Call for Papers

Methodology in Interdisciplinary Phenomenology

June 8-10, 2020

Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center
Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, USA

Phenomenology is only accessible through a phenomenological method.
Merleau-Ponty

Keynote Speakers: Amedeo Giorgi and Dan Zahavi

The issue of methodology speaks to the very heart of the phenomenological endeavor. Such methodological issues open up in ever more intriguing ways when we apply phenomenology to fields other than philosophy. Many phenomenological philosophers have addressed a number of applied fields such as psychology, sociology and psychiatry, just as there have been many researchers with no formal training in academic philosophy who have used phenomenological thought, and methodology, in their applied fields and professions.

Recently there has been a healthy discussion about the nature of phenomenological methodology as applied beyond the disciplinary context of philosophy. Some philosophers assert that phenomenological methodology was designed only to be used for strictly philosophical questions and is therefore being misapplied when used outside of philosophy. Others would contend that philosophy, especially phenomenological philosophy, is unique in that it is always already an interdisciplinary discipline and not at all bounded in the way other disciplines are confined to a specific subject matter. It could even be claimed that phenomenological philosophy is already interdisciplinary in its orientation to knowledge. On this view, phenomenology can be understood as an essential part of any vision for a non-naturalistic approach to the social and human sciences. All views, however, would agree that some basic knowledge of phenomenological philosophy is needed if one is to do any kind of meaningful applied phenomenological research – whatever one’s field.

It is also true that philosophers conducting interdisciplinary research beyond their original training would benefit from cognizance of the literature, institutional history
and embedded research practices particular to these fields. In short, while most parties would agree that a “mutuality” of exchange between disciplines would be ideal, the exact nature of this mutuality has been rarely, if ever, spelled out.

The purpose of this meeting is to engage this important dialogue with regard to how we practice phenomenology beyond the boundaries of academic philosophy. We will ask such questions as: can one understand phenomenology without the methodological procedures that make the researcher aware of the natural attitude? Can phenomenological concepts be understood within the natural attitude and applied without a philosophical phenomenological understanding? What do we mean by qualitative phenomenological research and how is this to be distinguished from other qualitative methods that make no reference to phenomenological insights? What existing versions of applied qualitative phenomenological methodology might be more ‘successful’ than others? What are the goals and nature of good qualitative phenomenology? Do we need more integration between these existing methodologies, or should we develop new methodologies and strategies for interdisciplinary phenomenology? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, what are the unique challenges to teaching phenomenology to non-philosophically trained researchers? What is the pedagogy that is best suited to teaching phenomenology to new audiences?

As timely as this topic is to current debates in phenomenology, this year’s topic also speaks directly to the very mission of ICNAP. We welcome abstracts from all fields and disciplines, especially those that address these questions. We do, however, also want to make room for submissions that contribute to phenomenology but do not necessarily address this year’s conference theme. As such, we welcome all abstracts so long as they are phenomenological in scope.

**Deadline: February 1, 2020**
(In order to accommodate funding needs, early review is available upon request).

Abstracts of 250-500 words should be prepared for blind review (including abstract and title only) and emailed as a Word or pdf attachment to icnap2020@gmail.com. The body of the email should include the presenter’s name, discipline, and contact information.

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