MAXINE SHEETS-JOHNSTONE
University of Oregon
msj@uoregon.edu

ON THE ORIGIN, NATURE, AND GENESIS OF HABIT

abstract

This article details fundamental aspects of habits, beginning with the fact that habits are dynamic patterns that are learned, and that in coincidence with this learning, habits of mind are formed, as in the formation of expectations, thus of certain if/then relationships. It points out that, in quite the opposite manner of the practice of phenomenology, the strange is made familiar in the formation of habits. It shows how clear-sighted recognition of the seminal significance of movement and phenomenologically-grounded understandings of movement are essential to understandings of habits and the habits of mind that go with them. The article differentiates non-developmentally achieved habits from developmentally achieved habits, but elucidates too the relationship between instincts and habits. It elucidates the relationship in part by showing how, contra Merleau-Ponty, "in man" there is a "natural sign"—or rather, natural signs. By relinquishing an adultist stance and delving into our common infancy and early childhood, we recognize the need for what Husserl terms a "regressive inquiry" and thereby recover 'natural signs' such as smiling, laughing, and crying. At the same time, we honor Husserl's insight that "habit and free motivation intertwine." As the article shows, resolution of the relationship between habit and free motivation requires recognition of nonlinguistic corporeal concepts that develop in concert with synergies of meaningful movement, concepts and synergies achieved not by embodied minds but mindful bodies.

keywords

Dynamic patterns, habits of mind, kinesthesia, tactile-kinesthetic body, instincts, infancy and early childhood, freely motivated and freely moving

ON THE ORIGIN, NATURE, AND GENESIS OF HABIT

MAXINE SHEETS-JOHNSTONE *University of Oregon*

Brushing one's teeth, tying a shoelace or knot, hammering a nail and not one's thumb, writing one's name, walking down stairs—each is a distinctive qualitative dynamic, a sequence of movements that has a distinctive beginning, a distinctive contour with distinctive intensity changes, for example, and a distinctive end. Each is a dynamic pattern of movement. We are born with none of these dynamic patterns, which is to say that they are not ready-made or innate in any sense. Each is learned.

There is a lesson to be learned from this existential truth, namely, that whatever habits we develop in what we do and the way we do things, they exist because we learn the dynamics that constitute them, whether by trial and error, by assiduous practice, by resting and taking up the challenge again at a later time, or whatever. The mode of one's learning may vary, but the formation of a habit in each instance is basically an enlargement of one's kinetic repertoire, which is to say that one can form a habit only by learning a new dynamic pattern of movement. In the beginning, the formation is ordinarily a spontaneous developmental given, i.e., infants are not told how to do such and such nor are they told they must learn to do such and such in the first place—they would not understand anyway if they were *told*, for infants are precisely "without speech." Infants indeed initiate their own learning by first of all learning their bodies and learning to move themselves (Sheets-Johnstone 1999a/expanded 2nd ed. 2011). They do so without an owner's manual as well as without instructions from others, a manual that would state, for example, 'lift and move your right foot forward, then gradually take weight on it as you peel off your left foot-- the foot that is now behind you--from heel to toe,' and so on, and so on. Infants learn quite by themselves to reach effectively, to grasp objects effectively, to walk, to feed themselves, and ultimately, to talk and thereby exceed their classification as infants. Habits of mind proceed in concert with these habit-formed and -informed accomplishments, most basically in expectations, i.e., in if/then relationships, of which more presently.

The formation of habits proceeds in just the opposite manner of the practice of phenomenology. In doing phenomenology, that is, in following its methodology, we not only make the familiar strange, but do so in part by disenfranchising our habits, i.e., by bracketing, by "renounc[ing] all erudition, in a lower or higher sense" (Husserl 1989, p. 96). Across the spectrum of human cultures, that is, in the most basic ontological sense

that includes every human, habits are indeed a matter of *having made the strange familiar.* That familiarity becomes ingrained in what Husserl terms the psychophysical unity of animate organisms and their ways of living in the world. In more precise terms, habits develop by bringing what was out of reach and/or beyond understanding effectively and efficiently into the realm of the familiar and into what are basically synergies of meaningful movement that run off by themselves. Habits are indeed grounded from the beginning in movement, that is, in the primal animation of animate organisms that gives rise to sensings and sense-makings that evolve into synergies of meaningful movement and habits of mind. It is hardly any wonder, then, that foundational understandings of habit, its origin, nature, and genesis, are rooted in a "regressive inquiry" (Husserl 1970, p. 354) into ontogenetic life, or what Fink terms a "constructive phenomenology" (Fink 1995, p. 63).

In the course of their learning their bodies and learning to move themselves effectively and efficiently, infants form certain ways of "doing" that generate an ever-expanding repertoire of "I cans" (Sheets-Johnstone 1999a/expanded 2nd ed. 2011, Chapter 5). We might recall in this context Husserl's and Landgrebe's emphasis on the fact that "I move" precedes "I do" and "I can" (Husserl 1989, p. 273; Landgrebe 1977, pp. 107-108). Certain ways of "doing" are indeed constituted in and by certain qualitatively inflected movement dynamics that inform an infant's "I cans," dynamics that create particular spatio-temporal-energic patterns. Just as infants nurse in distinctive ways and kick their legs in distinctive ways, so they ultimately learn to walk in distinctive ways, which is to say that the qualitative dynamics of one infant's movements are different from that of another. Ways of moving are indeed individualized. Moreover qualitatively inflected movement dynamics feed into a certain *style*, of which more later. What is of immediate moment here is that self-generated dynamics are the foundation of developmentally achieved habits.

Developmentally achieved habits are to be distinguished from non-developmentally achieved habits, that is, habits that are not cultivated from the beginning through learnings of one kind and another. The distinction between walking and smiling or laughing is one such distinction. One does not learn to smile or laugh: smiling and laughter, like crying, are spontaneous movement patterns that arise on their own. Such spontaneous human movement patterns are in fact quite remarkable. As Darwin succinctly observed, "Seeing a Baby (like Hensleigh's) smile & frown, who can doubt these are instinctive—child does not sneer" (Darwin 1987, Notebook M, No. 96, p. 542). Darwin's observation is in fact of moment: the

relationship between instincts—what is "instinctive"--and habits warrants attention.

Instincts, like habits, are distinctive qualitatively inflected dynamic patterns. Those patterns, however, arise on different grounds. As specified and discussed in detail elsewhere with respect to infants and animate forms of life more generally (Sheets-Johnstone 2008, pp. 349-367), what Merleau-Ponty terms "natural signs," including "the realm of instinct," are part of the heritage of humans, Merleau-Ponty's dismissal of them to the contrary. As noted in that discussion, "When Merleau-Ponty writes that 'in man there is no natural sign', and that '[i]t would be legitimate to speak of "natural signs" only if the anatomical organization of our body produced a correspondence between specific gestures and given "states of mind"' (Merleau-Ponty 1962, pp. 188-189), he is surprisingly oblivious of the dynamic congruity that binds movement and emotions, the kinetic and the affective (Sheets-Johnstone 1999b/2009). A nervous laugh might simply burst forth, for example, when one feels less than full assurance about what one is doing or how one is to answer to a question, just as a free lower leg might begin swinging or jiggling when one is seated and feeling bored or eager to get up and leave a lecture or meeting of some kind. While such bodily happenings might not be countenanced as instincts, they are without doubt natural signs, instances of spontaneous, involuntarily produced movements--"specific gestures"--tied to affective feelings--"given 'states of mind'." Adult instances aside, with respect to infant life, smiling, laughing, and crying are clearly the spontaneous expression of human nature: they are natural signs. They are, as Darwin indicates, instinctive beginning forms of sociality that are spontaneously generated; they are neither self-taught nor other-taught. They may certainly be honed, however, and in habitual intentional ways, as when an infant cries because it has learned all by itself that crying brings its mother or caretaker to it, or, when as a child in later years, it learns to feign a smile when greeting a certain adult person it does not like, or, when as an adult in still later years, it learns to restrain a laugh at a child's continuing awkwardness in order not to dissuade him or her from trying to do something. As is evident by such cries, feignings, and restrainings, humans can and do develop certain habits by choice on the basis of what was originally instinctive. Instincts may thus be the generating ground of habits, precisely as in crying to bring someone to you, in feigning a smile at someone you actually dislike, or in restraining a laugh in deference to embarrassing another. Moreover somatic responses (Johnstone 2012, 2013) such as shivering from cold are natural signs that may generate a habitual running to get a sweater or slippers, or to close

a window or turn up the thermostat, or in other words, to do something rather than nothing in fear that one might be catching a cold. In short, what is basically instinctive and thus involuntary becomes open to modulations in later years, that is, to voluntary implementations that may and often do become habitual in certain circumstances.

Wholly voluntary learnings have no such roots in instincts or instinctive dispositions. Indeed, when children and adults voluntarily take up a new skill and in the process form new qualitatively inflected dynamic patterns that become habitual —when they learn to write, to type, to jump rope, to play the clarinet, to drive, to make a surgical incision, and so on— their learnings have no underlying 'natural signs'. In actual practice, however, their learned patterns are also modulated according to circumstance; they are open to variation depending on the particular situation of the moment and altered accordingly, as in making an abdominal incision or a spinal incision, or as in writing one's name with a piece of chalk on a blackboard or signing one's name with a pen on a house purchase contract.

There is a basic dimension of instincts, however, that warrants attention. In their pristine mode, i.e., before being possibly transformed by learnings of one kind and another, instincts are properly analyzed as self-organizing dynamics that flow forth experientially in spontaneous movement dispositions, thus basically, not just the spontaneous movement disposition of a fetus to move its thumb toward its mouth and not toward its ear or navel, for example, but *the spontaneous disposition to move in and of itself in the first place*, including movement of the neuromuscular system itself as it forms in utero. Such movement is not "action" nor is it "behavior." It is the phenomenon of movement *pure and simple*—a phenomenon that in truth is not so simple when analyzed phenomenologically in descriptive experiential terms, that is, as a phenomenon in its own right. Indeed, this pure and simple phenomenon is incredibly complex, far more complex than the terms 'action' or 'behavior' suggest when they are implicitly and largely unwittingly used in its place, as in talk and writings of "action in perception" (Nöe 2004). Along similar lines, neither does "embodied movement" come close to a recognition of the phenomenological complexity of movement, even as in an attempt to abbreviate Husserl's consistent specification of the two-fold articulation of perception and movement (Husserl 1989) by stating, "Our embodied movement participates in seeing, touching, hearing, etc., thereby informing our perceptual grasp on the world" (Gallagher and Zahavi 2012, p. 109).

Husserl did not plumb the dynamic depths and complexities of movement, understandably so, however. His central though certainly not exclusive

concern was cognition and the build-up of our knowledge of the world. He certainly did realize the complexity of what he consistently termed "affect and action" and the fact that he did not explicate them fully, terming them at one point simply "the root soil," "*the background that is prior to all comportment*" (Husserl 1989, p. 292, p. 291, respectively). Moreover however briefly, he certainly did grasp the centrality of body movement to soul, to performance, to production, and to style. With respect to the integral connection of body movement and soul, he writes, "Each movement of the Body is full of soul, the coming and going, the standing and sitting, the walking and dancing, etc. Likewise, so is every human performance, every human production." In a Supplement to this section of *Ideas II*, he observes that "products and works" such as wielding a stick or writing a book "take on the spirituality of the Body," that products and works are "psycho-physical unities; they have their physical and their spiritual aspects, they are physical things that are 'animated." (Husserl 1989, pp. 252, 333, respectively). Psychophysical unity and animation indeed go hand in hand (Sheets-Johnstone forthcoming 2014).

Precisely in his emphasis on *animation* and in his not just consistent but pivotal concern with *animate organisms* throughout his writings, Husserl's observations are clearly a beginning entry into the complex phenomenology of movement and its relation to instinct and habit, and this both in recognition of, and in going beyond the fact that "I move" precedes "I do" and "I can." In particular, Husserl notes that, "In original genesis, the personal Ego is constituted not only as a person determined by *drives*, from the very outset and incessantly driven by *original 'instincts'* and passively submitting to them, but *also as a higher, autonomous, freely acting* Ego, in particular one guided by rational motives, and not one that is merely dragged along and unfree. Habits are necessarily formed, just as much with regard to originally instinctive behavior (in such a way that the power of the force of habit is connected with the instinctive drives) as with regard to free behavior" (Husserl 1989, p. 267). In short, to yield to a drive establishes a habit just as "to let oneself be determined by a value-motive and to resist a drive establishes a tendency . . . to let oneself be determined once again by such a value-motive (and perhaps by value-motives in general) and to resist these drives" (ibid.). He points out explicitly that "Here *habit and free motivation intertwine*. Now, if I act freely, then I am indeed obeying habit too" (ibid., pp. 267-68). In effect, what I freely choose to do and do again that leaves a natural disposition or instinct behind is itself a habit: my freely-formed movement itself in virtue of its repeated patterning is in a basic sense habitual.

This existential reality is of moment for it indicates a substantively significant cognitive dimension in the formation of habits and in habits themselves. In more explicit terms, the intertwining of habit and free motivation and movement implicitly suggests habitual patterns of mind--habitual ways of valuing and of thinking. Given the fact that "consciousness of the world . . . is in constant motion" (Husserl 1970, p. 109), these habitual ways can hardly be ignored. Habits of mind are surely spurred by expectations, for example, most basically by what Husserl terms 'if-then' relationships (Husserl, e.g., 1989, p. 63), and correlatively by what infant psychiatrist and clinical psychologist Daniel Stern terms "consequential relationships" (Stern 1985, pp. 80-81) and what child psychologist Lois Bloom terms "relational concepts" (Bloom 1993, pp. 50-52). Insofar as these relationships are foundational-- "if I close my eyes, it is dark"; "if I move my lips and tongue in certain ways, I make and hear certain sounds"--it is not surprising that the relationships are foundational to everyday human habits, such as closing one's eyes to go to sleep or when a light is too bright, and saying the words "No" and "Yes." Just such kinesthetically felt and cognized experiences ground the faculty that Husserl identifies as the "*I-can* of the subject" (Husserl 1989, p. 13), a faculty that engenders a repertoire of abilities and possibilities that are indeed in many everyday instances habitual. More finely put in phenomenological terms, tactile-kinesthetic awarenesses and their invariants are realized in basic if/then relationships that we spontaneously discover in infancy in learning our bodies and learning to move ourselves. Tactile-kinesthetic awarenesses are thus a central aspect of animation, a tactile-kinesthetic built-in of life, a vital dimension in the formation of habits.

That expectations are indeed basic to animate forms of life can hardly be doubted, not only in such ordinary realities that if I turn my head and twist my torso, then a different profile of the object at which I am looking comes into view, and not only in such commonly passed over realities that 'if I close my eyes, it is dark', but in hearing a strange rustling in the midst of silence or in smelling smoke. In other words, habits of mind are also spurred by happenings and by particular valuings and thoughts that follow in response to those happenings that become standard. Though they are open to possible variations according to circumstance, they retain their basic dynamic: the bodily-felt dynamic of apprehension, for example, or of suspicion, and so on. In this regard they might evolve in the form of 'wondering if', for example, or 'thinking that', precisely as when one hears a strange rustling in the midst of silence and straightaway 'wonders if ...' or smells smoke and straightaway 'thinks that...' Moreover habits of mind may

be defensive as well as expectant. Ernest Becker, a cultural anthropologist who elaborated on Otto Rank's conception of truth-seeking as an immortality ideology—Rank was a one-time disciple of Freud-- captured this defensive habit of mind in a striking way when he wrote about "the life-and-death viciousness of all ideological disputes": "Each person nourishes his immortality in the ideology of self-perpetuation to which he gives his allegiance; this gives his life the only abiding significance it can have. No wonder men go into a rage over the fine points of belief: if your adversary wins the argument about truth, *you die*. Your immortality system has been shown to be fallible, your life becomes fallible" (Becker 1975, p. 64). It is of interest to note that Husserl at one point gives voice to how what Becker terms an "allegiance" can be an obstacle to one's vision and understanding. He does so with respect to a "zoologist and naturalistic psychologist," each of whom is so wedded to the "*scientific* attitude" or to "'Objective' reality" that "[h]e wears the blinders of habit" (Husserl 1989, p. 193; italics and quote marks in original). The blinders of habit are clearly not limited to scientists, but include those whose "allegiance" deters them from considering findings, perspectives, or ideas different from, or inimical to their own.

As the above examples suggest, through investigations of habits of mind with full phenomenological rigor, one might come to a description of mental tendencies and dispositions in valuing and thinking. Yet such an investigation might be met with skepticism since it is possible that, even with the practice of free variation, mental tendencies and dispositions exist beyond one's individual phenomenological capacities. In essence, one might thus skeptically claim that there is no valuing and thinking 'morphology' of humans akin to the real-life flesh and bone morphology of humans.[1]Insofar as phenomenological inquiries are open to verification, however, elaborations, amendments, corrections, and so on, are certainly possible and in fact to be cultivated if phenomenology is to prosper. Furthermore habits of mind fruitfully investigated phenomenologically might be authenticated and possibly even refined through Buddhist Theravada meditation practice. Such practice has basic methodological and experiential similarities with phenomenology (Sheets-Johnstone 2011a). It might thus be affirmed that whatever an individual's limitations might be with respect to encompassing a full-scale phenomenological description of habits of mind, that investigation is open both to verification by other phenomenologists and to habits of mind discovered through a different method of inquiry and study that has the possibility of complementing a phenomenological investigation

1 For perhaps similar reasons, some might claim that there is no" emotions morphology" of humans en par with the real-life flesh and bone morphology of humans.

and possibly even expanding its insights.

Concerns about a morphology of mind notwithstanding, the above discussion and examples indicate that habits of mind may be and commonly are formed coincident with kinetic habits, and from the beginning in learning one's body and learning to move oneself. The full-scale realities of habit are indeed psycho-physical in nature and develop in concert with experience. They are at once cognitively, affectively, and kinetically dynamic: they flow forth with varying intensities, amplitudes, and perseverations in each of these dimensions of animate life and at the same time as a singular whole in the habit itself. That Husserl writes often of the "intertwining" of body and soul is revealing in this respect, perhaps most decisively when he affirms that "the unity of man encompasses these two components not as two realities externally linked with one another but instead as most intimately interwoven and in a certain way mutually penetrating (as is in fact established)" (Husserl 1989, p. 100).

In sum, what comes to mind may be and not uncommonly is habitual in some degree, as the above examples indicate and as psychological renditions of associations might furthermore show. The idea that habits of mind exist, however, might pose conundrum. Such habits seem both to affirm and to contradict the fact that thoughts simply arise. Aficionados of *the brain* might claim that the affirmation and contradiction attest to the hegemonic nature of the brain; that is, they might latch on to the conundrum as a validation of the monarchical status of *the brain* and its right to experiential ascriptions such as "If you see the back of a person's head, the brain infers that there is a face on the front of it" (Crick and Koch 1992: 153). The habit of inferring arises and the thought "a face on the front of it" arises because the brain infers and says as much. This rather comically eccentric not to say preposterously homuncular metaphysics is clearly at odds with experience[2]. However much thoughts may and do simply arise, we are able to concentrate attention on a text, on a report, on a paper we are writing, on a puzzle we are trying to solve, on a fugue or nocturne we are trying to learn, and so on. We are at the same time, however, something akin to passengers with respect to what turns up in the process of our concentrated attention—a wayward concern about an upcoming meeting, a recurring concern about how a sick child is doing, a resurging regret about not having done something earlier. Yet

2 State ments of neurobiolo gist Semir Zeki and neurologists Antonio and Hanna Damasio engender a similarly quirky metaphysics: "An object's image varies with distance, yet the brain can ascertain its true size" (Zeki 1992: 69); "To obtain its knowledge of what is visible, the brain ... must actively construct a visual world" (Zeki 1992: 69); "When stimulated from within the brain, these systems [neural systems in the left cerebral hemisphere that "represent phonemes, phoneme combinations and syntactic rules for combining words"] assemble word-forms and generate sentences to be spoken or written" (Damasio and Damasio 1992: 89).

though thoughts outside our concentration may and do arise, we surely control "turning toward," as Husserl emphasizes, just as he emphasizes that we control our attention to something, that is, our interest (or disinterest) in something, and we of course control what we choose to do or not to do. We are indeed *freely-motivated* and *freely-moving* (e.g., Husserl 2001, p. 283). These dual facts of human life are obviously of pivotal importance to our understandings of habit. Supposing we are sufficiently attuned to our affective/tactile-kinesthetic bodies, we can, for example, choose to change our habit of turning only toward certain things and not others, or of finding interest in only certain things and not others, or of doing only certain things and not others. These dual facts of human life are of pivotal importance as well to understandings of habit and its relation to *style*.
Husserl deftly and succinctly captures the relation of habit to style when he writes, "Every man has his character, we can say, his style of life in affection and action, with regard to the way he has of being motivated by such and such circumstances. And it is not that he merely had this up to now; the style is rather something permanent, at least relatively so in the various stages of life, and then, when it changes, it does so again, in general, in characteristic way such that, consequent upon these changes, a unitary style manifests itself once more" (1989, p. 283). That habits are breakable, so to speak, and that any particular habit can be replaced by a different habit means that one's style of life is precisely changeable with respect to what Husserl terms "*affection and action*." Husserl's common meaning of affection is tethered to "allure" and motivations (Husserl 2001, p. 196), that is, to 'turning toward' and 'interest'. He writes, for example, of receiving "some joyful tiding and liv[ing] in the joy," pointing out that "Within the joy, we are "intentionally" (with feeling intentions) turned toward the joy-Object as such in the mode of affective 'interest'" (Husserl 1989, p. 14).
Such investigations and findings conflict with present-day phenomenological studies that pass over kinetic and affective realities, and this in part because they unwittingly pass over ontogenetic realities of human life, choosing instead a perspective that is in truth adultist. Gallagher and Zahavi, for example, affirm that "[T]he sense of agency is not reducible to awareness of bodily movement or to sensory feedback from bodily movement. Consistent with the phenomenology of embodiment, in everyday engaged action afferent or sensory-feedback signals are attenuated, implying a recessive consciousness of our body." They cite Merleau-Ponty (1962) as a reference and conclude, "I do not attend to my bodily movements in most actions. I do not stare at my hands as I decide to use them; I do not look at my feet as I walk." Their apparent unwitting

appeal to vision and neglect of kinesthesia is both telling and puzzling. Why would one stare at his or her hands in deciding "to use them" any more than one would look as one's feet as one walks unless there was a pathological condition of some kind[3]. In short, when phenomenologists write as knowledgeable adults without ever stopping to ask themselves how they came to be the knowledgeable adults they are--using their hands to grasp a cup or towel, walking along a trail or down the street--and in turn, offer fine-grained phenomenological descriptions of same, they pass over the need for a full-scale constructive phenomenology, a phenomenology that might indeed at times embrace a genetic phenomenology, the latter in the sense of determining how we come to the meanings and values we do.

A full-scale constructive phenomenology necessarily addresses the question of familiarity, in particular, the nature of that familiarity that undergirds habits having to do with using my hands, for example, and walking. How indeed is it that reaching for a glass or throwing a ball, or walking or skipping, or moving in all the myriad habitual ways we move in our everyday lives, run off as what famed neurologist Aleksandr Romanovich Luria termed "kinesthetic melodies" (Luria 1966, 1973)? How is it that these melodies, with all their variations with respect to particular situations and circumstance, become engrained in kinesthetic memory? How indeed--except on the basis of *familiar qualitative dynamic patterns*, particularly inflected patterns of movement that run off in a way not dissimilar from the way that Husserl describes internal time consciousness "running off"? Movement, like time, is a "temporal Object," and temporal Objects "appear" in a wholly different way from "appearing objects": they are precisely "running-off phenomena" (Husserl 1964, p. 48; see also Sheets-Johnstone 2003, 2012, forthcoming 2014). Familiar qualitative dynamic patterns are just such phenomena. We may thus ask how, other than as learned patterns of movement, patterns learned in infancy and early childhood, such familiar qualitative dynamic patterns come to be? As pointed out earlier, infants and young children learn their bodies and learn to move themselves in myriad ways in the course of growing. In effect, when present-day phenomenologists overlook ontogeny, they overlook the very ground of that adult knowledge that allows them to claim "a recessive consciousness of our body" and to state, "I do not attend to my bodily movements in most actions." Indeed, an adultist stance seems generally to allow a distanced stance with respect to the body: "The body tries to stay out of our way so that we can

3 One might be inclined to think that Gallagher and Cole's study of Ian Waterman, a person who "does not know, without visual perception, where his limbs are or what posture he maintains" (Gallagher 2005, p. 44), has unwittingly influenced phenomenological practice and in this instance compromised it.

get on with our task" (Gallagher and Zahavi 2012, p. 163)[4].
A veritable phenomenological analysis of what is going on "in most actions" shows something quite different. It shows that, whether a matter of walking or eating or dressing ourselves or drying ourselves after a shower, or whether a matter of myriad other everyday "actions, the dexterity, the precision, the fluidity, and so on, that are necessary to the "action" running off are engrained in kinesthetic memory in the form of an ongoing qualitative dynamic that is spontaneously inflected and modulated according to circumstance, an ongoing qualitative dynamic that was learned and cultivated in earlier years and is now so dynamically familiar that it runs off by itself. In short, whatever the everyday adult actions, their dynamic familiarity is anchored in the tactile-kinesthetic body and thus in kinesthetic memory. Their formal reality is in part related quite precisely to Husserl distinction between an appearing Object and a running off Object: staring at one's hands in deciding to use them or looking at one's feet in walking are not equivalent to everyday synergies of meaningful movement, synergies that were honed from infancy and early childhood on and that adult humans reap in the form of "getting on with our task." It is indeed not that the body "tries to stay out of our way," but that in learning our bodies and learning to move ourselves, we have amassed an incredibly varied and vast repertoire of I cans. To overlook ontogeny is thus to fail to ask oneself basic questions concerning one's adult knowledge and in turn foil foundational elucidations of habit. It should be added that neither does Merleau-Ponty asks himself ontogenetic questions, basically *genetic phenomenology* questions, nor does he, in his discussion of habit, provide answers to the question of how habits come to be formed. On the contrary, Merleau-Ponty declares simply that habit is "knowledge in the hands" (1962, p. 144) even though in the previous sentence he declares that "habit is neither a form of knowledge nor an involuntary action" (ibid.).
Gallagher and Zahavi's reliance on Merleau-Ponty is in fact disconcerting, and this because, again, quite to the contrary, movement "pure and simple" does not surface with phenomenological clarity and depth in Merleau-Ponty's writings. Without this surfacing, genuine phenomenological understandings of habit are kept at bay. In a long footnote, for example, in which he tries to explain how motion, "which acts as a background to every act of consciousness, comes to be constituted," Merleau-Ponty

4 We might in fact ask whether it is "the body" that "tries to stay out of our way," or "we" who try to keep the body out of our way, or what "our way" would be had we not learned our bodies and learned to move ourselves and in the process forged those myriad familiar dynamic patterns that inform our everyday lives and that run off so effectively without our having to monitor them.

writes, "The consciousness of my gesture, if it is truly a state of undivided consciousness, is no longer consciousness of movement at all, but an incommunicable quality which can tell us nothing about movement" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 276). Moreover his earlier appeal to "the bird which flies across my garden" (ibid., p. 275) actually confuses movement with objects in motion (for a phenomenological clarification of the distinction between movement and objects in motion, see Sheets-Johnstone 1979) and leads him simply to posit "[p]re-objective being." In short, Merleau-Ponty too passes over *the qualitative dynamics inherent in kinesthetic experience*, which indeed are "incommunicable" only if one disregards them. Merleau-Ponty in fact dismisses kinesthesia outright when he affirms that "As a mass of tactile, labyrinthine and kinaesthetic data, the body has no more definite orientation than the other contents of experience" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, pp. 287-288) and when, in his attempt to fathom the complexities of movement in relation to learning, he simply states, "a movement is learned when the body has understood it" (ibid., [1945], p. 139). His statement is in fact an unacknowledged near quotation from Henri Bergson who wrote almost fifty years earlier, "A movement is learned when the body has been made to understand it" (Bergson 1991 [1896], p. 112). His continuing statement that a movement is learned when the body "has incorporated it into its 'world'," and that "to move one's body is to aim at things through it" is taken up explicitly by Gallagher and Zahavi. They declare, "[W]e are normally prepared to describe our habitual or practised (sic) movements as actions. I would say that 'I hit the ball' or 'I played one of Beethoven's sonatas', rather than 'the arm (or fingers) changed position in space'. But in this case the movements are at some level conscious. They are teleological *actions* which contain a reference to the objects at which they aim (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 139)" (Gallagher and Zahavi, p. 174).

A description of our "habitual or practiced movements" does not of course have to be, or even "normally" is, in the past tense any more than it has to be described "normally" in terms of action. Phenomenological descriptions hew fairly consistently to the present tense of the experience they are describing, taking into account its temporal flow and how the experience comes to be constituted. Furthermore, if "habitual or practiced movements" are to be elucidated phenomenologically, they warrant bona fide phenomenological descriptions that, rather than packaging them in *actions*, do justice to their particular and unique qualitative dynamics—whether a matter of hitting a ball, hammering a nail, playing one of Beethoven's sonatas, or playing Liszt's Liebestraum No. 3. Further still, doing phenomenological justice to "habitual or practiced movements"

means realizing that *movement is not a matter of body parts having "changed position in space."* By its very nature, movement is neither positional nor is it simply spatial. Movement is a phenomenon in its own right, a spatio-temporal-energic phenomenon that is clearly distinguishable in essential ways from objects in motion, which do change position in space. To do phenomenological justice to the phenomenon of movement requires opening one's eyes not to positional awarenesses but to the dynamics of *change* (for a phenomenological analysis of movement, see Sheets-Johnstone 1966/1979 and 1980; Sheets-Johnstone 1999a/expanded 2nd ed. 2011).

The underlying problem in all these purported phenomenological descriptions of movement is a basic ignorance of movement "pure and simple," meaning that complex qualitatively dynamic phenomenon that is opaquely subsumed in various and sundry ways in action, behavior, and embodiment, and that is furthermore mistakenly described as an object in motion and thus relegated to what amounts to no more than positional information of one kind and another. Habits, both general human ones and highly personal human ones, are not reducible to changes of position unless, of course, one is referring to an attempt to change one's habit of slouch-sitting to erect-sitting, for example. Even then, kinesthesia cannot be ignored: that pan-human sense modality is integral to the change, not only to felt changed tensions but to changes in body line, i.e., changes in the linear design of one's body that, as experienced, are dependent in part on one's imaginative consciousness (on this latter topic, see Sheets-Johnstone 2011b). Moreover kinesthesia can hardly be ignored since it, along with tactility, is the first sensory modality to develop neurologically in utero (Windle 1971) and, barring accidents, is there for life. Indeed it is *an insuppressible sensory modality*. As well-revered and internationally-known neuroscientist Marc Jeannerod concluded in the context of examining "conscious knowledge about one's actions" and experimental research that might address the question of such knowledge, including experimental research dealing with pathologically afflicted individuals, "There are no reliable methods for suppressing kinesthetic information arising during the execution of a movement" (Jeannerod 2006, p. 56).

"Information" terminology aside, especially in the context not of position or posture but of movement, Jeannerod's declarative finding speaks reams about the foundational ongoing reality and significance of kinesthesia, reams that should certainly lead phenomenologists to take kinesthesia seriously and the challenge of elucidating its *insuppressible living dynamics* of signal importance. Puzzlingly enough, Gallagher bypasses this very foundational reality. When he writes (Gallagher 2005, p. 83), "The

phenomenon of newborn imitation suggests that much earlier [before later forms of imitation and the "mirror stage"] there is a primary notion of self, what we might call a proprioceptive self—a sense of self that involves a sense of one's motor possibilities, body postures, and body powers, rather than one's visual features"—he clearly affirms that "a primary notion of self" is not a visual recognition of oneself. At the same time, however, he bypasses the foundational reality that is the tactile-kinesthetic body, its neurological formation, as noted above, encompassing the first sensory modalities to develop[5]. He bypasses as well findings such as those of infant psychiatrist and clinical psychologist Daniel N. Stern whose studies led him to the description of a "core self" identifiable in terms of four "self-invariants": self-agency, self-coherence, self-affectivity, and self-history. As Stern states, "In order for the infant to have any formed sense of self, there must ultimately be some organization that is sensed as a reference point. The first such organization concerns the body: its coherence, its actions, its inner feeling states, and the memory of all these" (Stern 1985, p. 46; see also Sheets-Johnstone 1999c). Though not specified as such, these invariants all rest on the tactile-kinesthetic body (Sheets-Johnstone 1999b/expanded 2nd ed. 2011). The description of each dimension indeed validates the primacy of movement and the tactile-kinesthetic body. Recognition of this body would obviate the need of Gallagher or any other researcher to "suggest" anything. On the contrary, recognition of the tactile-kinesthetic body straightaway gives empirical grounds for affirming that the phenomenon of newborn imitation is rooted in a kinetic bodily logos attuned to movement (see, for example, Spitz 1983 on what Husserl would term the "allure" of movement), and further, that as that body learns, it cultivates and forges an ever-expanding repertoire of I cans, that habits are engendered in that repertoire, and that a certain style--or "character" as Husserl also terms

5 Proprioception, as first described by Sir Charles Sherrington and as taken up by many present-day academics (e.g., Bermudez 2003, Thompson 2007, Gallagher 2005, Gallagher and Cole 1998), is basically a postural rather than kinetic sense. Indeed, Sir Charles Sherrington's original coinage of the term and his focal emphasis define proprioception as "the perception of where the limb is" (Sherrington 1953, p. 249). Proprioception provides us postural awarenesses and, in addition, a sense of balance through vestibular mechanisms. Gallagher and Cole uphold Sherrington's postural specification when they explicitly state, "Proprioceptive awareness is a felt experience of bodily position" (Gallagher and Cole 1998, p. 137). Gallagher and Zahavi do likewise when they state, "Although I do not have observational access to my body in action, I can have non-observational proprioceptive and kinaesthetic awareness of my body in action. Proprioception is the innate and intrinsic position sense that I have with respect to my limbs and overall posture. It is the 'sixth sense' that allows me to know whether my legs are crossed, or not, without looking at them" (2012, p. 162). Whatever the meaning of "non-observational . . . awareness of my body in action"--does "non-observational awareness" mean simply "knowing without looking"?--Gallagher and Zahavi clearly bypass phenomenologically deepened understandings of the sense modality that is kinesthesia, which is to say the experience of movement and its qualitative dynamics.

it--is born and being shaped in the process, a style that others readily recognize.

The lapses specified above indicate a call "to the things themselves." In heeding the call, one is led back to Husserl's phenomenological insights. They are indeed an imperative beginning to bona fide understandings of habit, a beginning that might proceed from, but is certainly not limited to his conclusion that "each free act has its comet's tail of nature" (Husserl 1989, p. 350). What Husserl meant by this metaphor is that, by way of earlier experiences, "[t]he Ego always lives in the medium of its 'history'," that "aftereffects" are present in "tendencies, sudden ideas, transformations or assimilations" (ibid.). This insight in particular leads most decisively to an appreciation of the significance of ontogenetic studies. Pathological case studies may enhance phenomenological understandings, but they are not essential in the way that phenomenologically-informed ontogenetical studies are essential: a constructive phenomenology is indeed essential to understandings of habit, just as it is essential to understandings of emotions and agency (on the latter topic, see e.g., Bruner 1990, Sheets-Johnstone 1999c; on the former topic, see Sheets-Johnstone1999b, Johnstone 2012, 2013). In fact, how "[t]he Ego always lives in the medium of its 'history'" is of sizeable import. Husserl implicitly indicates just how central that history is when he brings together habit and style, and habit and the freely-motivated, freely-moving subject. He states, "As subject of position-takings and of habitual convictions I have of course my style . . . I am dependent on my previous life and my former decisions . . . I depend on motives . . . I have a unique character . . . I behave according to that character in a regular way" (Husserl 1989, p. 343). While he is clearly at pains to distinguish "who I am" as natural being from "who I am" as "position-taking Ego," he is clearly at just as sharp pains to show their relationship, in other words, the relationship of what he terms the freely-acting Ego to "affect and action" (for a full discussion, see ibid., Supplement XI, pp. 340-343). His emphasis on the relationship of a foundational basis in nature—a lower psychic level—to a position-taking Ego is succinctly put when he states that, "with each position-taking, there develop 'tendencies' to take up the same position under similar circumstances, etc." (ibid., p. 293). The relationship is emphasized in different but related terms when, in describing "The spiritual Ego and its underlying basis," he points out that whatever is constituted naturally, i.e., in associations, tendencies, perseverations, and so on, permeates "all life of the spirit": spirit "is permeated by the 'blind' operation of associations, drives, feelings which are stimuli for drives and determining grounds for drives . . . all of which determine the subsequent course of

consciousness according to 'blind' rules. To these laws correspond *habitual modes of behavior* on the part of the subject, acquired peculiarities (e.g., the habit of drinking a glass of wine in the evening)" (ibid., p. 289). It is in this context, several pages later (ibid., pp. 291-292) that Husserl writes of the *background that is prior to all comportment* and of what we find "in the obscure depths": "a root soil." In sum, habits, including habits of mind, particularly for Husserl in the form of motivations, are a basic dimension of a freely-moving subject, which is to say that the "medium of its history" is integral to the life of a subject.

Surely it is essential for phenomenologists to attempt a regressive inquiry, to take an ontogenetic perspective and carry out a constructive phenomenology. Habits are a fundamental dimension of human life. Indeed, we could not readily live without them. If everything were new at each turn, if all familiarity was erased and strangeness was ever-present, life as we know it would be impossible. A few final words about a dimension of habit make the point both incisively and decisively. That dimension has to do with style, specifically, our common dependence on style in our interchanges with others and our recognition of them as individuals to begin with. Husserl affirms, "One can to a certain extent expect how a man will behave in a given case if one has correctly apperceived him in his person, in his style" (Husserl 1989, p. 283). He offers many examples of style—not only in the way in which an individual judges, wills, "and values things aesthetically," but in the way "'sudden ideas' or 'inspirations' surge up . . . in the way metaphors come to him and [the way in which] his involuntary phantasy reigns," and even further, "in the way he perceives in perception . . . [and] "in the specific way his memory 'operates'." In short, Husserl affirms that style permeates to the core and does so on the basis of habit. What we notice in another person's style are precisely just such aspects of another person's comportment—the ways in which he or she typically relates to his or her surrounding world, thus not only the way in which a person "behaves," i.e., his or her typical kinetic qualitative dynamics, but the things the person typically values, his or her typical lines of thought, what he or she typically notices, and so on. Moreover Husserl includes in a person's style his or her "turning of attention," a turning that, Husserl states, "is also a 'comportment'," but is not a position-taking as are other aspects of the person's style. Yet here too, as Husserl observes, "the subject displays his 'peculiarity', i.e., in what it is that rivets his attention and how it does so . . . [how] [o]ne subject jumps easily from object to object, from theme to theme; another one remains attached for a long time to the same object, etc." (ibid., p. 291). In sum, Husserl's observations pertain to a social

world. We indeed seem to be more aware of the habits of others than of our own habits. We do so to a sizeable extent on the basis of the movement of others, what we in a packaging way term their "behavior," but which we get a glimpse of in terms such as "jumping easily from object to object" in contrast to "remain[ing]attached for a long time to the same object." The qualitative dynamics of another are perceived. They are integral dimensions of his or her style. We can thus anticipate what another will likely do given such and such a situation. There is a certain familiarity about the person that is simply there, evidenced in the dynamics of his or her comportment across our history with them, hence dynamics that we have experienced before and have now come to expect. It should be noted that we do not anticipate ourselves in the way we anticipate others. As indicated above, we are commonly less aware of our own qualitative dynamics than we are of the qualitative dynamics of others-- unless we have attuned ourselves to our own movement.

When we begin not with an adultist perspective and speculative entities to explain various phenomena, but with a veritable reconstructive or constructive phenomenology that allows one to "get back" to those nonlinguistic days in which we learned our bodies and learned to move ourselves and in the process formed nonlinguistic corporeal concepts in concert with synergies of meaningful movement, we approach veritable understandings of mind. We find that those synergies of meaningful movement are orchestrated not by an embodied mind but by a mindful body, alive to and cognizant to its surrounding world and developing fundamental abilities to move effectively and efficiently within it from infancy and in fact from in utero onward.

REFERENCES

Becker, E. (1975), *Escape from Evil,* New York, The Free Press.
Bergson, H. (1991[1896]), *Matter and Memory*, translated by N. M. Paul and W. S. Palmer, New York, Zone Books.
Bermúdez, J. (2003), "The Phenomenology of Bodily Perception," *Theoria et Historia Scientiarum*, vol. VII, no. 1, pp. 43-52.
Bloom, L. (1993), *The Transition from Infancy to Language: Acquiring the Power of Expression,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
Bruner, J. (1990), *Acts of Meaning,* Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.
Crick, F. and C. Koch. (1992), "The Problem of Consciousness," *Scientific American* 267 (3), pp. 153-159.
Damasio, A. R. and H. Damasio. (1992), "Brain and Language," *Scientific American* 267 (3), pp. 89-95.
Darwin, C. (1987), *Charles Darwin's Notebooks, 1836-1844*, edited by P. H. Barrett, P. J. Gautrey, S. Herbert, D. Kohn, S. Smith, Ithaca, Cornell University Press.
Fink, E. (1995), *Sixth Cartesian Meditation*, translated by R. Bruzina, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.
Gallagher, S. (2005), *How the Body Shapes the Mind*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.
Gallagher, S. and J. Cole. (1995), "Body Image and Body Schema in a Deafferented Subject," *The Journal of Mind and Behavior* 16, pp. 369-390. Included in *Body and Flesh: A Philosophical Reader,* edited by D. Welton. (1998), Malden, MA, Blackwell Publishers, pp. 131-147.
Gallagher, S. and D. Zahavi. (2012), *The Phenomenological Mind*, 2nd ed., London and New York, Routledge.
Husserl, E. (1964), *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*, edited by M. Heidegger, translated by J. S. Churchill, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press.
Husserl, E. (1970), *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, translated by D. Carr, Evanston, IL, Northwestern University Press.
Husserl, E. (1989), *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy,* translated by R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers.
Husserl, E. (2001), *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*, translated by A. J. Steinbock, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers.
Jeannerod, M. (2006), *Motor Cognition: What Actions Tell the Self*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
Johnstone, A. A. (2012), "The Deep Bodily Roots of Emotion," *Husserl Studies* 28, no. 3, pp. 179-200.
Johnstone, A. A. (2013), "Why Emotion?" *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 20, no.

9/10, pp. 15-38.
Landgrebe, L. (1977), "Phenomenology as Transcendental Theory of History," in *Husserl: Expositions and Appraisals*, edited by F. A. Elliston and P. McCormick, Notre Dame, IN, University of Notre Dame Press, pp. 101-113.
Luria, A. R. (1966), *Human Brain and Psychological Processes*, translated by B. Haigh, New York, Harper & Row.
Luria, A. R. (1973), *The Working Brain: An Introduction to Neuropsychology*, translated by B. Haigh, Harmondsworth, England, Penguin Books.
Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962), *Phenomenology of Perception*, translated by C. Smith, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Nöe, A. (2004), *Action in Perception*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (1966), *The Phenomenology of Dance*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press. Second editions: 1979, London, Dance Books Ltd.; 1980, New York, Arno Press.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (1979), "On Movement and Objects in Motion: The Phenomenology of the Visible in Dance," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 13, No. 2, pp. 33-46.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (1999a/expanded 2nd ed. 2011), *The Primacy of Movement*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (1999b), "Emotions and Movement: A Beginning Empirical-Phenomenological Analysis of Their Relationship," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6, No. 11-12, pp. 259-277. Included in Sheets-Johnstone, M. (2009), *The Corporeal Turn: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, Exeter, Imprint Academic, Chapter VIII.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (1999c), "Phenomenology and Agency: Methodological and Theoretical Issues in Strawson's 'The Self'," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6, No. 4, pp. 48-69.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (2003), "Kinesthetic Memory," *Theoria et Historia Scientiarum*, vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 69-92.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (2008), *The Roots of Morality*, University Park, PA, Pennsylvania State University Press.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (2011a), "On the Elusive Nature of the Human Self: Divining the Ontological Dynamics of Animate Being," in *In Search of Self: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Personhood*, edited by J. W. van Huyssteen and E. P. Wiebe, Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp. 198-219.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (2011b), "The Imaginative Consciousness of Movement: Linear Quality, Kinesthesia, Language and Life," in *Redrawing Anthropology: Materials, Movements, Lines*, edited by T. Ingold. Surrey, Ashgate Publishing, pp. 115-128.

Sheets-Johnstone, M. (2012), "Kinesthetic Memory: Further Critical Reflections and Constructive Analyses," in *Body Memory, Metaphor and Movement*, edited by S. C. Koch, T. Fuchs, M. Summa, and C. Müller, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing, pp. 43-72.
Sheets-Johnstone, M. (2014, forthcoming), "Animation: Analyses, Elaborations, and Implications," *Husserl Studies*.
Sherrington, Sir Charles. (1953), *Man on His Nature*, New York, Doubleday Anchor.
Spitz, R. A. (1983), *Dialogues from Infancy*, edited by R. N. Emde, New York, International Universities Press.
Stern, D. N. (1985), *The Interpersonal World of the Infant: A View from Psychoanalysis and Developmental Psychology*, New York: Basic Books.
Thompson, E. (2007), *Mind and Life: Biology, Phenomenology, and the Sciences of Mind*, Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press/Harvard University Press.
Windle, W. F. (1971), *Physiology of the Fetus*, Springfield, IL, Charles C. Thomas.
Zeki, S. (1992), "The Visual Image in Mind and Brain," *Scientific American* 267 (3), pp. 69-76.