although solipsism was already raised and negated in the introduction, in light of the eight preceding chapters, the reader will have arrived at a fuller, more integral grasp of this critical issue. Gallagher draws from Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre in his discussion of intersubjectivity; however, he also integrates the important, contemporary work of Dan Zahavi. And of course, the chapter would not be complete without a section on social cognition and the arguments against theory-theorists and simulation theorists.

### Conclusion

For those seeking an introductory text to phenomenological philosophy that reviews the major concepts in philosophy, includes the words of the phenomenological movement’s founders, and integrates research in cognitive science with contemporary phenomenological philosophy, Gallagher’s text is an excellent resource. For those seeking an historical review of the movement, Gallagher (see p. 205) recommends Moran’s introduction. Gallagher’s *Phenomenology*, in contrast, provides students with a stimulating introduction to contemporary phenomenological philosophizing, clearly demonstrating the way in which this path of enquiry is rooted in Husserl’s work.

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