



## Conference Report

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The Tenth Annual International Conference of the Merleau-Ponty Circle met 26-28 September, 1985, at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois (USA). The conference was designed to facilitate a discussion of contemporary research on the connection between phenomenology and the human sciences, especially communicology and semiology, as inspired by problematics and thematics suggested in the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Approximately 150 persons representing fifteen disciplines including communication, political science, linguistics, sociology, semiotics, community development, and medicine attended the meeting. Participants came from eight countries such as Germany, Japan, and Poland, although the majority were from Canada and the United States. Each participant received a copy of the *Conference Proceedings* edited by Richard L. Lanigan, the conference coordinator. The local organizing committee, the "Southern Circle of Phenomenologists," included Lanigan, Thomas Pace, and James Jasinski (Dept. of Speech Communication). Hans Rudnick and Thomas Miller (Dept. of English), and Garth Gillan and Stephen Tyman (Dept. of Philosophy) and Jnan Bhattacharyya (Dept. of Community Development).

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The conference keynote paper entitled "Machine Knowledge and Human Perception: Representation and Intuition" was presented by Elmar Holenstein, Institute of Philosophy, Ruhr University at Bochum. A cognate program session entitled "Artificial Intelligence, Cognitive Science, and Phenomenology" included Hwa Yol Jung's (Moravian College) paper "A Critique of Autonomous Technology: Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenological Argument Reconsidered," Michael Presnell's (Tulane University) paper: "Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy of Mind-Body Dialectic: A Critique of Computational Theories of Mind," Stephan T. Mayo's (Molloy College) paper "Exorcizing the Tacit Homunculus: A Comparison of Daniel Dennett and Merleau-Ponty," and Catherine W. Kaha's (University of Illinois) paper "The Prereflective: To the Other Side of Reason."

The conference included a program session devoted to self-critique entitled "A Phenomenology of Phenomenology" with a paper by Martin C. Dillon (State University of New York-Binghamton) entitled "Merleau-Ponty and the Transcendence of Immanence: Overcoming the Ontology of Consciousness," a paper by Stephen Watson (Notre Dame University) entitled "We must form a new idea of reason: Merleau-Ponty and Phenomenology," and one by Hugh J. Silverman (State University of New York-Stony Brook) on "Hermeneutics and Interrogation."

A special program on "Semiotic Phenomenology" featured papers by Gail Weiss (Yale University) on "Gesture, Expression, and Communication: A Study in the Thought of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and George Herbert Mead," Algis Mickunas (Ohio University) on "Merleau-Ponty in Greimas' Semiotics" and Michael Smith (Berry College) on "Some Pedagogical Implications of Merleau-Ponty's Description of Language."

"The Phenomenology of Television" was a program featuring an ongoing research interest in the Department of Speech Communication at Southern Illinois University and included Eric E. Peterson's (University of Maine-Orono) paper "The Child's Relations with Television" and Jenny Nelson's (Southern Illinois University) paper "Reruns: Merleau-Ponty and Televisual Perception." A special program was devoted to the problematic of "The Body and Embodiment" with presentations by Ernest Sherman (Pace University), "Good Narcissism or How to Philosophize with the Body," Carole Spitzack (Tulane University), "Controlling Body Space: A Case of Disguised Powerlessness," Drew Leder (State University of New York-Stony Brook), "Flesh and Blood," and David M. Levin (Northwestern University), "The Transpersonal: An Existential Development of Prepersonal Life."

The conference included a plenary session discussion on the topic "The Phenomenological Interrogation of Nature" initiated by a paper presented by David Abram (Yale University; SUNY-Stony Brook) entitled "The Perceptual Implications of Gaia." The three day meeting of the Merleau-Ponty Circle concluded with a program session on "The Phenomenology of Art." Four papers were read, Anthony J. Steinbock (State University of New York-Stony Brook) speaking on "Artist, Revolutionary, Hero," Galen A. Johnson (University of Rhode Island) speaking on "Merleau-Ponty's Aesthetics of History," S. Mallin (York University) discussing "The Ontology of the Line through Sierra's Sculpture," and Robert Burch (University of Alberta) offering "A Reflection on Art and Truth: Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger."

The business meeting of the Merleau-Ponty Circle established a permanent secretariat care of Martin C. Dillon at the Department of Philosophy, University Center at Binghamton, State University of New York, Binghamton, New York 13901 USA. The 1986 meeting of the Merleau-Ponty Circle will be held at Notre Dame University. Proposals for programs and papers should be sent to the conference coordinator, Stephen Watson, Department of Philosophy, Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556 USA.