



Editorial

Invitation to Phenomenology + Pedagogy

How does one introduce a new journal? Of course one cannot help but admit a sense of accomplishment. It was not an easy birth. And it is not at all clear whether the newcomer will enjoy a rewarding life. But as with all new life, much will depend on the care we are able to muster. In a sense, a journal is much less a metaphor for a newly born than it is a metaphor for the effect a newly born has on those who brought it to life. A journal is the place where our voices are gathered for the sake of that of which we speak. Ostensibly this is a journal of research in education and the helping professions. "A human science journal" we call it. But a journal of phenomenology and pedagogy is much less the location where people publish the results of their research than it is the place where they practice it.

A journal of pedagogy then is a particular kind of commons, a space, which draws like-minded men and women to engage in certain kinds of discourse, dialogues, or conversations about the lives they live together with children, adolescents, adults, or with those, young or old, entrusted to their pedagogic care. In a sense, the articles in this journal could be read as reflexive examples of a certain thoughtfulness: a thoughtfulness of how we speak and listen to children; a thoughtfulness about the way we are in the world as men and women, mothers and fathers, but also as teachers, friends, lovers, comrades, and so forth; a thoughtfulness about the limits and possibilities of how we speak, of the languages of common sense and science; a thoughtfulness of how we construct and perpetuate the often repressive institutional and ideological environments in which we live and in which we place our children; a thoughtfulness of how we should conduct and interpret our research activities; and generally, a thoughtfulness of the principle that allows us to be principled actors in the first place.

A journal is both a record and a book of service (diurnal): in it we account for our day's work, our day's journey, and in our accounting we exemplify a devotion, we exhibit a praxis, we show how a life is to be lived. That is why journals are often known by their orientation, their program. And as the cover title announces, our interest is "phenomenological"; an awkward word perhaps, ambiguous even, but as a broad program it is readily intelligible. Phenomenology consists in the effort of regaining a fuller grasp of life, of the nature and significance of our lived experiences. Merleau-Ponty called this the program of "relearning to look at the world" by "re-awakening our basic experience of the world," and thus our efforts are aimed at re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world as we live it from day to day. This implies that we are less interested in abstracted theorizing than in understanding the forms of life and the lived experiences of which the theoretical abstractions are derivative.

Phenomenological research is the practice of thoughtfulness. Indeed, if there is one word that most aptly characterizes phenomenology itself, then this word is "thoughtfulness." To be full of thought means not that

we have a whole lot on our mind but rather that we recognize our lot of minding the Whole: that which gives life its fullness. In the works of the great phenomenologists, thoughtfulness is described as a minding, a heeding, a caring attunement—a heedful, mindful preoccupation with the project of life, of living, of what it means to live a life. For us this phenomenological interest of doing research materializes itself in our everyday practical concerns as parents, teachers, teacher educators, psychologists, child care specialists, administrators—in short pedagogues. As pedagogues we ongoingly must act responsibly and responsively in our relations with children, youth, or those with whom we stand in a pedagogic relationship. So in some sense, the theoretical practice of phenomenological research like the mundane practice of pedagogy is a ministering of thoughtfulness. Phenomenological thinking edifies the same critical thoughtfulness which serves the practical tactfulness of pedagogy itself.

The composition of the editorial board of *Phenomenology + Pedagogy* should be read as a formulation of an editorial commitment more eloquent than I can here reconstruct. It includes men and women such as Maxine Greene, Paulo Freire, Martinus Jan Langeveld, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Robert Coles, and many others deeply committed to a pedagogic form of life. We invite you as readers, writers, and social actors to become co-authors of this form of life.

On behalf of all friends of *Phenomenology + Pedagogy* I would especially like to thank Sharon Jamieson, Director of the Faculty Publication Services for believing in this project, Otilie Sanderson for her dedication and navigating in many storms, and Don McEachern for his steadfast proofreading and his enigmatic smile. Without them *Phenomenology + Pedagogy* would not have made such a promising start.