

## **Microphenomenology workshop**

**Foljuif, France, 26-30 September 2016**

### **Abstracts of the presentations**

#### **Michel Bitbol**

Archives Husserl, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris

#### **Beyond Panpsychism: the radicality of phenomenology**

A central presupposition of science is that objectivity is universal. Although this presupposition is the basis of the success of scientific inquiry, it also creates a blindspot in which the conscious knower/objectifier is hidden, ignored, or surreptitiously objectified (which is tantamount to ignore it). Several strategies were accordingly adopted in the West to overcome this induced ignorance. One of them is *Phenomenology*, with its project of performing a complete suspension of judgments (*epochè*) about the alleged objective world, and evaluating any claim of knowledge, together with its activity of objectification, on the basis of lived experience. Another one is panpsychist, or rather *pan-experientialist* metaphysics, that puts back lived experience in the very domain that was deprived of it by the act of objectifying.

I will compare these approaches, thereby establishing a hierarchy of radicality between avoiding the blindspot from the outset and compensating for it retrospectively.

#### **Emily Hammond**

School of Psychology, University of Exeter

#### **Developing a microphenomenology of emotion for affective science: some preliminary reflections on methodology in practice.**

Emotions and affectivity are a fundamental aspect of human life, yet curiously, precise accounts of how emotions unfold experientially are lacking from the research literature in scientific psychology. Although current research does investigate experiential dimensions of emotionality such as granularity and complexity, these are nevertheless captured using static ratings of researcher-selected emotion terms, which significantly restricts the scope for phenomenological depth and nuance. This talk will present a study-in-progress which uses microphenomenology to explore the experiential characteristics of affective responses as they unfold. The aims of the study are two-fold: empirically, to develop a rich corpus of fine-grained phenomenological descriptions of dynamic emotion that might begin to elaborate and extend current scientific accounts, and methodologically, to identify concrete steps towards effectively applying the microphenomenological technique in the domain of affective science. To date, forty-five interviews have been conducted with established meditation practitioners on provoked affective experiences, with data collection due for completion in early September 2016. Although situated in the specific field of emotion, the central focus of the talk will be to consider the methodological practice of microphenomenology, particularly as it may apply to the concerns of experimental science. In so doing, I hope to invite shared reflections on the work at this developmental stage, and to stimulate discussion of general interest and value.  
Emily Hammond 31 August 2016

## **Eva Bojner Horwitz**

Karolinska Institute and Uppsala University, Stockholm

### **"Moving into the sound" - a micro-phenomenological case study on understanding writer's block after contemplative inquiry in movement**

**Background** This comparative study stems from a meditation exercise in contemplative inquiry performed by researchers. A master's student with writer's block was asked to perform body movements reflecting a thesis writing process over time. An interview using a phenomenological hermeneutic method was used to uncover the student's experience during the exercise, including bodily sensations, feelings, and thoughts (published elsewhere). New embodied knowledge helped the student identify and accept blocking information, and hence to overcome it.

**Method** A micro-phenomenological method developed by Petitmengin was used in a second analysis to investigate the same student's writer's block experiences in relation to a specific sound experience. The sound was recorded with the student's own voice and was the subject of analyses.

**Results** A diachronic and synchronic structure analysis of the micro phenomenological interview shows in great detail the sound process, i.e. *how* the student perceives very specific mental images and auditory, bodily, and taste sensations in relation to the sound. Specifically, we see that the student's inner sounds are triggering different body movements and gestures and not the other way around. Performing body movements during the thesis writing process was connected to the student's inner sounds. These findings suggest that the power of non-verbal ways of learning by using movements can be applied in broader areas such as research writing whereas the micro phenomenological method applied on the first person perspective can reveal a very detailed and deep understanding of specific experiences from the student's sensations and perceptions, in this case, from sounds.

**Conclusion** New embodied knowledge after contemplative inquiry in movement may be helpful in academic writing to understand obstacles in the writing process. The micro phenomenological analyses put the light on the relationship between inner sound and movement. Coping with sounds is further discussed in the study.

#### **Keywords:**

Contemplative inquiry in movement, embodied knowledge, phenomenological-hermeneutic

## **Bruna Petreca**

School of Engineering and Design, Brunel University, London

### **Design, Materials & Experience**

In this presentation I will show two different projects where the Elicitation Interview method has been used as part of the design research and practice. In design research the 'sCrIPT Toolkit' will be presented as the research outcome, which is a method to support embodied textile selection processes in design. In design practice the concept of the art direction of the project 'Diptych of the multitude: Axis and Cosmos' will be discussed, to show how the interviews supported the creative process of the art director, as well as its impact on the dancers performance. Finally, the impact of applying the Elicitation Interview method to design as a research method, but also its pedagogical and creative potential will be discussed.

## **Eva Kreikenbaum**

Basel University Hospital, Basel, Switzerland

### **Transformation by chanting and dancing. A presentation of the work of Maud Robard.**

## **Greg Walkerden**

Department of Geography and Planning, Macquarie University, Sydney

### **Microprocesses in reflective practice experiments - as methods and as topics.**

Informally, and formally, practice traditions can be carried forward via practitioners experimenting reflectively with variations to their practice (Schön 1987). Microprocess methods play a pivotal role in such research - notably micropractices for heeding and speaking from one's 'felt sense' of what 'fits' (Gendlin 1997). Four research projects using this approach illustrate different degrees of reliance on the first person skills that the researcher-practitioner(s) bring to the research process. To convey a practitioner's knowing-how - their feel for their practice - in way that keeps faith with its undeductive orderliness, and its complexity and openness, a non-standard logic is needed (Walkerden 2009). A key dilemma I am working with is: how to build a common language for articulating commonalities amongst, and contrasts between, practice traditions, given that describing a practice in a different vocabulary is explicating it, not reproducing it - what emerges is a resonant, fresh practice.