

STEVEN CROWELL

Normativity  
*and* Phenomenology  
*in* Husserl  
*and* Heidegger

NORMATIVITY AND  
PHENOMENOLOGY IN  
HUSSERL AND HEIDEGGER

STEVEN CROWELL

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## NORMATIVITY AND PHENOMENOLOGY IN HUSSERL AND HEIDEGGER

Steven Crowell has been for many years a leading voice in debates on twentieth-century European philosophy. This volume presents thirteen recent essays that together provide a systematic account of the relation between meaningful experience (intentionality) and responsiveness to norms. They argue for a new understanding of the philosophical importance of phenomenology, taking the work of Husserl and Heidegger as exemplary, and introducing a conception of phenomenology broad enough to encompass the practices of both philosophers. Crowell discusses Husserl's analyses of first-person authority, the semantics of conscious experience, the structure of perceptual content, and the embodied subject, and shows how Heidegger's interpretation of the self addresses problems in Husserl's approach to the normative structure of meaning. His volume will be valuable for upper-level students and scholars interested in phenomenological approaches to philosophical questions in both the European and the analytic traditions.

STEVEN CROWELL is Joseph and Joanna Nazro Mullen Professor of Philosophy at Rice University. He is the author of *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning* (2001), and editor of *The Prism of the Self: Philosophical Essays in Honor of Maurice Natanson* (1995), *Transcendental Heidegger* (with Jeff Malpas, 2007), and *The Cambridge Companion to Existentialism* (Cambridge, 2012).

*In memoriam*  
John Haugeland (1945–2010)  
philosopher and friend

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Of the thirteen chapters in this volume, Chapter 1 and Chapter 10 are published here for the first time. The others are reprinted here, in slightly altered form, by permission of their original publishers:

Chapter 2 appeared in *A Companion to Phenomenology and Existentialism*, ed. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006, pp. 9–30); Chapter 3 appeared as “Heidegger and Husserl: The Matter and Method of Philosophy,” in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 49–64); Chapter 4 was originally titled “Phenomenology and the First-Person Character of Philosophical Knowledge,” and was published in *Modern Schoolman* 84 (January and March 2007), pp. 131–48; Chapter 5 appeared in *Synthese* 160 (2008), pp. 335–54; Chapter 6 was originally published in *Contemporary Kantian Metaphysics: New Essays on Space and Time*, ed. Roxana Baiasu, Graham Bird, and A. W. Moore (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, pp. 81–106), and is reproduced with permission of Palgrave Macmillan; Chapter 7 appeared as “Husserl’s Subjectivism: The ‘ganz einzigen “Formen”’ of Consciousness and the Philosophy of Mind,” in *Philosophy, Phenomenology, Sciences: Essays in Commemoration of Edmund Husserl*, ed. Carlo Ierna, Hanne Jacobs, and Filip Mattens (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010, pp. 363–89); Chapter 8 was originally published in *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 44(4) (December 1, 2001), pp. 433–54, and is reprinted here with permission of the publisher, Taylor & Francis Ltd.; Chapter 9 appeared as “Conscience and Reason: Heidegger and the Grounds of Intentionality,” in *Transcendental Heidegger*, ed. Steven Crowell and Jeff Malpas (Stanford University Press, 2007, pp. 43–62), © 2007 by the Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Jr. University and is used with permission of Stanford University Press; Chapter 11 appeared as “*Sorge* or *Selbstbewußtsein*? Heidegger and Korsgaard on the Sources of Normativity,” in *European Journal of Philosophy* 15(3) (2007), pp. 315–33, and is reprinted here with permission of Blackwell Publishing; Chapter 12 originally appeared under

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Master Class in Phenomenology for Asian Scholars. I am deeply grateful to the Edward Cheng Foundation Asian Centre for Phenomenology, and its director, my friend Cheung Chan-fai, for providing me this opportunity, and to the participants in the Master Class for the insights they shared with me.

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## CITATION CONVENTIONS FOR THE WORKS OF HUSSERL AND HEIDEGGER

References to the works of Husserl and Heidegger are found in the text according to the following abbreviations, which refer to the *Husserliana* series and the *Gesamtausgabe*, respectively. In the text, the German pagination is given first, followed by the English pagination (when I have consulted a translation). In the case of *Sein und Zeit* (GA 2), I have first given the *Gesamtausgabe* pagination, followed by the pagination to the seventh German edition published by Max Niemeyer Verlag (found in the margins both of the *Gesamtausgabe* edition and the English translation), and finally the pagination to the English translation by Macquarrie and Robinson. I have, however, altered all translations as I see fit, without comment. In cases where the texts in question are not yet found in a volume of the respective collected works, the reference will be found in the list of references.

### Edmund Husserl

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- Hua 2 *Die Idee der Phänomenologie. Fünf Vorlesungen*, ed. W. Biemel. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1958; *The Idea of Phenomenology*, trans. W. P. Alston and G. Nakhnikian. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964.
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- Hua 17 *Formale und transzendente Logik: Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft*, ed. P. Janssen. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974; *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, trans. D. Cairns. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969.
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### Martin Heidegger

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- GA 5 *Holzwege*, ed. F.-W. von Herrmann. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1976; *Off the Beaten Track*, trans. and ed. J. Young and K. Haynes. Cambridge University Press.
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## Introduction

This book outlines and defends a new understanding of the philosophical importance of phenomenology, taking the work of Husserl and Heidegger as exemplary. The crux of this understanding lies in the connection between normativity and meaning, a connection that has been extensively explored in certain strands of analytic philosophy but has not been sufficiently appreciated in the phenomenological tradition. In one sense this is odd, since meaning (in the form of an analysis of intentionality) has been central to that tradition from the beginning. In another sense, however, it is perfectly understandable, since neither Husserl nor Heidegger (nor most of their followers) identified the theme of phenomenology specifically with meaning (*Sinn*). Rather, Husserl understood phenomenology to be a science of consciousness, while Heidegger understood it to be an approach to being. At the same time, both Husserl and Heidegger argued that phenomenology transformed the sense of previous philosophical concepts, so it is not altogether clear how we are to understand terms like “consciousness” and “being” in their writings. As I have argued in *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning* (2001), and continue to argue in this volume, a careful look at the particular descriptions, analyses, and interpretations offered by each shows that it is phenomenology’s focus on the transcendental conditions of the constitution or disclosure of meaning that upsets our understanding of traditional philosophical topics in the ways that exercised Husserl and Heidegger. It thereby also allows us to appreciate why the analytic treatments alone are not enough.

The closer examination of the space of meaning in its character as a norm-governed phenomenon, and of the self or subject capable of experiencing such meaning, is the primary aim of this book. That examination yields a conception of phenomenology that sees in it neither a one-off product of a largely defunct continental metaphysical tradition, nor an appendage that deals with marginal cases of “what it is like” to experience something. The phenomenology I have in view offers a deep and compelling approach to problems of philosophy. In this volume, issues in



philosophy of mind, moral psychology, and philosophy of action provide the primary focus for illustrating this claim.

Before going further, a word should be said about the concept of “norm” that is in play here. The term is often used in a narrow sense, according to which a norm is an explicitly formulated rule – whether conventional or rationally derived – that serves as the basis for determining whether something (an action, mainly) is permissible or obligatory. When the term is understood in this way, the idea that normativity is central to Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenology may well appear perverse. But there is a wider sense according to which a norm is anything that serves as a standard of success or failure of any kind, and it is in this sense that I understand the term here. Thus a legislated statute is a norm, as are rules of games like chess or baseball; but “unspoken” rules, satisfaction conditions, cultural mores, manners, what is “normally” done – in short, whatever it is that *measures* our speech and behavior – are also norms. Kant links the “exemplary universality” of our experience of the beautiful with the normative by invoking the “presence of a rule that we cannot state,” and we can understand Platonic *eide* as norms in this sense as well: as ideal exemplars, they stand in relation to the things that share their names as standards for being those things. Like phenomenological “essences,” such exemplars are not rules in any sense, but they possess a kind of normative claim that precludes our thinking of them simply as entities that turn up in the world, whether as part of the latter’s causal nexus, as social facts, or as elements of the subject’s psychological outfitting. It is this that makes the normative a basic concern in phenomenology, since it belongs squarely within the scope of the latter’s distinctive sort of anti-naturalism (or anti-objectivism).

Thus the normative is found wherever we can speak of rules, measures, standards, exemplars, ideals, concepts, and so on; wherever distinctions between better and worse, success and failure, can be made. I don’t pretend that discriminating between these various sorts of norm is not philosophically important; on the contrary, there is already a robust literature that essays this task, and if my argument goes through, tracing the differences and interconnections among these ways in which the space of meaning is constituted is a significant item on the phenomenological agenda. One example will be found in Chapter 10, where the distinction between the good and the right is touched upon. For the purposes of the general argument, however, only the wider concept of normativity is necessary.

The normative is at stake in the accounts of intentional content or meaning offered in both analytic and phenomenological traditions, and