

SUFFERING DASEIN: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY INTO
THE MEANING OF SUFFERING, POSSIBILITY, AND *LEIBEN* (BODYING)
THROUGH HEIDEGGER'S *BEING AND TIME*

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Approved: 

Professor John T. Lysaker

Emmanuel Levinas calls suffering “the very bond of human subjectivity,” that by which we are most fundamentally connected. Albeit irrefutable in its own right, properly accounting for human suffering and pain resists explanation almost as much as accounts of the nature of the human body do, and it is the opacity of the latter, I hope to show, that belies the clarity of the former. Undoubtedly, there is hardly a more consequential subject than one’s understanding of the human body, for it (in)forms one’s understanding of the world, one’s *Weltverständnis*, from the most “theoretic” and far-ranging human beliefs, such as those in religion, philosophy, and the sciences, to the most “mundane” and everyday beliefs, such as one’s attitude towards bodily consumption. In an effort to address these topics, this thesis begins with Martin Heidegger’s *Being and Time* and the compelling account it gives of human being-in-the-world. Then, on the way to a phenomenology of suffering, it both critiques and augments Heidegger’s treatment of the body, eventually working towards an interpretation which understands the body as *leiben*, as the body-*ing* of Dasein. I will argue that bodying is an existential—that is, a constitutive factor of Dasein’s ontological structure. This means, in turn, that the bodying of Dasein is ontologically definitive for, is an equiprimordial structuring of, the being of every being encountered by it, including itself. Lastly, the phenomenology of suffering presented will, where successful, substantiate and extend the arguments given within the context of Heidegger’s work, with the final suggestion that the conception of the bodying developed herein has extensive implications for medicine, ethics, and politics.

Dedicated to

My grandfather, hero, and friend, Papa Jack,

My miraculous brother, Jason, whose love knows no bounds,

& My amazing mother, Gail,

Whose suffering taught me that nothing is more insufferable

Than to ignore that of another.

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τ κφρονε ν βροτο [δώ-
 σανα, τ ν πάθει μάθος
 θέντα κυρίως χειν.
 στάζει δ νθ ρηοτ πρ καρδίας
 μνησιπήμων πόνος· κα ραη -
 κοντας λθε σωφρονε ν.
 Αγαμεμνων, Αεσχυλος, 177-181



“Zeus has led us on to know,
 the Helmsman lays it down as law
 that we must suffer, suffer into truth.
 We cannot sleep, and drop by drop at the heart
 the pain of pain remembered comes again,
 and we resist, but ripeness comes as well.”
 Agamemnon, Aeschylus, 177-181

☞ Introduction

The world in which we live—in which we wake and dream, in which we tie our worn-out shoes, drink our preferred (twice-ground, double-filtered) coffee, commute to work, call our friends, avoid our in-laws, and write abstruse, long-winded philosophy papers—is effusive with meanings, with *überschwägliche Sinn*. The meaningfulness of the world which we inhabit is excessive; indeed, upon closer inspection, so far from diminishing or simplifying, that excessiveness, that *Übermäßigkeit*, compounds *ad infinitum*. Yet the exorbitancy of human meanings is not infinite in an unbounded sense; indeed, we are often prone to speak of certain phenomena as *meaningless*, *Sinnlos*, and perhaps the best example of such a phenomenon is suffering. While it is widely acknowledged as both a pervasive and ubiquitous facet of human experience, it is not clear how suffering affects the manifold meanings of human being-in-the-world; indeed, its apparent lack and disseverment of meanings marks its particular character.

In an effort to examine the phenomenon of suffering, a triad of *topoi* implicated therein—human being, human body(ing), and human suffering—will be examined in conversation with Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*. I begin by arguing that *leiben*, the way in which Dasein *bodies* or is *bodying* (read progressively and in an ambitransitive sense), is an existential—that is, a constitutive factor of Dasein's ontological structure, of its being. This means, in turn, that the bodying of Dasein is ontologically definitive for, is an equiprimordial structuring of, the being of every being encountered by it and not just of its own being. I will then present a phenomenology of suffering, focusing specifically, though not exclusively, on that which is experienced in chronic pain. In describing the types of suffering Dasein can experience, I hope to substantiate not only the claim that

the bodying of Da-sein is an existential, but also that bodying provides an account of *how* it is that such a being can suffer, an account noticeably lacking in Heidegger's analysis. Ultimately, I hope to have brought some light to *the meaning of suffering* and, therewith, the nature of human being and human bodying.

Within the Western philosophical cannon (notable exceptions notwithstanding) the curious dismissal and even omission of a thematic and sustained treatment of the human body—and, correlatively, of bodily suffering—marks a tendency, since Plato/Socrates, to emphasize the mind, rationality, or thought, at the expense of the “body” and myriad “bodily” dimensions of the human *Lebenswelt*. By beginning and ending with the *topoi* of human being, human body(ing), and suffering, this thesis will attempt to counter the age-old tendency to minimize the glaring fact of their mutual implication, a fact which stares us in the face—quite literally—every day (Darfur, Iraq, Gaza, the “beggar” on the corner, the relative with cancer, etc). There is an intricate movement, interrelation, and interpenetration between these three phenomena, and thus, one cannot, I think, sufficiently investigate any one of these issues without addressing their constitutive (counter)parts.

The present investigation, although split in two divisions, is tripartite in structure. It questions the nature of human being-in-the-world, then the problematic of the body, until finally turning to a phenomenology of suffering. An examination of these aspects of human being will provide a philosophical topology that, given its specific terrain, invariably opens onto questions of possibility and meaning, thus bringing the inquiry back to its point of departure. Always from that point, from that place, we ask—what is the meaning of human suffering?

PART 1: WORLD, POSSIBILITY, AND *LEIBEN* IN HEIDEGGER'S *BEING AND TIME*

Mourning, Saturday

“Permeability. Almost not being there.
 Wind across the tidepools, almost straight
 through me. Some fish rotting, salt spray.
 As little of me as possible, hour after hour.
 Quiet. And at night in bed, quiet.
 Then jabs of pain: you are, are a body”
 —Laura Fargas

A Hand

“A hand is not four fingers and a thumb. Nor is
 it palm and knuckles, not ligaments or the fat's
 yellow pillow, not tendons, star of the wristbone,
 meander of veins. A hand is not the thick thatch
 of its lines with their infinite dramas, nor what it
 has written, not on the page, not on the ecstatic
 body. Nor is the hand its meadows of holding, of
 shaping—not sponge of rising yeast-bread, not
 rotor pin's smoothness, not ink. The maple's
 green hands do not cup the proliferant rain.
 What empties itself falls into the place that is
 open. A hand turned upward holds only a single,
 transparent question. Unanswerable, humming
 like bees, it rises, swarms, departs.”
 —Jane Hirshfield

“The experiencing body...is not a self-enclosed
 object, but an open, incomplete entity...a kind of
 open circuit that completes itself only in things,
 and in the world.”
 —David
 Abrams

On the Way to the Meaning of Suffering: Philosophic Itineraries

The publication of Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* in 1929 proved to be one of the more important events in twentieth-century philosophy.¹ Although undoubtedly a “philosophic” work, it ranges over and came to affect everything from scientific theory

¹ Hereafter, *Being and Time* will be cited as *SZ*, both for succinctness and also since pagination will refer to the German edition unless specified otherwise.

and psychology to anthropology and historiography. Heidegger describes the work as an inquiry into fundamental ontology, that is, an inquiry into the meaning of being. This question, the *Seinsfrage*, was the guiding question for Heidegger from his reading of Franz Brentano's *On the Several Senses of Be-ing in Aristotle* in September of 1907 all the way to some of the last lectures he gave in Le Thor and Zähringen from 1966-73.² Indeed, while diverse and divergent, the Heideggerian corpus is an extended and complex meditation on this single question. In *SZ*, the specific point of departure for this question is that of the being who interrogates being: Da-sein—literally: being (*sein*)-there/here (*Da*).³ In choosing Dasein as the term with which to describe the being for whom being is “a matter of importance at all,” Heidegger interprets human being not as a thing, but as a *be-ing*—a modality, a *way* of being—not a *what*, but a *how*.⁴ Moreover, Heidegger, in a Kantian fashion, thinks that one cannot ask such fundamental questions without investigating the very being doing the questioning. Yet, unlike Kant, he acknowledges that, because one oneself is that being, such an investigation is itself a project of that

² For Heidegger's own admission of the influence of Brentano's dissertation, see *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His Early Occasional Writings, 1920-1927*, ed. T. Kiesel and T. Sheehan (Illinois: Northwestern Univ. Press, 2007), 9. For the precise dating of these occurrences, see Alfreud Denker, *Martin Heidegger (1889-1976): Chronology*, <<http://www.freewebs.com/m3smg2/HeideggerChronology.html>>. The lectures given in 1966-1973 have been collected in GA 15 and translated into English as *Four Seminars*, trans. A. Mitchell and F. Raffoul (Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 2003).

³ Although there are good reasons to offer a translation of Da-sein into English (Malpas' argument for the translation of “being-there” is a good example; see Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology* (Mass: The MIT Press, 2005)). I strongly prefer, in this case, to keep the original German term because such a method forces the reader to “learn” the word, as opposed to being able to already start with at least some sort of definite understanding of it, which an English translation invariably suggests. While it is true that leaving it untranslated leaves the reader looking for an explanation in the translator's introduction or glossary, wherein an “explanation” and thus interpretation will lay, in this case I find keeping it untranslated to leave *more* in the reader's hands, forcing the reader to conceptually and interpretively grapple with the word more than s/he would with an English translation. Wherever German, Greek, or Latin (etc.) terms appear throughout the paper, my use follows the same reasoning.

⁴ Ryan Streever, “Heidegger's Formal Indication: A Question of Method in *Being and Time*,” *Man and World* 30: 415.

being—thus rendering any “critical” enterprise irremediably hermeneutic. In other words, the “subject” and “object” of *SZ* are, as it were, one.

Precisely as an ontic project of Dasein, the architectonics of *SZ* are not built sturdily and axiomatically upon logico-transcendental truths but are, rather, *to be taken up by concrete Daseins as possibilities for their being*. Heidegger is very clear on this point:

The idea of existence which we have posited [from the outset of *SZ*] gives us an outline of the formal structure of the understanding of Dasein and does so in a way *which is not binding from an existentiell point of view*...[this positing has] the character of an understanding projection, in such a manner indeed that the interpretation [*Interpretation*] by which such an understanding gets developed, will let that which is to be interpreted *put itself into words for the very first time, so that it* [one’s own Dasein] *may decide of its own accord whether, as the entity which it is, it has that state of Being for which it has been disclosed in the projection with regard to its formal aspects [formalanzeigend]*” (313-315).⁵

Thus, the hermeneutic situation of Dasein, which *SZ* consistently explains and refers to, itself speaks against a reading of the work as a philosophic “system.” It is, on the other hand, both an *invitation* to question one’s own being and being itself *with* Heidegger and also a systematic elaboration of that questioning.

⁵ The latter italics are Heidegger’s, the former are my own. I owe this point to John Lysaker and Ryan Streeter. In Streeter’s words: “any formally indicating Dasein (in this case, Heidegger) can never hope to correctly and comprehensively project *all* of what needs to be projected in any investigation so as to settle an issue once and for all, the issue here being the constitution of that which each of us in each case is. That is why Heidegger claims at the outset in §25 that he is *only* formally indicating Dasein’s ontologically constitutive state (SZ 114), and that in considering the ‘I’ in order to establish the ‘who’ of Dasein, he is employing a ‘non-binding formal indicator’ that is general enough to account for various forms of ‘Ihood,’ even when the ‘I’ has lost itself (SZ 116). Later, he reiterates what he has formally indicated so as to tempt one to ‘try the fit’ and see if the existentials in *Being and Time* do not at least point one in a direction that he or she can take up in an existential way that completes them (SZ 313). What existence is can only be ‘said’ in certain ways that call for interpretation: the explication of existence in formally indicative (*formalanzeigend*) terms is the putting into words for the first time that Being which we *are* and are always trying to interpret, namely Dasein. Accordingly, we must decide on the basis of *the Being that we find ourselves to be* whether or not that interpretation fruitfully renders that Being (SZ 314–315).” See Streeter, “Heidegger’s Formal Indication,” 417.

In the spirit of the *SZ* itself, this thesis will respond to Heidegger's call to "decide of [one's] own accord" whether the formal aspects of the work indeed speak to one's being, contending that a central and constitutive factor of the being of Da-sein, and thus of all of its projects, is left unexplored: *der Leib*, the body. The first section will be divided as follows: first, a propaedeutic of sorts to Heidegger's thought and the relation of *SZ* therein. Then I will turn to an engagement of his treatment of *Zuhandensein*, the ready-to-hand, wherein I will argue that ready-to-hand beings themselves reveal the body. This analysis, however, will force a reexamination of what is meant by *der Leib*, leading to the use of *leiben*, bodying, as the name for the phenomenon under discussion.

Heidegger, Sein und Zeit, and die Seinsfrage

For Heidegger, *the* fundamental philosophic question is "what is the meaning (*Sinn*) of being (*Sein*)," that is, "what is the meaning of what is?"⁶ Yet, this question is already problematic. We cannot be sure, Heidegger argues, that we know *how* to ask this question. One might respond that such a reservation is sophistic. One asks precisely because one does not know and in problematizing the questioning itself, one is inevitably on the way to a sort of solipsism. Heidegger would respond that every question necessarily makes presuppositions—in various ways and to various degrees—about that into which it questions. One cannot ask *about* a thing without identifying, conceptualizing, pointing out, etc., that thing in some manner or another: the hermeneutic

⁶ Some have argued that "being" is *not* the central term in his thought, but, rather, "die Sache selbst." Consider Thomas Sheehan's "Dasein" in *A Companion to Heidegger* (H. Dreyfus and M. Wrathall, Mass: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, 193-213). I am with the former camp. For a lucid and short argument in this direction, see Kelsey Wood, "ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ as Contrast of Being with Being." *Existentialia: Μελεται Σοφιας* XV, no. 3-4 (2005): 223-232.

circle *is* our (hermeneutic) situation. Thus, one can close off and cover over the answer regarding that which one questions before one has even questioned it precisely by *the way in which* one questions.

The goal of *SZ*, put simply and summarily, is to attempt to work out a possible foundation for asking the question of the meaning of being properly. Yet, if we are not sure we can even ask this question appropriately, how is any ground to be made positively? Heidegger's answer capitalizes on this seeming impossibility by pointing out that this problematic is not merely negative, but also positive. It is only because we understand *something like being* that we can ask about it in the first place. As stated above, to ask about something means that in some fashion or another we "know" that about which we question, however minimal or distorted that knowledge might be. Thus, what appeared as purely negative—we can't ask about things without covering them over—is equally positive—we could not ask about them unless we already *know* them in some way.

This pushes us one step further, however, for it is not clear who this "we" is. Who is it that knows? A human?—what kind of human? A being made in the image of God—a $\delta\zeta$ $\mu\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\nu$ (*zōon logon*: rational animal)—a *res cogitans* (thinking thing)—a being which is through the (re)production of its material life? A self?—what kind of self? A relational self—a dialogic self—a self-identical self? An "I" or ego?—what kind of ego? An ego driven by sexual drives—a transcendental ego—an embodied ego? Yet all of these "concepts" of the who-that-we-are import wide-ranging ontological assumptions, and each has a messy and controversial history not simply in the western philosophical canon, but also across the history of human thought. It is on the horizon of

this predicament that one can see the novelty and analytic import of Heidegger's use of and focus on *Da-sein* as the term to describe human being-in-the-world, and it is also here that one begins to see the hermeneutic trajectory of *Being and Time*.

Ultimately, Heidegger wants to ask the question of the meaning of being and finds that due to the very problematic of that question itself, it can only be asked by asking about the being who asks this question, for it is precisely that being which already "knows" something of being in the first place. What or *who* is this being? The being who is *open* to being such that it can question it: *Dasein*.⁷ In the words of John Lysaker, "Dasein is the horizon in which *Sein* can and does become a question."⁸ Heidegger perhaps gives the clearest explanation of this term during his lectures on "The Concept of Time" in 1924:

Da-sein is that entity which is characterized as *being-in-the-world*. Human life is not some subject that has to perform some trick in order to enter the world. Da-sein as being-in-the-world means: being in the world in such a way that this being means: having to do with the world, sojourning within it in the routines of working, of managing and taking care of things, but also of examining, interrogating, and determining them by way of examination and comparison. Being-in-the-world is characterized as *concern* [*Sorge*].⁹

An analytic of Da-sein, as an investigation into the being of the being who questions being, must be the starting point in order to uncover *how* and *that it is* that this being already understands something like being and what this understanding or knowing

⁷ Kisiel and Sheehan, *Becoming Heidegger*, 485-486, fn.2. Though I will be unable to expand upon the implications of this, it is important to note with Derrida that "*Dasein*, in its neutrality, must not be confused with the existent. *Dasein* only exists in its factual concretion, to be sure, but this very existence has its originary source (*Urquell*) and internal possibility in *Dasein* as neutral. The analytic of this origin does not deal with the existent itself. Precisely because it precedes them, such an analytic cannot be confused with a philosophy of existence, with a wisdom...or with a prophesy that would teach such or such a 'world-view.' It is therefore not at all a 'philosophy of life.'" See Jacques Derrida, "Geschlecht: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference," *Research in Phenomenology* XIII, 1983: 65-83, esp. 68-69, 73.

⁸ Personal correspondence, 2009.

⁹ Kisiel and Sheehan, *Becoming Heidegger*, 204.

amounts to. In carrying out this analytic, Heidegger hopes to provide the proper horizon for asking the question of the meaning of being.

As abstract and general as this may appear, it was absolutely decisive for Heidegger, from his “formative” years in the early Freiburg period to the very end of his life, to stress that this question arose “concretely and factually out of [his] ‘I am’ [that is, his being].” As he put it in a personal letter to his first doctoral student, Karl Löwith, “I work concretely and factually out of my ‘I am’—out of my spiritual and thoroughly factic heritage, my milieu, my life contexts, and whatever is available to me from these, as the vital experience in which I live. This facticity, as existentiell, is no mere ‘blind existence’—this Dasein is one with existence, which means that I live it...the act of existing seethes with this *facticity of Being-thus*, it surges with the historical.”¹⁰ The question of the meaning of being arises, just as the question of the meaning of suffering, from the factual situatedness of “my” existence, from the constituted whole of my life-experience (*Lebenserfahrung*), and these questions arise likewise from the existence of any other for whom they constitute a worthy and genuine question to be asked.

Now that an introduction of sorts has been offered so as to situate *SZ* within Heidegger’s thought, we will turn to that work in hopes of developing an understanding of *der Leib*, all the while being on the way to a phenomenology of suffering and to the explication of its meaning.

¹⁰ Kisiel and Sheehan, *Becoming Heidegger*, 99-100.

☞ Interpreting Leib and Leiben: The Body as an Existential

In §1, the first half of the Introduction to *Being and Time*, Heidegger names “the very being to which Da-sein can comport itself in one way or another, and always does comport itself somehow, existence [*Existenz*].”¹¹ Existence is to be understood as a possibility of Dasein, and it is “in terms of its existence—in terms of a possibility of itself” that Dasein always understands itself (12). This “self-understanding” or “self-relation” is then terminologically and formally separated into “existentiell” and “existential” understanding. Existentiell understanding is the kind of understanding of Da-sein that is in terms of its factual existence, that is, in terms of (its seizing upon or neglecting) its various possibilities to be itself or not to be itself. For example, this could be being a “happy person” or being a monk, for both are questions of factual existence and thus simply “ontic ‘affairs’ of Da-sein.” Accordingly, “the question of existence” of a particular Dasein “never gets straightened out except through existing itself” (12).

Existential understanding, on the other hand, is in relation to the ontological structure of existence, that is, it has to do with the “analysis of what *constitutes* existence” (12, my italics). Accordingly, Heidegger calls the coherence of these structures *existentiality*. To give a short example, Heidegger considers facticity (*Faktizität*) to be an existential of Da-sein—a constitutive factor of its existence, ontologically understood. (To clarify, the distinction between existential and existentiell is formally analogous to the difference between the ontic and the ontological. For

¹¹ Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit [SZ]* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2006), 12; translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson as *Being and Time* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962); and translated by Joan Stambaugh as *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein und Zeit [BT]* (New York: State Univ. of New York Press, 1996). In-text citations will be to the German text, and while, as a rule, the English translations which appear here are based on the M&R translation, some translations will be my own. I have in all cases consulted one or both of the English translations.

Heidegger, the ontic names the factual, lived-existence of a being, whereas the ontological is the *structure* of the ontic; the existentiell names the way in which Dasein “takes up,” *is*, its factual, lived-existence, whereas the existential names the *structure* of Dasein’s existence.) Much can be said about facticity, but for purposes of explaining existentiality, it will suffice to say that Da-sein is *always* the concrete situatedness in which and as which it finds itself.¹² Thus, whereas the specific way in which one seizes upon a particular possibility of oneself, such as being a monk, is existentiell, facticity is a structural-ontological constituent of the being of *every* being that has the character of being of Da-sein. Phrased otherwise, existentials are an a priori, a condition of the possibility, of a being like Da-sein and thus of *any* of its possible existentiells: I, as Dasein, can be or not be a monk; I, as Dasein, cannot *not* be the there that I am.¹³

Along with the existentials named in *SZ*—such as ensnarement (*Verfallen*), existence (*Existenz*), facticity (*Faktizität*), and signification (*Bedeutsamkeit*)—I hope to show that the body, *der Leib*, must also be understood as an existential. Yet, for reasons which will be explained below, the term “the body” is highly problematic and further obfuscates the phenomenon it is meant to describe. Thus, in the end, I will speak instead of *leiben*, of the *bodying* of Dasein: *bodying is an existential*, and, accordingly, *the bodying of Dasein is ontologically definitive for, is equiprimordially structuring of, not just its being, but also the being of every being encountered by it*. In order to be able to

¹² I am primarily thinking here of Heidegger’s initial and preliminary explanation of facticity, where he states “the concept of facticity implies that an ‘innerworldly’ being has being-in-the-world in such a way that it can understand itself as bound up in its ‘destiny’ with the being of those beings which it encounters within its own world,” *SZ* 56.

¹³ Heidegger does not use the language of “a priori” in the same way that, e.g., Kant does (such that Kant, e.g., has to explain how the empirical and transcendental “get together”—whereas for Heidegger, these a priori arise *out of* concrete lives), so this formulation is a bit misleading or, at the very least, lacking nuance.

explain *der Leib*, much less *leiben*, we will first enter the world of the *Werkstatt* in the analytic of Dasein.

Zuhandensein and the World of the Werkstatt

With the aim of examining the “worldhood of the world,” that is, the ontologico-existential structure of any given determinant mode of world¹⁴ (64-65), Heidegger argues that it is only by looking to the beings encountered in the “closest world of everyday Dasein and their specific being that such structures can be revealed (63-66).¹⁵ He calls this “closest world” the environing world, *die Umwelt*, and contends that it is the “proper phenomenal point of departure for access to the phenomenon of worldhood” (66).¹⁶

The way in which these beings are given to us is in terms of our “*dealings in the world and with inner-worldly beings*” (66-67).¹⁷ Indeed, the only way in which these beings become available or accessible to us is “when we put ourselves into the position of concerning ourselves” in dealings with them (67). Heidegger immediately acknowledges that this formulation is misleading, for we are always already *in* the position of concernful dealings with beings; “this is the way in which everyday Dasein always *is*:

¹⁴ Thus worldhood is an existential of Dasein; see, *SZ* 65.

¹⁵ This argument relies entirely on Heidegger’s extensive argumentation regarding proper phenomenological method and research. It is simply outside the scope of the paper to rehearse these arguments; see esp. §7.

¹⁶ I translate *Umwelt* as ‘environing world’ because, at least in American English, the word “environment” immediately connotes ‘environmentalism’ and the matrix of movements and people associated with it. “Environing world,” however, keeps the explicitness of ‘Welt’ in ‘Umwelt’ with ‘world,’ captures the ‘around’ and ‘about’ of ‘um-’ with ‘environing,’ and also avoids the aforementioned connotations. Matching the morphology of the German is not a translational necessity, of course, but it works well here.

¹⁷ “Inner-worldly beings” simply means those beings that do not have the being of Dasein (see *SZ* 65). Although both Macquarrie and Robinson and Stambaugh give no indication (in the text or in footnotes) of this, it is interesting to note that *Umgang* can—in addition to dealings, association, trafficking, etc.—mean *handling*, as in learning how to handle horses (*den Umgang mit Pferden lernen*); see “Umgang” in the *Concise Oxford-Duden German Dictionary*, 3rd Ed., Clark and Thyen eds. (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005).

when I open the door, for instance, I use the latch” (67). These entities with which we are always already in concerned dealings in the environing world Heidegger calls “equipment,” *das Zeug*.¹⁸ He then goes on to interpret the being of *das Zeug*, arguing that what it *is* is revealed:

- 1) only in the context, only as belonging-to, a totality of equipment (*Zeugganzes, Zeugganzheit*),
- 2) as essentially an in-order-to (*Um-zu*),
- 3) only vis-à-vis concerned dealings suitable to (*zugeschnitten, angemessen für*) it, and
- 4) in terms of the work/production/creation (*Werk*) “towards which” (*Wozu*) its use is directed.

Hammering is Heidegger’s choice illustration. The being of hammer is revealed 1) only in the context of worktables, nails, tool belts, wood or other materials, furniture, windows, doors, rooms, buildings, etc.; 2) as essentially being *for* hammering *something*, as something which is used *in-order-to* hammer something; 3) only vis-à-vis concerned dealings suitable to the hammer, e.g., that type of dealing which is most suitable for the hammer is hammering and not using it as a paperweight or as a device with which to destroy the next door neighbor’s hideous pink flamingo lawn ornament (a flamethrower, on the other hand, might be a more suitable tool); and 4) in terms of the work of building a chair, putting up a picture, or, in annoyed remorse, repairing that flame-charred flamingo.

¹⁸ I will retain the term *das Zeug* because whereas possible English translations such as “equipment,” “instrument” or “tools” are permissible, the German term also functions like the English “stuff,” thereby making it, at least implicitly, far more nebulous. In short, I find the possible English translations to narrow the German too much.

The being of the hammer thus explicated suggests—*contra* much of the history of philosophy—that it is inappropriate to understand it as a thing (*Dinge*), a *res*, with qualities of substantiality, materiality, extendedness, and the like, for it is only in the *action* of hammering that one encounters the hammer as what it is and that the structures above become salient. None of this occurs by staring at it as some thing *qua* object (68-69).¹⁹ That is, no amount of theoretic contemplation gives one *hammering*. In Heidegger’s idiom, concerned dealings with beings in the environing world require that one act (*handeln*), which action is always both “practical” and “theoretical” (69).

The less we just stare at the hammer-thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is—as equipment. The hammering itself uncovers the specific ‘manipulability’ [‘Handlichkeit’] of the hammer. The kind of being which equipment possesses—in which it manifests itself in its own right—we call ‘*readiness-to-hand*’...No matter how sharply we just *look* at the ‘outward appearance’ of things in whatever form this takes, we cannot discover anything ready-to-hand...If we look at things just ‘theoretically,’ we can get along without understanding readiness-to-hand. But when we deal with them by using them and manipulating them [gebrauchend-hantierende Umgang], this activity is not a blind one; it has its own kind of sight, by which our manipulation is guided and from which it acquires its specific thingly character. (69).

Concerned dealings have their *own kind of sight*, and this sight is not seen in nor elucidated in terms of a “theoretic” orientation.

Circumspection, *Umsicht*, is the name Heidegger gives to this particular kind of sight (69). Circumspection is the “sight” which “sees” the in-order-to and towards-which of *das Zeug* in its equipmental totality being used for some work (*Werk*) and constantly directs Dasein’s *Verhalten* (comportment, attitude, behavior, bearing) in terms of the

¹⁹ If one were to explain to another how to hammer, and then that person were to do so successfully with a single try, this would, far from countering this claim, substantiate it, for it is precisely due to the explanation of the one who knows *how to hammer*, who *has hammered*, that the other can most successfully learn how to do so.

being of the being which it sights. The work, it should be noted, has the being of *Zuhandensein*, readiness-to-hand, as well. It is worthwhile to rehearse how, similar to *das Zeug*, the work is what it is:

- 1) only in the context, only as belonging-to, a totality of other work,
- 2) as essentially being a being which is usable-*for*, that is, it is in terms of the usability “towards which” (*Wozu*) its production is directed, thus pointing to that for which the work is itself an in-order-to (*Um-zu*),
- 3) only vis-à-vis concerned dealings suitable to it,
- 4) only as a production “of something for something”; it is what it is only in terms of the “whereof (*Woraus*) of which it consists” (71), and
- 5) in terms of the person or peoples (*das Wer*) who are to use it, thus pointing to the regions in which the work is encountered, going from, e.g., the world of the workshop to the public world and the enviroing nature (70-71).

Using a chair as an example of a work, we can say that the chair is what it is 1) only in the context of a totality of other works: tables, stools, couches, counters, etc.;²⁰ 2) only as being usable-*for sitting in* (though it can have numerous other types of usability); 3) only vis-à-vis concerned dealings in which one *sits*, that is, the dealing which is most suitable for the chair is sitting;²¹ 4) only as being made out of wood, steel, glue, nails, etc.; and 5) in terms of the fact that it is *people* who sit in it.²² Heidegger does not explicitly state much of what was just said about the work and much more could be said and refined in terms of the structures of its being as ready-to-hand. Clearly, the differences between *das Zeug* and the work are not strict, for the hammer, e.g., is itself a made-product, a work.

²⁰ This could also be construed in terms of the producer, such that the chair, as something produced, is the project one worked on *before* making the table, *after* making the stool, and *while* making a second chair.

²¹ The difference between (2) and (3) are seen more clearly with the example of the hammer because whereas for the hammer in (2) the *Um-zu* (in service of the *Wozu*) of the hammer is to hammer *something* and in (3) its suitability is for hammering, with sitting (2) and (3) are somewhat collapsed. That which it is usable-*for* is precisely that type of dealing which is suitable-*to* it.

²² The hammer clearly also refers to people and the enviroing world, though less explicitly than the chair.

Yet, at the same time, it makes sense that within the context of our concerned dealings, the chair we are working on—that is, the chair that is a work—does not have the exact structure ontologically as does the chair we sit in *while* working, though the primary mode in which we encounter both types of beings is nevertheless that of readiness-to-hand.²³

What is of particular interest for a discussion of *der Leib* is in the way in which a phenomenological exploration of the mode of being of readiness-to-hand reveals and discovers so much more than the specific being or beings with which one is dealing. This is perhaps most obvious in the referentiality of the Who, *das Wer*. As Heidegger explains, “along with the work, we encounter not only entities ready-to-hand but also entities with Dasein’s kind of being—entities for which, in their concern, the product becomes ready-to-hand; and together with these we encounter the world in which wearers and users live, which is at the same time ours” (71). In other words, in the work we do not merely encounter “the domestic world of the workshop,” but also the public world (*öffentlichen Welt*) and the environing nature (*die Umweltnatur*).²⁴ With the chair we discover the world in which people sit, the public world, and we do so according to the leadings of the environing nature (if it is raining, one either sits inside or under some cover; if it is sunny, one often sits outside for that reason). I want to suggest it is equally clear that we not only encounter *der Leib*, but *der Leib* shows itself as an equiprimordial structuring (qua existential) of the being of every being encountered by it.

²³ This is ultimately, as John Lysaker notes, a question of function. Additionally, this discussion raises questions of how to understand “non-made” beings, such as a mountain or a tree. This is a question to which we will return.

²⁴ Again, this could equally be said of the hammer, though less explicitly.

For example, Heidegger states, “when we make use of the clock-equipment, which is proximally and inconspicuously ready-to-hand, the environing Nature is ready-to-hand along with it...when we look at the clock, we tacitly make use of the ‘sun’s position’, in accordance with which the measurement of time gets regulated in the official astronomical manner” (71). Yet, in a similar manner, is not the body, *der Leib*, also ready-to-hand along with the clock? Just as the entire logic of the “time-keeping” of the watch is configured according to “some definite constellation in the world-system,” is not nearly every detail about the watch configured, (in)formed, and determined by the character of *der Leib* (71)? Its shape is such that it fits around the arm; its hands (or digital numbering) must be large and clear enough to be seen by the eyes; the mechanism with which one changes the time must be appropriately manipulable by the human hand; the materials, sighted in the whereof (*Woraus*), which it is made out of are likewise fit to the arm, eyes, and hands—it is not made out of materials which are itchy or sticky to one’s arm; the hands or numbers are not made out of some type of iridescent material which obfuscates one’s reading of the time; it is not made out of some sort of gelatinous material such that it is difficult or impossible to put it on one’s arm or for it to then stay on one’s arm, etc. Moreover, the structural division of the time of the clock (antemeridian, postmeridian) is incontestably a product of dealing with the diurnality of the human body (and not simply the specific astronomical coordinations of the earth, the sun, and other celestial bodies). Indeed, just as Heidegger seems to suggest that one will not find a single *Zeug* or work which does not encounter the environing world in some manner or another, I am suggesting that one cannot find a single *Zeug*, work, or being which does not similarly encounter *der Leib*.

This could be repeated with the being of the hammer, for nearly every detail about the hammer is likewise configured, (in)formed, and determined by the character of *der Leib*. The material of the grip is such that however hard one swings the hammer, it should not fly out of one's hand when properly grasped; the weight of its head is engineered to utilize the physics of the human body as both the elbow and the torso act together as fulcrums—too heavy and one's grip will not be strong enough to keep hold of it, too light and one will have to take over much of the work the hammer is designed to eliminate. The list could go on and on. Paying attention to these references/referentialities (*Verweisungen*) makes clear, however, that the in-order-to of the hammer is not *simply* to hammer something, but an in-order-to to assist *the human body with what it is unable to do on its own*. Its in-order-to is tied to the possibilities of the human body, which is to say its *being* is structured by the possibilities of the human body.²⁵ This could be said equally of the watch. Such a claim is very similar to one made in Elaine Scarry's *The Body in Pain*. "The made object," she argues, "is a projection of the human body."²⁶ "When, e.g., the woven gauze of a bandage is placed over an open wound," it both mimes the function of the skin and assists its inabilities.²⁷ Scarry argues that the "interior structure" of made objects, of artifacts, are shaped by "bodily capacities and needs," or, to transpose it into a Heideggerian key, the being of these types of beings reveals the body as determinate for their being.²⁸

²⁵ Recall that a constitutive factor of the *being* of the ready-to-hand is the in-order-to.

²⁶ Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985), 281.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 281-282.

²⁸ As far as I can tell, Scarry's artifact is only understood as what it is (her "interior structure") in its relation to human being as it relates to its concerned dealings; in other words, the artifact has the being of *Zuhandensein*; see 280. The language of "made *object*" should not lead one astray in her analysis.

As obvious as this may be vis-à-vis human-made objects, what of “non-made” objects? When one encounters a tree, for instance, the primary mode of encounter on Heidegger’s account is still in terms of readiness-to-hand. The tree is encountered as climbable, as able-to-be-cut-down, as able-to-provide-shelter, etc. Is *der Leib* encountered as well? Absolutely. Every example that was just given of the way in which the tree is encountered in the mode of readiness-to-hand is precisely in terms of the (cap)abilities of *der Leib*. The tree is encountered as climbable (and the ninety-degree rock face is not) only due to the fact that *der Leib* affords Dasein certain possibilities-to-climb.²⁹ Yet this should not lead us to think that the (cap)abilities of *der Leib* are proper to Dasein. That Dasein does not have the ontic capability of, say, a gecko (whose feet are equipped with millions of branching, self-cleaning fibers called setae, allowing them to stick on nearly any surface in any spatial orientation³⁰) is only one side of the capabilities of *der Leib*, for if the gravitational pull of the earth were less, then that menacing rock face could be free soloed by effort of a strong jump and nimble aerobatics. We will return to this observation, but before we do, it is crucial to highlight the fact, which is only now becoming clear, that in talking about *der Leib*, what is *not* meant is the “flesh-and-blood” defined and classified under *homo sapiens* in the disciplines of, e.g, anatomy and physiology. Rather, what is meant is the possibilities of, the possibilizing structuring of, the body: *bodying (leiben)*. To clarify this point, we will now turn to discussion of *der Leib*.

²⁹ And it is the same affording of the capabilities/possibilities of *der Leib* that allows Dasein to invent and create climbing gear such that it can then scale that rock face. I will return to this point later.

³⁰ Minkel, JR, “Tree Frog Inspires New Easy-Off Stickies,” *Scientific American* <<http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=tree-frog-inspires-new-easy-off-stickies>> Jan 18, 2009.

An Existential Somatology: "Wir leben, indem wir leiben"

Throughout *SZ*, when Heidegger refers to the body and the problematic it presents, he speaks of "*der Leib*." "*Der Körper*" is used, on the other hand, when speaking of the body specifically in terms of objective presence, as a being in the mode of *Vorhandensein* (present-to-hand). In both English and German, there exists a distinction between body, soul, and spirit (*der Leib*, *die Seele*, and *der Geist*), yet in German, when one wants to speak of the body more specifically in terms of its physiognomy, biology, or anatomy, one usually speaks of *das Körper* (from the Lt. "corpore"). It can be used to refer to the body in a more restricted manner, in terms of that which is "still there" after death—the corpse, cadaver, carcass, etc. Whereas in English "the body" can properly be used to speak of a corpse ("His body is in the trunk," said Al Capone³¹), the German *der Leib* thus already takes us a step closer to the interpretation of the body we are seeking. Donn Welton notes, "though we do find the contrast in Scheler about the same time, it was Edmund Husserl's untiring pen that first developed the notion of *Leib*, of lived-body, and set it in opposition to *Körper*, the body under a strict physical or physicalistic description."³² Yet, however helpful *der Leib* as "lived-body" might be, what we are running up against is not merely a matter of diction, but also of grammar, for *der Leib* functions nominally every bit as much as *der Körper*.

The grammar of *der Leib* suggests that it *is* something, that it is a person, place, or thing that can be pointed to in four-dimensions. Yet, what *is der Leib*? If by using "is" one means to predicate something of a substantive, objectively present object, the correct

³¹ Lest I offend some "Al Capone," let me state: any likeness or similarity to actual events, people, places or entities, and any such likeness or similarities are unintentional and purely coincidental.

³² Donn Welton, "Introduction: Foundations of a Theory of the Body," in *The Body: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Donn Welton (Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 4.

answer is: the body is *not*. In a quote we will return to numerous times, Heidegger states during his initial lecture on Nietzsche:

We do not “have” a body in the way we carry a knife in a sheath. Neither is the body [*Leib*] a mere corporeity [*Körper*] that simply accompanies us and which we can establish, expressly or not, as being also at hand. We do not “have” a body, but we “are” bodily [*wir “sind” leiblich*]... We are not first of all ‘alive,’ only then getting an apparatus to sustain our living which we call ‘body,’ but we live to the extent in which we exist-as-body [*wir leben, indem wir leiben*].³³

In order to sound the uniquely *verbal* character of *der Leib*, a character made explicit in its etymological kinship with *leben* and a whole field of words around it—life or living (*leben*), animate (*lebend, lebendig*), animation (*lebhaftigkeit*), creature/animal (*Lebewesen*)—Heidegger crafts “leiben,” turning a noun into a verb.³⁴ While Christian Ciocan suggests “body-forth,” “exist-as-body,” or “to body” as possible translations of “leiben,” I will employ the term *bodying* as an interpretation of “leiben.”³⁵ What is at stake for Heidegger (and for us) in this neologism is much more than simply making the body “active,” turning the body into something which is “done” or “performed.” Rather, as is alluded to in the quote above, it is to connect the way in which *der Leib* is precisely

³³ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. 1: *The Will to Power as Art*, trans. David Farrell Krell (New York and Evanston: Harer & Row, 1991), 99, quoted in—with translation modified by—Christian Ciocan, “The Question of the Living Body in Heidegger’s Analytic of Dasein,” *Research in Phenomenology* 38 (2008), 77-78.

³⁴ I say “crafts” and not “coins” because in 1923, e.g., Martin Buber writes, “Er [der Baum] leibt mir gegenüber,” *Ich und Du*, (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1983), 8. Translated as *I and Thou*, by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Touchstone, 1970), 58. Kaufmann renders this as “it confronts me bodily,” a translation I find quite obscure. A more literal translation would be much better: “it bodies me in relation” or “it bodies me relationally,” thus 1) exemplifying the idiosyncrasy of the German “leibt” with the equally odd “bodies,” 2) retaining “gegenüber” as “across” or “against” but in the clearly intended sense of an encounter [see def. 2 of “vis-à-vis,” *Concise Oxford-Duden German Dictionary*, ed. Dudenredaktion, (New York: Oxford, 2005), 1252] and 3) acknowledging that, given the word order, “leibt” takes the dative “mir.” I note all this to make clear (as it would immediately be to a German reader) the unique way Buber uses this word. Moreover, the phrase “wie er leibt und lebt” (the very image of him) exists in modern German, a phrase with which both Buber and Heidegger were likely familiar.

³⁵ Ciocan, “The Question of the Living Body,” 2008. I do not mean to suggest that my usage of this term relates to what Heidegger “meant” in the above passage; hence, I do not call it a translation but an interpretation. I am merely taking his German neologism as a spark from which the present investigation of bodying is lit.

not “a mere corporeity,” a mere *Körper*, but is something which in its very being speaks to the life (*das Leben*), the aliveness (*die Lebhaftigkeit*) of Dasein.

Thirty years later, Heidegger returns to this point—again in the context of Nietzsche—in the Heraclitus Seminars with Eugen Fink. In forging an interpretation of Heraclitus’ Fragment 26, the phenomenon of the body, “*das Leibphänomen*,” arises in the context of talking about Dasein both as the clearing of being and as, in Fink’s words, “tied to the underground of all clearing.”³⁶ Heidegger then states, “this would become intelligible first of all through the phenomenon of the body,” quickly clarifying that “body is not meant ontically” (nor, Fink adds, “in the Husserlian sense”) but “rather as Nietzsche thought the body.”³⁷ Shortly thereafter, Heidegger avers, “a human is embodied [*leibt*] only when he lives [*lebt*]...thereby, ‘to live’ [*leben*] is meant in the existential sense.”³⁸ The formula has now been reversed, but this is not a change of position. Rather, it is merely its semantic obverse. “We live to the extent we are bodying...we are bodying to the extent we live,” or, more simply, “*wir sind leben; wir*

³⁶ Martin Heidegger and Eugen Fink, *Heraclitus Seminar*, trans. Charles H. Seibert (Illinois: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1994), 145. To clarify, for Heidegger the “problematic of the body” names, as David Levin notes, “the *relationship* between our animal nature and our human nature,” see David Michael Levin, “The Ontological Dimension of Embodiment: Heidegger’s Thinking of Being,” in *The Body: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Donn Welton (Mass: Blackwell, 1999), 126. Yet, putting it this way makes him sound embarrassingly anachronistic. I find that what is at stake in this problematic is the way in which one cannot think the problematic of the ontological difference without thinking that of the body (and *visa versa*), and although Heidegger never phrases it in such a fashion, this is the primary way in which it is raised as a problem in the first place—in terms of how Dasein’s being is unique such that it is open to being as Dasein and yet is clearly ontic such that it “*too*” is an “animal.” Had Heidegger spent more time probing this issue, I like to imagine that the blatant humanism in such a distinction would have been softened or even erased. It is pure prejudice to assume that animals do not have access to being, however different their access might be from ours. We may be the only beings that *question* being and for whom our own being is a question, but *that* is not enough to create the truly “abyssal” gap between animals and ourselves Heidegger often entertains.

³⁷ *Idem*. Heidegger adds, “even though it is obscure what he actually meant by it.”

³⁸ *Ibid*, 146.

sind leiblich.” Bodying as *leiben* works to identify and connect *der Leib* as it is vis-à-vis *be-ing-in-the-world*.³⁹

Let us return to what was being suggested about the body and its “relation” to the world as regards its (cap)abilities. To take a new but related example, it is indeed the case, and Heidegger continually probes and points to the ontological import of this, that the pen and paper on a table do not present themselves as equipment *for writing* unless there is a being that is open as Dasein is and, thus, for whom these beings (pen, paper, table) can appear as something to be encountered (as explicit objects of concern) in such a way. Hopefully equally obvious is the fact that this being must have opposable thumbs in order to encounter the being of the pen (and of the paper and table) in this way as well as the fact that specific conditions within the electromagnetic field must exist for there to be proper friction such that a pen, pencil, or any such instrument of writing could function; yet what is not obvious about this ontic fact is what it indicates ontologically. I am proposing that the fact that the being of the pen referentially reveals the body is a formal indication of the fact that the being of the pen is itself determined by the bodying of Dasein, just as Dasein’s possible ways of encountering—possible ways of being (open to)—the pen are determined by its bodying.⁴⁰ Bodying names an equiprimordial

³⁹ This connection between *leben* and *leiben* is not mere etymological play for Heidegger; it gets to the core of what “being alive” and “the body” mean. One cannot have one without the other, and this is more than a banal fact about the body as alive verses the body as dead—though, how, why, and that this is more than such a fact is extremely complicated to explain. Thus, in my employment of “bodying” to translate *leiben*, the zoetic component must not be forgotten. The distance from “body” to “bodying” is the distance from the body as a “thing” to the body *as alive*. What it means, both ontologically and ontically, to say that the body *is* alive or that it speaks to our *aliveness* (and thus should be spoken of as “bodying”) unfortunately outstrips the parameters of this paper, but it is nonetheless in the background of what I take to be at stake in speaking of *leiben*.

⁴⁰ This is not at all to say that the bodying of Dasein is the *sole* determinate “factor” of the being of the pen; rather, it is *one* of the structures determinative for it, just as the *Um-zu* or *Wozu* are. This seems like a more difficult claim to make in terms of non-made objects, such as a bird. How is the being of a bird determined by the bodying of Dasein? The answer follows the lines of those given with other objects: if

structure, an existential, of Dasein's being, for, as every example from the hammer to the tree has shown, Dasein's encounters with every being are pre-reflectively oriented in terms of its bodily possibilities (i.e. capabilities), its bodying.⁴¹ Firstly, this must be understood in terms of the equiprimordiality of the existentials.⁴² Secondly, though, it requires a discussion of projective understanding.

In speaking of the hermeneutic circle, Heidegger argues that when this phrase is used pejoratively, one admits of misunderstanding what “belongs to the essence and to the distinctive character of understanding as such” (314). In other words, as stated from the outset, in even asking a question about something, not to mention making a judgment regarding it, one *presupposes*. This does not mean that we are always positing arbitrary propositions “from which we deduce further propositions” but, rather, that “pre-supposing” has “the character of an understanding projection, in such a manner indeed that the Interpretation by which such an understanding gets developed, will let that which is to be interpreted *put itself into words for the very first time*” (314-315). This presupposing is not something we decide to do; rather, in Dasein's very being, Dasein projects understandingly. “As understanding, Dasein projects its being upon possibilities...in terms of the significance which is disclosed in understanding to the

Dasein did not see the particular wavelengths it does of the electro-magnetic field; if it did not hear the particular frequencies it does; if the fact that birds could fly were shared with it as opposed to being an obvious difference—all of these things would alter Dasein's specific way of being in the world such that what it takes to be the ontological constitution (its projected understanding, to foreshadow our discussion of “meaning” below) of the bird would likewise be altered. Dasein's ontological understanding, as Heidegger constantly repeats, is inextricable from, is always already *revealed* in, its ontic, “pre-ontological” understanding.

⁴¹ And, again, this does not mean it's own body as opposed to the bodies of things around it; “the body” only means what it means *qua* situated in its environment.

⁴² “The phenomenon of the *equiprimordiality* [Gleichursprünglichkeit] of constitutive factors has often been disregarded in ontology on account of a methodically unrestrained tendency to derive everything and anything from a simple ‘primordial ground’ [‘Urgrund’],” *SZ*, 124.

world, concerned Being-alongside the ready-to-hand gives itself to understand whatever involvement that which is encountered can have” (148). Pre-reflective bodily orientations towards possibilities in the world are *precisely* one of the ways Dasein gives itself to its involvements, that is, one equiprimordial structure of “whatever involvement that which is encountered can have” is the possibilities afforded by the body, by *bodying*.

Heidegger explains, “projecting discloses possibilities—that is to say, it discloses the sort of thing that makes possible. To lay bare the ‘upon which’ of a projection amounts to disclosing that which makes possible what has been projected” (324). Put more clearly, when we inquire into the meaning of something, we are asking “what makes possible the totality of the articulated structural whole” of it, “in the unity of its articulation” as it is phenomenologically unfolded (324). Dasein’s being is such that, in its being, it is projecting—it is always ahead of itself in terms of its possibilities, and meaning (*Sinn*) is the articulation of such projecting in its possibility.⁴³ The projecting of Dasein’s understanding of being lays out the upon-which, which is what constitutes the *Sinn* of something, for, to clarify, “the totality of the articulated structural whole” of a being *is* only in terms of its being, which is itself understood beforehand in the primary projection of Dasein. Heidegger goes on to say

As a disclosure, understanding always pertains to the whole basic state of being-in-the-world. As a potentiality-for-being, any being-in is a potentiality-for-being-in-the-world. Not only is the world, *qua* world, disclosed as possible significance, but when that which is within-the-world is itself freed, this entity is freed for *its own* possibilities. That which is ready-to-hand is discovered as such in its

⁴³ Projection, however, is explained primarily in terms of understanding (*Verstehen*), which Heidegger defines as “the existential being of Dasein’s own potentiality-for-being [Seinkönnen]; and it is so in such a way that *this being discloses in itself what its being is capable of*” (144, my italics). Understanding, put simply, names the basic mode of Dasein, namely, as a potentiality-for-being. “Dasein is such that in every case it has understood (or alternatively, not understood) that it is to be thus or thus. As such understanding it ‘knows’ *what* it is capable of—that is, what its potentiality-for-being is capable of” (144).

serviceability, its usability, and its detrimentality. The totality of involvements is revealed as the categorical whole of a *possible* interconnection of the ready-to-hand (144). If we say that entities ‘have meaning,’ this signifies that they have become accessible *in their being*, and this being, as projected upon its “upon which”, is what ‘really’ ‘has meaning’ first of all. (324).

We can only understand what it means to say, “bodying is ontologically determinate for, is an equiprimordial structuring of, the possibilities of Dasein,” if “possibilities” is heard as designating a “categorical whole of possible interconnection[s] of the ready-to-hand” (in a “totality of involvement”) precisely *in terms of* “possible significance.”

In other words, *possibility signifies the opening up of significance, of meaning*. Treating possibility in this way breaks with the tendency in medieval and most modern philosophy to place possibility on an ontologically “lower level than actuality and necessity” (143). Here, instead, possibility is “the most primordial and ultimate way in which Dasein is positively determined ontologically,” and possibility is likewise the most primordial and ultimate way in which the meaning of any given being is understood and determined (143). Along with ensnarement, existence, facticity, and signification (i.e., equiprimordially), one of the ways in which the projecting of Dasein’s understanding of being lays out is in terms of Dasein’s bodying, and as I have attempted to show, every encounter Dasein has with beings indeed reveals Dasein’s bodying as one of the ontological structures of those beings.

Be this as it may, what is left unexplored here is *how it is* that referentiality functions, such that the readiness-to-hand of the hammer and the pen discovers the public world, the environing world, the body, etc. In speaking of such “discovering,” Heidegger states

Our concerned absorption in whatever work-world lies closest to us has a function of discovering; and it is essential to this function that, depending upon the way in which we are absorbed, those entities within-the-world which are brought along in the work and with it (that is to say, in the assignments or references which are constitutive for it) remain discoverable in varying degrees of explicitness and with a varying circumspective penetration (71).

Thus, before we can penetrate what is at stake in saying that *der Leib* is ready-to-hand *along with* the being of *das Zeug* and the work and, *a fortiori*, that bodying is determinate for the being of such beings, we need to explain what is going on ontologically by way of these assignments or references, for it is referentiality which has been the organizing methodological tool “revealing” the being of the beings we have discussed. The totality or whole (which is *eo ipso* referential) of a given being (*das Um-zu, die Angemessenheit, das Wozu, das Woraus, and das Wer*) is discovered—is itself a *discovering*—by way of referentiality.⁴⁴

Verweisungen: Signs, Signification, and der Leib

As one would expect, Heidegger saw the structural relationship between the ready-to-hand and referentiality, even stating, “the structure of the being of what is ready-to-hand as equipment *is determined by* references or assignments” (74, my italics).⁴⁵ In §17, he explicitly takes up “a kind of equipment in which one may come across such ‘references’ in more senses than one,” and he designates signs (*Zeichen*) as such equipment (77). While the term “sign” covers many different kinds of signs, it can also be “formalized as a *universal kind of relation...being-a-sign-for*,” yet this covers over the

⁴⁴ That is to say, as ontological structures of *Zuhandensein*, these are discovered by way of *Verweisung* and, at the same time, they themselves discover what they discover (e.g., the *Wer* discovers the public world) by way of *Verweisung*. Referentiality is both that by which these structures are discovered and the internal logic of the structures discovered by it.

⁴⁵ See Appendix I.

circumspection to the environing world, unlike the hammer which does so implicitly (82).

The central point of this is the fact that the sign does not explain the ontological structure of referentiality but, rather, shows itself, like the hammer, to be founded upon it.

To say that the being of the ready-to-hand has the structure of assignment or reference means that it has in itself the character of *having been assigned or referred*. A being is discovered when it has been assigned or referred to something, and referred as that entity which it is. *With any such entity there is an involvement which it has in something. The character of being which belongs to the ready-to-hand is just such an involvement...the relationship of the 'with...in...' shall be indicated by the term Verweisung*" (84).

The involvements, *die Bewandnisse*, which are definite for possible references vis-à-vis a given being are thus "ontologically definitive for the being" of that being and not mere "ontical assertion[s] about it." In other words, *all the involvements which constitute the referentiality of a being are ontologically definitive for it* (84).⁴⁷

The specific serviceability-for of beings with the being of readiness-to-hand is, however derivatively, *always* in relation to projects of Dasein which cannot be understood outside of possibilities of its bodying.⁴⁸

With the 'towards-which' of serviceability there can again be an involvement: *with* this thing, for instance, which is ready-to-hand, and which we accordingly call a 'hammer', there is an involvement in hammering; with hammering, there is an involvement in making something fast; with making something fast, there is an involvement in protection against bad weather; and this protection 'is' for the sake of [um-willen] providing shelter for Dasein—that is to say, for the sake of a possibility of Dasein's being. Dasein always assigns itself from a 'for-the-sake-of-which' [Worum-willen] to the 'with-which' [Womit] of an involvement; that is to say, to the extent that it is, it always lets entities be encountered as ready-to-hand. *That wherein* [Worin] Dasein understands itself beforehand in the mode of assigning itself is *that for which* [das Woraufhin] it has let beings be encountered

⁴⁷ This substantiates my earlier claim regarding the hammer that to say that its in-order-to is tied to the possibilities of the human body is to say that its *being* is structured by the possibilities of the human body. My further claim, of course, is that this is true of all beings. Also, it's important to note that Heidegger differentiates the assignment or referring that *leads* to the discovery of the being, yet, at the same time, these assignments themselves constitute *what* is discovered as the being of the discovered being. Both senses are at play in the definition here.

⁴⁸ And, to repeat, this serviceability is itself "a constitutive state of equipment" (84).

beforehand. The “*wherein*” of an act of understanding which assigns or refers itself, is that for which one lets entities be encountered in the kind of Being that belongs to involvements; and this ‘*wherein*’ is the phenomenon of the world. And the structure of that to which [woraufhin] Dasein assigns itself is what makes up the *worldhood* of the world (84, 86).

Heidegger started his investigation of the phenomenon of world by noting that it is only by looking to the beings encountered in the “closest world of everyday Dasein” and their specific being that such structures can be revealed (63-66).⁴⁹ The structure of the world was revealed as that wherein (*Worin*) Dasein understands itself beforehand in the mode of assigning itself, and the wherein is precisely that-for-which (*das Woraufhin*) Dasein has let entities be encountered beforehand (86). The kind of being of beings encountered in the wherein, the world, is always discovered beforehand in terms of involvements, and accordingly, these involvements are determinate for the being, revealed through referentiality, of those beings. That to-which or upon-which (*das Woraufhin*) Dasein assigns itself is thus what constitutes the worldhood of the world.

At this point, I have claimed that bodying is an existential of Dasein. It is ontologically definitive for and it equiprimordially structures the being of every being it encounters. Following Heidegger to his definition of the structure of the worldhood of the world as the upon-which (as that upon-which Dasein has always already assigned itself in its circumspect, concerned dealings with that wherein it is, the world), I have argued that this claim is, within the very phenomenological methodology Heidegger avouches, disclosed in the being of readiness-to-hand.⁵⁰ Yet, I have not clearly delineated the function of possibility and meaning in the previous sections, and once I

⁴⁹ See above pgs. 11-15.

⁵⁰ Because the present-to-hand is a *narrowing* of the mode of the ready-to-hand, this is *a fortiori* the case with it.

have, we will be able to see more clearly what is at stake in understanding the bodying of Dasein.

∞ Bodying, Meaning, Possibility, and Excess

Not even one page into *SZ* and the question of meaning, *Sinn*, rings out.⁵¹

Heidegger capitalizes on this little word and its manifold senses throughout *SZ*, yet, somewhat uncharacteristically, not until §65 of Division 2 does he explain in formal terms how “meaning” has been meant and utilized methodologically in the previous three hundred or so pages. It becomes clear very quickly, however, that the semantic fraying of “meaning” is twined together by the thread of possibility. Interestingly, the upon-which reappears, now as the key term used to explicate the structure of meaning. “‘Meaning’ [Sinn]” Heidegger explains, “signifies the ‘upon which’ of a primary projection in terms of which something can be conceived in its possibility as that which it is.” Repeating lines cited earlier, he goes on to clarify, “Projecting discloses possibilities—that is to say, it discloses the sort of thing that makes possible. To lay bare the ‘upon which’ of a projection amounts to disclosing that which makes possible what has been projected” (324).

Following this, the meaning, taken in Heidegger’s formal sense of the word, of the body is bodying, that is, the meaning of the body is the possibilities afforded by the determining capabilities of bodying for a categorical whole of possible interconnections of beings in a totality of involvement, understood in terms of possible significance. Among other examples, invention can be seen as a multifaceted illustration which makes

⁵¹ Actually, it rings out before the book proper even starts—in the forward: *SZ*, 1.

explicit Dasein's bodying insofar as it opens a categorical whole of possible interconnections of beings in a totality of possible significances. Imagine—or, depending on the reader's age, *recall*—when various countries attempted to put a person on the moon. In terms of evolutionary history, it took an astronomically long amount of time for technology to be developed such that this was a legitimate possibility, yet, in the end as in the beginning, the most crucial and defining factor was dealing with the possibilities of the human body. I don't mean this solely in terms of obvious facts such as: humans cannot maintain life for more than a few minutes without oxygen; humans cannot withstand temperatures outside of a specific and relatively small range; humans can only experience so many g-forces before there is life-threatening damage to our internal organs, etc. I also mean this in terms of the possibilities of mathematical and theoretical developments. It took theoretical physics quite some time to progress to the point where rockets necessary to send a ship into space could be developed—among a host of other things. As mundane as these examples might appear, they demonstrate the way in which the bodying of Dasein determines the possibilities for Dasein's being and, more formally, that the bodying of Dasein is ontologically definitive for, is equiprimordially structuring of, the being of every being that it encounters, including itself. The moon, once encountered primarily as hostile, as inhospitable, is now encountered as a “new frontier,” as an object which exemplifies human ability, etc.

Elaine Scarry, in a different context, speaks of how the bodying (to use our terminology) of the human hand

may itself be altered, redesigned, repaired through, for example, an asbestos glove (allowing the hand to act on materials as though it were indifferent to temperatures of 500°), a baseball mitt (allowing the hand to receive continual

concussion as though immune to concussion), a scythe (magnifying the scale and cutting action of the cupped hand many times over), a pencil (endowing the hand with a voice that has more permanence than the speaking voice, and relieving communication of the requirement that speaker and listener be physically present in the same space), and so on, through hundreds of other objects. The natural hand (burnable, breakable, small, and silent) now becomes the artifact-hand (unburnable, unbreakable, large, and endlessly vocal).⁵²

The bodying of Dasein allows us to both understand the hand as burnable,

breakable, small, and silent *and* as what allows Dasein to create works (*Werke*) which then “remake” the hand as unburnable, unbreakable, large, and endlessly vocal. This harkens back to Jane Hirshfield’s poem, “A Hand,” cited at the beginning of this division. After carefully discarding all the things that the hand is not, all the things to which or for which the hand could be wrongly reduced—whether as “four fingers and a thumb” or its writings on “the ecstatic body”—the hand, she suggests, *is not* at all. It is not until the hand turns upward, until it is seen in its *openness* and its *questioning*, that we truly “see” the hand. What do we see? “It rises, swarms, departs.”⁵³ The hand *does*.

Until then, we might have understood the hand as the maple’s leaf, like a thing or object, yet while “the maple’s green hands do not cup the proliferant rain,” the hand *does* precisely because the hand, whatever its actual grip (catching, cupping, holding, beating), is open; it is not static; it is not a thing; it is open to the world—it must be understood as a *how*, not a *what*. Hirshfield’s language almost betrays itself as the “hand turned upward *holds* only a single, transparent question.” For *what* is holding? Not the four fingers and thumb, nor the palm or knuckles; not even “a meadow of holding.” The trick is to hear who is doing the asking here. Why isn’t the poem entitled “What is a hand?” but, rather, “A Hand”? What happened to the question? It is “unanswerable” because the hand itself

⁵² Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 254.

⁵³ Jane Hirshfield, “A Hand,” *Given Sugar, Given Salt*, 9.

“holds” this question; the hand *is* this question, and the hand—as open, as a question—is infinite because it *is* its (infinite) possibilities. There is no answer to what the hand *is*. Rather, the hand *asks us* what it is and *asks us* to determine it. The hand is not what it has done—it is not the shaping of the yeast-bread or the inking of the page, but is what it is only as it *possibilizes* itself, as it *does*. Echoing Scarry, the hand asks us to make it (glove, mitt, scythe, pencil) just as it itself makes; the hand asks us to do (weld, catch, work, write) just as the hand *does*. Such a resonance opens our ears to hear the fact that so many languages equate doing with making as more than a mere linguistic oddity (*hacer*, Spanish; *faire*, French; *machen*, German); such an equation is not an ontic confusion, but an ontological recognition.

The hand names a possibilizing bearing of Dasein’s bodying—a making of (and thus openness to) possibilities and thus possible significances which bears on the directing-determining of Dasein’s bodying. Here, with the hand, we see an example of how the meaning of the body is bodying; the meaning of the hand is its possibilities or, more precisely, its specific *possibilizing*, its specific *capabilizing*, of the bodying of Dasein. Before we finally turn to a phenomenology of suffering, we will address some possible objections to bodying as it has been presented thus far.

Objections to Bodying as an Existential

In Lilian Alweiss' *The World Unclaimed: A Challenge to Heidegger's Critique of Husserl*, she reads Heidegger's treatment of spatiality as being devoid of *any* reference or referentiality to Dasein's "bodily nature," "bodily presence," or "corporeality."⁵⁴

Firstly, Heidegger's emphasis on Dasein's spatiality should not lead us to believe he is arguing that the subject is always embodied. Indeed, Dasein's spatiality is *not* a result of its *bodily* nature. Being-in should not be understood as a spatial relationship... We should never confuse Dasein's existential structure of Being-in-the-world with the way in which a body is in space. Similarly, we should never understand Dasein's spatiality in terms of its corporeality or bodily presence, for this would lead us to misinterpret Dasein's existential structure ontically.⁵⁵

She then quotes from *SZ*, where Heidegger says, "Hence being-in is not to be explained ontologically by some ontical characterization, as if one were to say, for instance, that being-in a world is a spiritual property, and that man's spatiality is a result of his bodily nature (which, at the same time, always gets 'founded' upon corporeality)" (56). First of all, it been repeated numerous times that the present analysis is by no means trying to define Dasein's spatiality or anything else about Dasein in terms of objective presence, wherein two objects are "in space" next to each other. Such a reading would completely misconstrue what Heidegger is doing throughout the whole of *SZ*. Secondly, bodying, as we have taken pains to explain, is an *ontological*—that is, existential—structure, and our formal definition of bodying should make it abundantly clear that bodying is not explained in terms of or "by some ontical characterization."

I have, via the formal indication of (Heideggerian) phenomenological method, moved from ontic "examples" to ontological structures. The mistake, which Alweiss

⁵⁴ Lilian Alweiss, *The World Unclaimed: A Challenge to Heidegger's Critique of Husserl*, (Ohio: Ohio Univ. Press, 2003) 83.

⁵⁵ Lilian, 83.

rightly points to, is to take ontic examples to be *themselves* indicative of the ontological structures. To define the *being* of the bird as being-in-flight because the bird, as a matter of fact, flies is precisely such a mistake; it is to take an ontic fact (birds fly) and to transpose it into ontological structure (the being of the bird is to be-in-flight). To say that (Newtonian) spatiality is an existential of Dasein because ontically Dasein is “in space” is the same procedural mistake.⁵⁶ At no point has such an argument been made, though the ontic examples that have abounded could lead one to believe so, were one to mistake the methodology at work, and that is why an account of that methodology was given.

Another possible objection could be that bodying does nothing more than transpose some notion of “embodiment” into the being of Dasein, that is, nothing actually changes in the analytic of Dasein by examining the body. I believe an example of such a move is found at certain points in David Levin’s work. In an essay on “The Ontological Dimension of Embodiment,” he remarks, “briefly stated, the ontological dimension of our embodiment is its (our) openness-to-being, its (our) ecstatic exposedness, its (our) receptive responsiveness and responsive receptivity to the presencing of being.”⁵⁷ This is not an explanation of “embodiment,” however (and perhaps Levin means to notify the reader of this by setting it off with “briefly stated”), for it merely transfers what is said about the being of Dasein onto a “dimension of our [Dasein’s] embodiment” and stops short of explaining what the body is and means ontologically. This is likely not even a goal of Levin’s, for he is not interested in talking about bodying in the terms of *SZ* as

⁵⁶ Obviously, it is a matter of method that is at issue, for it could well turn out to be that spatiality is an existential of Dasein, if it could be shown via phenomenological analysis. Saying that this is so *because of an ontic fact*, however, is not to attempt phenomenological analysis, but to feign (phenomenological) methodological procedure altogether.

⁵⁷ David Michael Levin, “The Ontological Dimension of Embodiment: Heidegger’s Thinking of Being,” in *The Body: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Donn Welton (Mass: Blackwell, 1999), 128.

much as he is of *reinterpreting SZ* such that it is, as it stands, a treatise on, or at least in intimate dialogue with, the embodiedness of Dasein. On a basic level, I couldn't agree more with his assertion that "the ontology of *Being and Time* is not intelligible, not possible, except for embodied beings, beings endowed with eyes, ears, arms and hands, throat and lips. The modes of being in and as which being presences itself only express themselves through, and *a fortiori* depend on, these organs of our embodiment."⁵⁸ Yet, the reason Dasein—and not we as factually "embodied beings"—is made the theme of *SZ* is because Heidegger thinks that looking to "beings *endowed with eyes, ears, arms and hands, throat and lips*" already obfuscates fundamental ontology. It is to start a phenomenal investigation having already narrowly decided on the being of the beings in question. Is Dasein *endowed* with a body and its constituent parts? Does Dasein's openness to being go "*through*" the "organs of our embodiment"? Such language suggests that Dasein's body is something distinct from it, which is nevertheless given to it; it's a replay of the soul-spirit, mind-body distinction, however much more nuance his account may possess.

Taking our cue from the phenomenology of Dasein's being and the beings in its world, I have *begun* with bodying as an existential of Dasein's, worked to reveal what this means for its being, and finally come to understand bodying as the determination or directing of its possibilities of being-in-the-world. There is no mind-body or Dasein-embodiment split, because no such split appears phenomenologically. In Levin's account, not only does he *not* rework the analytic of Dasein from the "ground up," as it were, he implicitly assumes a facile mind-body distinction which belies any accurate

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 129.

phenomenology of human being-in-the-world. Levin, as far as I can tell, doesn't re-think Dasein in terms of embodiment. To put it bluntly, he just says, "I never met a Dasein without a body"—a claim that needs no argument and which in and of itself adds nothing substantive to the Dasein analytic.

Another potential argument against bodying is that it has the potential to collapse the distinction between Dasein and animals. This is, on a certain level, correct. Frank Schalow, in *The Incarnality of Being: The Earth, Animals, and the Body in Heidegger's Thought*, argues that the body serves as a "clue" in the turning away from the forgottenness of being, explaining that "the question of embodiment reemerges in the turning as a distinct way by which human beings experience the tension of mediating this unity and diversity [of being's manifestness qua *physis*—emergent becoming], insofar as we are included within the whole of beings and yet distinguish the place (*Ort*) for being's appearance."⁵⁹ This "tension," I believe, is feigned, ultimately stemming from a prejudice that Dasein is the only being for whom being *is* at all. This is, of course, fully in step with many of Heidegger's comments regarding the relation between human being and "animality" or "animal nature." Yet, as stated above, I find it simply prejudicial to assume that animals have no access to being, for it is one thing to say that the particular way in which being presences to a being with the being of Dasein is *unique* and another thing to say that being simply *does not presence* for beings without such being.⁶⁰ I bring this up in the pretext of "possible objections to bodying," because I take one of the more important understandings borne by bodying to be the way in which it allows one to think

⁵⁹ Frank Schalow, *The Incarnality of Being: The Earth, Animals, and the Body in Heidegger's Thought* (New York: State Univ. of New York Press, 2006), 149.

⁶⁰ See above, pg. 16, fn. 38.

the ontological difference without hypostatizing human being such that it is placed firmly across an ontological abyss from “animal” being. On my account, one cannot think the being of Dasein without thinking its bodying, just as one cannot think the being of animals without thinking their bodying. In other words, the access to being of beings unlike Dasein is a question of ontological specificity, not of an ontological chasm.

Bodying does not refer to the body in time and space; it does not transpose a pre-established notion of “embodiment” into Dasein’s being; and it does, to a certain degree, work to bridge the supposedly unbridgeable chasm between human and animal being. Bodying names an equiprimordial structuring of the being of every being Dasein encounters, including itself.⁶¹ Without such a conception, Heidegger’s insight into “projective understanding,” among other things, misses a crucial component, for, as I’ve argued, the being of every being Dasein encounters has always already been protectively understood in terms of Dasein’s bodying. How else can one fully explain the grip of the hammer, the “handholds” of the tree, the shape of the pen, or the face of the moon? One cannot, in short, explain the being of these beings without referring to the bodying of Dasein, and as I attempted to show above, in the phenomenology of the ready-to-hand Heidegger was, point of fact, constantly referring to the bodying of Dasein—he just never gave it its ontological due. Having now hopefully established a clearer understanding of bodying, we will turn to a phenomenology of suffering, wherein bodying should further show itself as an existential of Dasein.

⁶¹ I will speak more of this “including itself” in the following division.

PART 2: A PHENOMENOLOGY OF SUFFERING

“Pain penetrates
 Me drop
 by drop”
 —Sappho

“There is a pain – so utter –
 It swallows substance up –
 Then covers the Abyss with Trance –
 So Memory can step
 Around – across – upon it –”
 —Emily Dickinson

“By its dire excess dissolve my sight,
 And thus entomb me in perpetual night!...
 O send it hither! I again would try,
 Tho’ in the attempt of conquering I die
 For thus to languish on is worse than death,
 And *I have hope* if Heav’n recall my breath.”
 — *The Head-Ach*, Jane Cave

“English, which can express the thoughts of Hamlet and the tragedy of Lear, has no words for the shiver and the headache. The merest schoolgirl, when she falls in love, has Shakespeare, Donne, Keats to speak her mind for her; but let a sufferer try to describe a pain in his head to a doctor and language at once runs dry.”
 —Virginia Woolf

∞ Suffering Da-sein: Bearing the *πάθος* of Pain

I have argued that a constitutive factor of Da-sein’s being is *leiben*, bodying, and that the bodying of Dasein is ontologically definitive for the being of every being it encounters, including itself. I am now in a position to explore the claim that the bodying of Da-sein offers an account of how this being can suffer and also to use suffering as an example of how bodying is indeed definitive for the being of every being Dasein encounters. Both claims are incomplete, of course, without an accompanying description

of the suffering of which Dasein is possible, and this will thus comprise much of what follows. Lest one think that such an account is, whether insightful or not, ultimately peripheral, I want to call upon Virginia Woolf as a provocative and breathtaking witness to the utter *centrality* of pain and the rich referentiality it reveals.

How common illness is, how tremendous the spiritual change that it brings, how astonishing, when the lights of health go down, the undiscovered countries that are then disclosed, what wastes and deserts of the soul a slight attack of influenza brings to light, what precipices and lawns sprinkled with bright flowers a little rise of temperature reveals, what ancient and obdurate oaks are uprooted in us in the act of sickness...“I am in bed with influenza,” he says, and actually complains that he gets no sympathy. “I am in bed with influenza”—but what does that convey of the great experience; how the world has changed its shape; the tools of business grown remote; the sounds of festival become romantic like a merry-go-round heard across far fields; the friends have changed, some putting on a strange beauty, others deformed to the squatness of toads, while the whole landscape of life lies remote and fair, like the shore seen from a ship far out at sea, and he is now exalted on a peak and needs no help from man or God, and now grovels supine on the floor glad of a kick from a housemaid...We float with the sticks on the stream; helter skelter with the dead leaves on the lawn, irresponsible and disinterested and able, perhaps for the first time for years, to look round, to look up – to look, for example, at the sky.⁶²

Woolf adeptly describes how illness attunes us to aspects of existence that we otherwise easily pass over and how, in certain cases, it illuminates aspects we might *never* see. Indeed, it is precisely illness’ ability to fundamentally alter our being-in-the-world that affords its unique insight into human being.

Limiting this ability to illness is too narrow, however, and I find “pain” a more accurate term to describe a range of phenomenon—the general structures of which Woolf acutely espies—which can, under certain conditions, precipitate such alterations of our

⁶² *Ibid*, 317, 319, 321. The essay is, ironically and purposefully, a performance of precisely that tendency it questions: instead of retaining illness as its theme, it slowly but surely moves to a nobler topic—literature itself. As if focusing on illness were already too much, the ill person (and essayist) picks up a few lines of poetry or snippets of prose here and there, and soon they (the ill and the essayist) have lost themselves in it—for “always to have sympathy...would be intolerable” (320-321)—so what of Sir John Leslie?

being-in-the-world as well as of the being of beings in the environing world. Yet, the pain of torture, the pain of unrequited love, the pain of mourning—these are qualitatively similar only at the most abstract level. Only “reasoning from another world,” to borrow Dostoevsky’s phrase, could produce such a metrics.⁶³ Be this as it may, we will see that the looseness of language alone cannot account for the intricate semantic orchestration arranged by the symphony of “pain.”

Pain, as defined by the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP), is “an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage...It is unquestionably a sensation in a part or parts of the body, but it is also always unpleasant and therefore also an emotional experience. Experiences which resemble pain but are not unpleasant, e.g., pricking, should not be called pain.”⁶⁴ This appears straightforward at first, but even in purely biological terms, it is quite difficult to analytically determine with sufficient precision what does and does not qualify as pain—hence the IASP’s use of the words “experience” and “associate” as opposed to more scientifically and diagnostically exact terms. Furthermore, if one focuses, say, on pain that occurs solely relative to the organ of the skin, even then there is much room for disagreement. For example, David Sinclair notes

The pain spots in the skin are so densely distributed that it is almost impossible to find a touch, cold, or warm spot which is not also sensitive to pain. Again, pain is unique in that it can be produced by almost any kind of stimulus, provided it is

⁶³ Fyodor Dostoevsky. *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volkhonsky (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002), 238.

⁶⁴ The International Association for the Study of Pain, 2009, Accessed March 2009, <<http://www.iasp-pain.org/>> (follow these links: Resources>Pain Terminology>Pain). For a concise, albeit incomplete, account of the history of concepts in pain research, see *Handbook of Perception: Feeling and Hurting*, Vol. VIB, Ed. Edward C. Carterette and Morton P. Friedman (New York: Academic Press, 1978), 159-179.

intense enough...most people today would agree with Piéron that pain is not on quite the same footing as touch, warm, and cold, for it is separable into two definite components, the sensation itself, and the emotional reaction to the sensation. Sometimes pain behaves as if the pure sensation were the dominant factor, and sometimes as if the ‘affective component’ were the more important of the two. There is also no doubt that purely psychological factors can evoke pain in the form of a somatic hallucination.⁶⁵

While it is possible, of course, to attempt a taxonomy of pain based upon factors such as organismic response and temporal duration—which, e.g., Sufka and Turner have attempted (see Appendix, Table 1)—there is general agreement about only one thing: pain is useful. In terms of evolutionary history, pain is a crucial tool for the human organism to become aware of threats to its well-being and also the well-being of its environment.⁶⁶ Yet, there are clearly cases where pain fails to function in this manner; indeed, so far from being adaptive, it can actually be *maladaptive* to the human organism. Chronic pain is just such a phenomenon, and it opens a unique door to examining a correlate of pain: suffering.

If one is interested in pain and suffering, chronic pain is an exemplary phenomenon to study precisely because it unquestionably covers the terrain of both, however one wishes to differentiate them. If one defines pain solely as “physical” pain, then the chronic pain sufferer (hereafter “CP sufferer”) automatically qualifies, and if one

⁶⁵ David Sinclair, *Cutaneous Sensation* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), 7-8. It is interesting that, as a point of contrast to Woolf’s assertion that language pales before pain and Scarry’s contention (dealt with below) that in pain language turns in on itself, Sinclair writes, “It is the urgency of pain that wrenches our vocabulary out of its indifference, and we recognize a considerable range of experiences which we describe in words such as ‘pricking’ and ‘burning, ‘cutting, or ‘stabbing’. Only a few such words (‘dull, ‘aching’) are qualitative; others may describe merely the time characteristics of the pain (‘throbbing’), its spatial extension (‘shooting’), or its affective component (‘vicious’, ‘nagging’). In the time of Trajan 13 different types of pain were recognized, while later as many as 75 were accepted. Le Dantec (1919) was so impressed with the great variety of complaints of pain encountered in clinical practice that he rejected the idea that pain could be a simple unitary modality,” *ibid*, 145.

⁶⁶ The most obvious example for this argument is found in those with hereditary or congenital pain insensitivity syndromes. Consider, e.g., Kenneth Sufka and Derek Turner, “An Evolutionary Account of Chronic Pain: Integrating the Natural Method in Evolutionary Psychology,” *Philosophical Psychology* 18, no. 2 (2005): 243-257, esp. 246-248.

defines suffering as pain which lasts over some defined amount of the time (with some defined amount of intensity) and accordingly affects one in a more lasting and holistic manner, the CP sufferer also clearly qualifies. Yet, is the distinction between pain and suffering so simple?⁶⁷ As open in its being, Dasein is open *to* and open *for* various possibilities of its bodying, one of which we commonly call “pain”—a word connected to a whole field of other terms, including “suffering,” “hurt,” “illness,” “torture,” “disease,” “affliction,” “misery,” etc.⁶⁸ Whereas “pain” comes from the classical Latin *poena* (“penalty” or “punishment”), “suffering” comes from the Latin *suf* (variant of *sub* - from below, up, away) and *ferre* (to bear): to bear in taking up, a taking-up which bears, etc.⁶⁹ The connection, on one level, is obvious: a punishment or penalty is precisely something which one takes up, which one must bear. Yet, this definition simply moves the explanatory onus onto the term “to bear,” a term equally opaque as “suffering” in its existential significance.

The primary definitions of “to bear” are 1) to carry; 2) to sustain; 3) to thrust, press; and 4) to bring forth, all of which suggest a certain agency and activity on the part

⁶⁷ Especially if this question is asked in relation to chronic pain, the answer is an emphatic “no.” Good et al note how poorly defined chronic pain is in medical discourse, official or otherwise. “The concept is so poorly defined that chronic pain syndromes lack official status within the standard biomedical taxonomy...all of this evidence suggests that chronic pain represents a special case, one that is different from standard biomedical disorders, such as diabetes or asthma, and also from official psychiatric diseases, such as depression.” Mary-Jo Delvecchio Good et al, *Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective* (Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1992), 4.

⁶⁸ In what follows, I am not supposing that the etymologies of English/Latin/Greek words necessarily captures the phenomenon of suffering (or any other). I am merely using them as springboards—for they are at minimum useful clues—and doing so with the knowledge that, among other things, because I am not attempting to perform or substantively incorporate cross-cultural studies, my analysis is open to charges of cultural myopia. Consider, e.g., the introduction to *Pain as Human Experience*, which provides a short and compelling account of how differently various phenomena of pain and suffering are interpreted in different cultures; *ibid*, 1-28.

⁶⁹ See Oxford English Dictionary Online, “pain, v.” and “suffering, v.,” 2nd Ed. 1989, Oxford Univ. Press: 2009 (Mar. 2009).

of the bearer.⁷⁰ Interestingly, there are two primary divisions of meaning for suffering and neither connotes such activeness on the part of the bearer: 1) to undergo, endure, and 2) to tolerate, allow. The literal rendering of “to bear (in taking) up” links well with the first meaning only if construed passively and simply doesn’t fit well with the second. Following the four definitions given above, to tolerate or allow something is not the same as bearing it. Although there are clearly cases where people undergo pain and suffering by passive choice, by more or less conscious “toleration” of various sorts, this is not congruent with the meaning at the core of these words’ etymologies. Thus, “bearing” interestingly captures something in the concept of suffering that is actually absent in suffering’s etymology. Ancient Greek may provide a useful hermeneutic key here: *πάθος* [*pathos*], normally translated into English as “suffering,” comes from the verb *πάσχειν* (*paschein*), to suffer, yet it also means *to experience*.⁷¹

This connection between suffering and experience speaks to the patent observation that by virtue of the fact that we are Dasein, we experience and always are experiencing, and one almost universally acknowledged constituent of said experience is a phenomenon of which the Greeks were acutely aware: suffering. One could say that insofar as we “choose” to live and not commit suicide, there is a way in which our suffering is indeed a choice. Yet, this putative “choice” to live is, on the whole, an armchair abstraction. It seems to me uncontroversial to say that killing oneself is not a “live option,” to borrow William James’ keen distinction, vis-à-vis the everyday, praxical life of the majority of people. Thus, I would suggest that *pathos*, at least as I will be

⁷⁰ “Bear, v. 1,” *ibid*.

⁷¹ Later, as is well known, *pathos* came to connote “emotion,” “feeling,” and “passion,” such that pathology (Lt. *pathologia*) was originally the study of emotions and only later became the studies of diseases.

using it, is better understood as something which we bear or undergo *without* choice. If at any point one could easily and decidedly get out of the system, à la Neo of the Matrix's choice between the red and blue pills, the import of suffering is counterintuitively enfeebled. Suffering is no longer a genuine issue, a fact which history, if not the very experience of living, vehemently repudiates. *Pathos* as something which we bear or undergo *without* explicit choice also links quite appropriately with Greek notions of fate. Regardless of what I have done, there are *poena* which I must bear. There is an undeniable capriciousness (relative, of course, to some assumed ideal of equality and fairness) inherent to human experience. In the overwhelming majority of cases, I do not choose to be punished in experience—I simply am.

This, I would argue, is precisely the case of those in chronic pain. I know of no one who suffers chronic pain who has become so by choice; indeed, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to put oneself into such a condition (one cannot willfully do things so as to get fibromyalgia or complex regional pain syndrome or chronic migraine headaches; rather, one “gets” such diseases, disorders, or syndromes due to genetic and environmental factors ultimately outside of the willful control of the person afflicted).⁷² With the example of the CP sufferer expressly in mind, I wish to propose an admittedly tenuous and heuristic delineation between pain, suffering, and extreme suffering, one wholly tied to the specific treatment of these topics in this paper and one which, if successful, will bear itself out in the analyses to follow. From this point on, when I use the word “suffering” I will mean, unless noted otherwise, that of a CP sufferer or of a comparable type of suffering. I do not wish to restrict my language completely to that of

⁷² There are those, however, who by some willful act (taking drugs, etc.) have become CP sufferers incidentally, yet this, of course, does not refute my claim.

CP sufferers because I think there are other forms of suffering which are comparable, at least structurally (for instance: emaciation, certain forms of torture, some types of suffering effected in war, etc).

Loosely appropriating the IASP's definition, I will define pain as an experience or a set of experiences one encounters as to-be-avoided that alters one's being-in-the-world in a negative way (hence: to-be-avoided).⁷³ I define suffering, in turn, as *a recalcitrant, non-willfully induced, bearing of pain that substantively constricts the possibilities of being for the sufferer*.⁷⁴ "Bearing" underscores the fact that exertion is required on the part of the sufferer to *deal with* her suffering. The conjunction "that substantively constricts the possibilities of being for the sufferer" serves to simply tease out what is already contained in my definition of pain, with the added specification of "substantive" to emphasize its non-trivial character. Lastly, the qualifications of "recalcitrant" and "non-willfully induced" further clarify that suffering, on the whole, is *out of one's control*.⁷⁵ There is also a third term which is necessary for the discussion to follow:

⁷³ I am avoided the IASP's language of "unpleasant" because in American English at least, "pleasure" unavoidably connotes an almost purely "subjective" phenomenon, and I find the language of "to-be-avoided" to somewhat sidestep this connotation.

⁷⁴ Again, to be as clear as possible, I do *not* take this definition to be an appropriate definition for suffering *in toto*; rather, I intend it to apply and function only in the context of this essay, specifically in order to narrow the scope of my investigation vis-à-vis chronic pain. I am also purposely avoiding the issue of time, i.e., the duration which an experience must have to qualify as pain and the duration which pain must have to qualify as suffering. I cannot see how defining this would not end up being at least somewhat arbitrary, thus I am consciously leaving it undefined.

⁷⁵ I find this a crucial distinction, as do, e.g., David Gregory and John English, two physicians who specializes in palliative care. They makes a similar argument in "The Myth of Control: Suffering in Palliative Care," *Journal of Palliative Care* 10, Issue 2 (1994): 18-22, wherein they speak of "the quest to control suffering" as transforming "a profoundly complex human experience into essentially a physical condition amenable to treatment." The "failure to draw a distinction between pain," they note, "which can usually be controlled, and suffering, which eludes control, represents a profound misunderstanding of human suffering" (18). Also, both the "bearing" and the "recalcitrant" character of suffering speak more generally to what Heidegger calls *Geworfenheit*, thrownness, which John Lysaker glosses as the acknowledgement that "human beings are not simply subjected to causes, but *explicitly undergo that subjection*," John Lysaker, "Constellations Without Cores: An Essay in Philosophical Psychology," 2009, unpublished article, 10.

extreme suffering. I must withhold a precise definition of it for the time being, but we will see that extreme suffering marks the point at which suffering constricts the being of the sufferer to such a degree that they no longer have any meaningful possibilities beyond simply surviving or managing their pain, that is, the world qua referential totality of meaning is in extreme suffering solely that suffering itself.

Adorno provides an excellent contrast to my definition, one which I think better captures suffering in a more holistic sense. He states, “suffering is the weight of objective realities bearing down on the individual.”⁷⁶ This definition is too imprecise for my purposes, though it certainly captures in a more general way the phenomenon of suffering as I have defined it. I pause to mention his definition because it provides a link between the narrowness of my investigation vis-à-vis CP sufferers and suffering taken as a “universal” human experience. Now that I have proposed a working definition of pain, suffering, and extreme suffering, I will now turn to examining the structures of suffering in a more elaborate manner, beginning with a close reading of the poetry of Jane Cave.

The Death of Sense: Suf-ferring Suffering

Following the definition given above, pain names a possibility opened up by Dasein’s affectivity (which is a structure of its bodying), namely, one which is *negative*, that is, to-be-avoided. Put simply, the way in which the phenomenon of pain is given to us, is encountered, is as to-be-avoided.⁷⁷ I will argue that pain is given to us in such a

⁷⁶ Adorno, *Lectures on Negative Dialectics*, 110.

⁷⁷ Of course, there are plenty of cases where people not only do *not* avoid pain, but seek after it (for religious reasons, such as in self-flagellation, or for “experiential/pleasurable” reasons, such as in sadomasochist practices). These cases do not cut against the argument being given here, which is simply

manner because it *closes off* Dasein to being; it narrows and restricts its being-open, which is to say, its being-there, its Dasein.⁷⁸ To state the obvious, the pain of death marks one limit of the being of Dasein and the pain of birth another. Another way to describe such “closing off” is that the world stops worlding: the world, qua referential totality of meaning, recedes. We will see that in extreme suffering the world as such can recede almost entirely, leaving quite literally *only* the plaintiveness of pain—the suffering of pain itself.⁷⁹

A CP sufferer, Jane Cave, lies in her bed with a migraine headache so strong that it is as if she is entombed “in perpetual night.”⁸⁰ Claustrophobic darkness encroaches upon her, drowning out, along with the last specks of light crawling through the shaded windows, sense itself. “To languish on is worse than death,” she cries, knowing that only the utter inertness of death could conquer the suffering which grips her. Why is she thus entombed? Whence has this suffering derived its power? This is not a question that perplexes her. She knows full well: “its dire excess” dissolves her sight. This feature of suffering—that is, its excessivity—is sounded by Dickenson as well when she speaks of “pain – so utter – It swallows substance up –”. The recession of the world I have described is precisely an utter excessivity—an excessivity of *nothingness*.

that pain is, initially and for the most part, *not* given to us in the way in which the latter two examples would suggest (as to-be-sought-after).

⁷⁸ As I intimated at the outset and will return to, this constriction can, apropos lower levels of pain and suffering, *open up* Dasein to aspects of being otherwise left opaque. This focalizing character is, however, a result of a limitation. This makes intelligible those who claim that in certain forms of pain one’s experience is “heightened.” Such arguments are variations on that given by the adrenaline-junky, yet the contrast between the former and the latter is interesting, for the latter never seeks “pain” as such.

⁷⁹ Consider, for example, Sophocles, “Philoctetes,” trans. David Grene, *Sophocles II* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1957), 206, “All gone, and not a man left on the island, / not one to help me or to lend a hand / when I was seized with my sickness, not a man! / In all I saw before me nothing but pain; / but of that a great abundance, boy,” lines 280-284.

⁸⁰ Jane Cave, *Poems on Various Subjects*, 166-167.

The restrictive character of pain, in turn, announces its general structure: pain is always pointing towards the possibility of feeling *nothing*—a pain which is so total, so complete, that one can no longer *feel*, but stops feeling altogether and for all time, that is, the ultimate restriction of death.⁸¹ On a biological level, my characterization of pain as to-be-avoided is accurate to the degree that one accepts the (uncontroversial) thesis that, evolutionarily, pain serves to alert the human organism to *dangers* concerning its well-being and that of its environment. On a more existential level, I interpret pain's givenness as to-be-avoided in terms of the way in which it forces Dasein to face its being-towards-death. This is yet another reason why Dasein is, initially and for the most part, at home in the They, in the self-certainty of the denial and leveling of death the They affords (§51).⁸² Pain points toward the death of Dasein just as, *a fortiori*, suffering does. Suffering, as the bearing of pain, not only names a certain way of experiencing pain but a distinct orientation to that pain; the sufferer is oriented, whether they are explicitly conscious of this fact or not, towards their mortality in a way that notably exceeds the experience(s) of pain. Death, ontologically understood, is meaninglessness *par excellence*—that is, there are no meanings for the dead—and suffering orients Dasein towards this meaninglessness in the most intense way possible.

We experience suffering as meaningless because, as a restrictive mode of bodying, suffering closes off possibilities for our being-in-the-world, throwing us towards

⁸¹ It is only with a concept such as I have suggested in bodying, I believe, that one can properly explain *how* it is that Dasein can die. Heidegger's contradictory and confusing explanation of this fact has been noted, and it is true that with Heidegger's account alone, it is difficult to answer how Dasein, a being which is *not* in any substantive sense, can nevertheless *leave* the world, can nevertheless *no-longer-be-there*. See, e.g., Ciocan, "The Question of the Living Body," 2008.

⁸² This is not to say that once one faces one's death in an authentic way, on Heidegger's terms at least, that pain then is no longer given as to-be-avoided. Rather, the emphasis then shifts from the to-be-avoided qua the desire to not have to *face* death to the to-be-avoided qua the desire to not factually *die*—Heidegger is no fatalist. It is, in both cases, given as to-be-avoided.

the nothingness of meaninglessness. Far from being simply a privative phenomenon, however, it can positively point to the affectivity of Dasein, thus “lighting up” the meaningfulness with which Dasein was and is always already involved in. In other words, the meaning of suffering—the *woraufhin* of its projection, or, in a different dialect, the condition of its possibility—is meaning itself. Meaning has already been discovered “before” suffering, and that is why it can be experienced as *meaningless*. Just as “in letting entities be involved so that they are freed for a totality of involvements, one must have disclosed already that for which [woraufhin] they have been freed,” in experiencing suffering as meaningless (that is, *in* and *by* suffering oneself), one must have disclosed already that for which suffering *is*: meaningfulness (*Sinn*) (85). The night of the sufferer’s entombment is known as such only in relation to the days of her freedom—pain feeds on and swallows up the substance the sufferer has already been given. This is not at all to claim that suffering is *necessary* in order for there to be something like meaning; rather, I am arguing that Dasein, in its being, has already discovered meaningfulness *before suffering*. Indeed, Dasein has had to have already discovered meaning for *there to be something like suffering at all*.

Before I expand on this point, I want to be absolutely clear that I am not making nor supporting the claim that suffering is in and of itself meaningful. To be completely honest, I find sickening any theory that justifies suffering, though this sickness always arises in conjunction with the utter insensitivity and oftentimes perplexing illogicality of every such theory I have ever encountered. Examples of this can be found in theodicies ranging from the Book of Job to Leibniz, which, implicitly and surreptitiously admitting

their failure in actually accounting for the pervasiveness of human suffering, simply *discount* human suffering as a (human) misunderstanding.⁸³

One who, in step with mainstream Catholic theology, understands suffering as a *gift* which God has given in order to strengthen or purify the suffering individual is one who justifies suffering. One who believes that all suffering is really an illusion—and thus that the sufferer who experiences it as such is merely deluded—is one who justifies suffering. One who chalks up the sufferings of whole peoples to the development and progress of history, whether preordained by God, determined by evolution, or haplessly guided by humans, is one who justifies suffering. Hegel is perhaps the best example of such a teleology, for he explicitly makes the following statement at the end of his lectures on the Philosophy of History: “that the history of the world is this process of development and the actual coming-into-being of spirit (*Geist*), underneath the variable dramas of its histories—this is the true theodicy, the justification of God in history.”⁸⁴ “He stoops,” Adorno chastises Hegel, “to offering victims decorative comfort without touching on the substantiality of the condition whose victims they are.”⁸⁵ People’s concrete sufferings are but “variable dramas” in the Hegelian dialectic.

I am not saying that such understandings do not comfort *some* types of suffering for *some* type of people; rather, I am arguing that there are types of suffering for which such justification is but a vile dismissal. Whether one speaks of a six-month old child

⁸³ See, e.g., Michael Murray, “Leibniz on the Problem of Evil” The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, < <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/leibniz-evil/>>. See also Pamela Ann Smith’s personal and insightful article, “Chronic Pain and Creative Possibility: A Psychological Phenomenon Confronts Theologies of Suffering,” *Broken and Whole: Essays on Religion and the Body*, Maureen A. Tilley and Susan A. Ross, eds. (MD: Univ. Press of America, 1995), 159-187.

⁸⁴ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, 22 Vols., eds. Eva Moldenhauer & Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 1970), 540.

⁸⁵ Adorno, *ND*, 325.

who dies from starvation, a mother of two who is randomly murdered by a long-lost, drug-addicted former boyfriend, or a CP sufferer, such examples are qualitatively different from those which could fall under the aforementioned “justifications.” Suffering, in all such “theodicies”—whether that $\theta\epsilon\varsigma$ (*theos*) be an omnipotent God, the Dao, or an impersonal, natural universe—ends up being measured (its *δίκη*, *dikē*: justice) in terms of some standard “higher” than the human, whether cosmic harmony, divine justice, or what have you. In other words, they end up speaking not to concrete human suffering, but to suffering as an abstract notion operative in some register definitively and intractably beyond the human.⁸⁶

Unassumability, Nothingness, and Negative Temporality

In an essay entitled “Useless Suffering,” Emmanuel Levinas makes a similar argument. “The void which suffering effects on meaning is total,” he avers. “In the phenomenality of suffering itself, suffering is intrinsically useless, literally “for nothing.”⁸⁷ He claims that this is because suffering is, phenomenologically understood, “unassumability.” That is, it is excess above and beyond what can be taken in. It is not a quantitative excess, but, rather,

⁸⁶ My attitude toward this issue has been deeply affected by Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, in which some of the most potent words I have ever encountered on the subject of suffering are sounded, especially on the lips of Ivan Fyodorovich. “If the suffering of children goes to make up the sum of suffering needed to buy truth,” he pronounces at one point, “then I assert beforehand that the whole of truth is not worth such a price.” See Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volkhonsky (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002), 245. The examples of children’s suffering found in *The Brothers Karamazov* were infamously taken directly out of newspapers from that day, and, horrifically, one can look to today’s newspapers to find examples no less disturbing. I am thinking especially of Baby Grace, whose story is every bit as monstrous as those which Fyodor describes. See “‘Baby Grace’ Testimony Moves Jury To Tears,” The Associated Press, *CBS News* 28 Jan. 2008, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/01/28/national/main4759152.shtml?source=related_story>.

⁸⁷ Levinas, “Useless Suffering,” in *The Provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other* [*Provocation*] (New York: Routledge, 1988), 158.

It results from an excess, a ‘too much’ which is inscribed in a sensorial content, penetrating as suffering the dimensions of meaning which seem to be opened and grafted on to it...it is as if suffering were not only a given refractory to synthesis, but the way in which the refusal opposed to the assembling of givens into a meaningful whole is opposed to it...taken as an ‘experienced’ content, the denial and refusal of meaning which is imposed as a sensible quality [by suffering] is the way in which the unbearable is precisely not borne by consciousness, the way this not-being-borne is, paradoxically, itself a sensation or a given.”⁸⁸

Thus, suffering is a given in consciousness, but it is given “in-spite-of-consciousness”; it is “at once what disturbs order and this disturbance itself.”⁸⁹ It is, in short, the “plaintiveness of pain, hurt [mal].”⁹⁰ “The ‘content’ of which the aching consciousness is conscious is precisely this very adversity of suffering, its hurt...*in suffering sensibility is a vulnerability.*”⁹¹ Human sensibility, affectivity, is converted into piercing vulnerability in the phenomenon of suffering. This suffering is not only in and of itself meaningless and absurd, but it is locked in on itself; it is hermetically sealed in a circuit of sorrow and pain.⁹²

Suffering is *in and of itself* meaningless, but, of course, suffering does not exist hermetically in the concrete life of a person. On the contrary, the perforation of the meaningless of suffering *by meaning* is already possible before suffering comes on the scene, and *that*, I have argued, is why it is experienced as meaningless.⁹³ One of the reasons for the devouring of “substance” by suffering which Dickinson speaks of is the peculiar character of its temporality, a temporality which, in its devouring and *nihil*-ating

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 156.

⁸⁹ *Idem*.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 159. The French “*mal*” can mean hurt or evil.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 157, my italics. On this point, see also Judith Butler, *Prekarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (New York: Verso, 2004), especially 133-134.

⁹² *Idem*.

⁹³ In other words, understanding it as *simply* meaningless is an abstraction.

character, is perhaps unlike any other phenomenon.⁹⁴ Levinas touches on this when speaking of suffering in *Totality and Infinity*. He says that in suffering

we find ourselves...backed up to being. We do not only know suffering as a disagreeable sensation, *accompanying* the fact of being at bay and struck; this fact is suffering itself, the ‘dead end’ of the contact. The whole acuity of suffering lies in the impossibility of fleeing it, of being protected in oneself from oneself; it lies in being cut off from every spring. And it is the impossibility of retreat...in fear death is yet future, at a distance from us; whereas suffering realizes in the will the extreme proximity of the being menacing the will. But we still witness this turning of the I into a thing; we are at the same time a thing and at a distance from our reification...suffering remains ambiguous: it is already the present of the pain acting on the for itself of the will, but, as a consciousness, the pain is always yet to come.⁹⁵

The “impossibility of fleeing” suffering speaks to the *nothingness* of suffering, and it is specifically a product of its temporality. In short, the future and the past are effaced in suffering. Dasein, qua *pro-ject* and qua *having-been*, exists no more (cf. §65). Dasein as *ecstatic* is effectively destroyed. Following Heidegger’s argument that “ecstatic and horizontal temporality temporalizes itself *primarily* from the future”—that “the now is not pregnant with the not-yet-now, but rather, the present arises from the future in the primordial, ecstatic unity of the temporalizing of temporality” (426-427)—it is clear that the most pernicious character of suffering’s temporality is its effacement of the future.

In the experience of suffering, there is no future for the sufferer, except that future which is both myopically defined and simultaneously denied by that suffering: a *hope* of suffering no more. “To languish on is worse than death,” Cave cries, for the only thing worse than the meaningless of death—which the fact of this languishing, this continual weakening and lessening of the sufferer’s being, is on the way to—is that this languishing

⁹⁴ John B. Brough, “Temporality and Illness: A Phenomenological Perspective,” *Handbook of Phenomenology and Medicine*, ed. S. Kay Toombs (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 29-46.

⁹⁵ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pennsylvania: Duquesne Univ. Press, 1969), 238.

could go *on*...and on. Clearly, this phenomenon of temporality is on a continuum and thus its effect increases or decreases according to the level of suffering, such that even this weak eschatology of hope is destroyed in extreme suffering. We can call the type of temporality experienced in suffering *compressed* or *negative temporality*. It is a temporality which heads towards itself, encloses upon itself, compressing and flattening the past, present, and future into a “now” which is only aware of itself as *pain*, as *suffering*.⁹⁶

In the nothingness and negative temporality of suffering, the world recedes. The hammer, the tree, and even the pen are no longer encountered in the mode of readiness-to-hand and, in extreme suffering, are perhaps not even encountered as present-to-hand. These beings can be leveled to such a point that one could say they are no longer encountered *at all*, losing their worldly character to the point of oblivion. The CP sufferer may not even be able to pick up the hammer; it could even take too much effort to open one's eyes to merely look at it as an object present-to-hand; and thus, in such cases, the being of the hammer for suffering Dasein is effectively annihilated. I can think of no example more powerful than this to support that claim that the bodying of Dasein is ontologically definitive for the being of every being encountered by it.

In suffering, Dasein incontestably encounters beings in fundamentally different ways. This is, on my account, due to the fact that the bodying of Dasein is an existential—it is a structure of Dasein's being and thus of all its possible encounters.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Levinas' contention that “we still witness this turning of the I into a thing” is less a product of suffering's negative temporality than it is the social dimensions of suffering. I will address this topic below.

⁹⁷ S. Kay Toombs, speaking of the experience of living with multiple sclerosis, remarks, “It is vital to recognize that the surrounding world can be restrictive not only in a physical sense but, more importantly, in the sense of restricting existential possibilities. If there was no ramp into the building where I teach, or a

For the CP sufferer, certain objects are never encountered as they would be by a non-sufferer. For example, the tree is no longer an object of potential play or use, but it is, at best, an object which one can *only* look at or smell, etc.⁹⁸ The pain-pill bottle, which for the non-sufferer is but a helpful object from time-to-time, becomes a being through which and by which the sufferer lives—oftentimes literally. It is no longer just another thing nor is it merely an object encountered as merely ready-to-hand—it is encountered as necessary, as actually life-giving. Should the CP sufferer’s condition have caused them to use a wheelchair, everything from curbs and restrooms to airports and cars are no longer encountered in the same way.⁹⁹ And yet, the observation that drives home this point most forcefully is not simply that these beings are encountered differently in suffering, but that all of these objects can recede *entirely* in extreme suffering—even the tree and the bottle can effectively be destroyed in extreme suffering due to the constriction of the possibilities of the body it brings about. There is nothing that the nothingness of suffering cannot penetrate and, in turn, efface.

Now that we have delineated some of the structures of suffering such as its nihilating character and its negative temporality, we can give a more precise definition of

curb cut that allows me to get on to the sidewalk in my wheelchair, or an elevator to get to the third floor, or an accessible restroom, I would be unable to teach in the philosophy department. And if I did not have the economic means that allow me to own a van with a wheelchair life, and a wheelchair, and to build a ramp providing me access into and out of my home, I would be unable to live an independent life. And, obviously, these economic means are – to a large extent – dependent on my access to employment, so it is a vicious circle” in “Reflections on Bodily Change: The Lived Experience of Disability,” *Handbook of Phenomenology and Medicine*, 261, fn. 5. In the language of this paper, here is a concrete example of how the existentiality of the body determines existentiell possibilities.

⁹⁸ This presents an obvious connection with the disabled, a topic which I sadly cannot broach here. Also, it’s worth noting that its type of being is here an even narrower version of the already narrow presence-to-hand.

⁹⁹ See S. Kay Toombs, “Reflections on Bodily Change: The Lived Experience of Disability,” *Handbook of Phenomenology and Medicine*, 247-261 and Toombs, “Disability and the Self,” *Changing the Self: Philosophies, Techniques, and Experiences*, eds. Thomas M. Brinthaupt and Richard P. Lipka (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1994): 337-356.

extreme suffering. Extreme suffering is *a recalcitrant, non-willfully induced, bearing of pain that constricts the possibilities of being for the sufferer to the point that nothing is experienced but that suffering itself.*¹⁰⁰ Sadly, this is a recurrent reality for CP sufferers. The darkest moments are those where pain not only “penetrates me drop by drop,” not only does it “entomb me in perpetual night” or “swallow substance up,” but moments where that penetration, entombment, and swallowing of substance *is all there is*. In such an experience, suffering *constitutes the world* for the sufferer, and it is at that point that we most clearly see the profound structuring of bodying for the being of Dasein. Without an understanding of bodying or something like it, one simply cannot explain how such a phenomenon could happen for a being with the being of Dasein.

I have argued that the penetrating character of pain, its ceaseless and erosive “drop by drop,” carves away the excessive meaningfulness of life and replaces it with *nothing*, and it is precisely this “nothing” which is so hard to describe to those who have not experienced it. That is to say, another way in which the excessivity of suffering, of nothingness, bears itself out is in terms of the oft-mentioned incommunicability of pain, and it is to this issue that I will now turn. Why and how this is the case will require a discussion of the semiotics of suffering, thus leading us to explicitly address its social dimensions as well.

¹⁰⁰ By “nothing is experienced,” I do not mean that they are literally “unaware,” as in not conscious, of anything else. I mean that whatever they are aware of beyond the pain does not and cannot constitute something meaningful for them because of the intensity of that pain. The doctor or loved one (or beautiful plant or sun rays) may be in the same room as the dying patient, but they are not there in a meaningful way in the extreme suffering of the patient, whose only meanings are that of the pain with which they must deal.

∞ Symptomatology and the Semiosis of Suffering

Recalling one of the quotes which set off this division, Virginia Woolf laments, “English, which can express the thoughts of Hamlet and the tragedy of Lear, has no words for the shiver and the headache...let a sufferer try to describe a pain in his head to a doctor and language at once runs dry.” Elaine Scarry, in *The Body in Pain*, agrees with Woolf’s assessment, attributing it to “the utter rigidity of pain.” “Its resistance to language,” she clarifies, “is not simply one of its incidental or accidental attributes but is essential to what it is.”¹⁰¹ When Scarry explains pain as the *inability* to share or communicate pain, she does so in terms of an inability to “move out beyond the boundaries of [one’s] own body into the external, sharable world...physical pain—unlike any other state of consciousness—has no referential content. It is not *of* or *for* anything. It is precisely because it takes no object that it, more than any other phenomenon, resists objectification in language.”¹⁰² Although perspicacious in many respects, I find this account inaccurate.

First of all, pain is imminently worldly—as Scarry would surely agree—yet the fact that it cannot in many cases be easily expressed discursively is not due to an unbridgeable gap between interior/exterior or body/world, but due to the *excessiveness* of pain. Indeed, as I argued earlier, there is a *too much* in the experience of pain (Levinas’ “unassumability”) which thus often renders it inexplicable in language. Following my description of the recession of the world as an excessivity of *nothingness*, it makes perfect sense that such a nothingness is equally resistant to language as is an excessivity of being, an excess of plentitude. We are equally at a loss for words in anxiety as we are

¹⁰¹ Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 5.

¹⁰² *Idem.*

in wonder, equally at a loss in severe pain as we are in astonishment. These mark horizons (limits) of experience at which the myriad symbolic tools of Dasein falter and even fail.

With the analytic of Dasein in mind, I find the contention that pain's incommunicability is a product of its inability to "move out beyond the boundaries of [one's] own body into the external, sharable world" facile. Scarry's argument that this relates to the fact that "physical pain...has no referential content" is also off-mark but by less. To sufficiently explain why Scarry might say that "pain has no referential content" and how it is, contra Scarry, that this fact does *not* thereby signify a divide (or intensification) between the internal/external or personal/social, I will now turn to a discussion of the semiotics of suffering, specifically of symptomatology (semeiology). This may appear at first as a long detour, but in explicitly dealing with symptomatology, we will get a much clearer picture of the making and unmaking of the sufferer's world (to borrow Scarry's phrasing) vis-à-vis the differentiations between pain, suffering, and extreme suffering I have suggested. It will also provide a theoretic framework within which we can both critique and better understand Scarry's claims.

Eugen Baer notes in "The Medical Symptom" that one must "be taken beyond Hippocrates back to an era of mythical consciousness" to find the medical symptom in its first abode: "in narrative systems of ontological equivalences and proportions which crossed the now separated realms of biology, sociology, and psychology." Setting aside the obvious critique, which Baer should have anticipated, that no age has "attained" a *mythos*-less consciousness (ours being likely the most mythical in its insistence that it is not mythical at all), he goes on to explain the semiotics of the symptom in this era. "The

symptom ‘stood,.’” he explains, “for the whole order of world experience, it evoked the sum total of human relations, it individuated the universe and its religious depth in one concrete existential sign of the body: it was, in short, *the concrete universal*.”¹⁰³ In harmony with this pluridimensional understanding of the medical symptom, Baer defines the medical symptom as “any sign which conveys to a perceiver that something is fine or wrong with the sender’s existence. ‘Existence,’ in turn, is defined as a way of ‘being-in-the-world’ (Heidegger). Because of its crisis-provoking character...the symptom is a privileged mode of human experience.”¹⁰⁴

Baer treats the symptom as a symbol (συμβάλλω—*symballo*: lit. “to throw-with”), a quite literal throwing together, of the human and its enviroing world. While one could conceivably have a positive symptom (warm appendages could be a “symptom” of proper circulation), this would be a modification on the original sense of symptom as the happening of a fall *qua* misfortune (σύν: together + πίπτειν: to fall, related to πτ 1 a: fall or misfortune, and σύμπτωμα: chance, accident, mischance, disease). Taken in its original etymological sense, the symptom only throws together the human and the world (*qua* symbol) in the event of something going wrong, of a problem. It both announces and further provokes crisis.

The medical symptom is “*the concrete universal*” for Baer because it, more primordially than any other symbol, announces the situation (and thus situatedness) of Dasein to itself. Given that the core etymological difference between symbol and symptom is just that between “thrown together” and “falling together,” Baer is pointing

¹⁰³ Eugen Baer, “The Medical Symptom,” *Frontiers in Semiotics*, ed. John Deely et al (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1986), 140-141. See also, Eugen Baer, *Medical Semiotics* (MD: Univ. Press of America, 1988).

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 143.

to the fact that the symptom is perhaps the best phenomenon which captures what it means to be made explicitly aware of one's situation—whether “thrown” or “fallen.” It is the “sign” par excellence because it is both a sign that occurs universally (there is no culture—at least that I am aware of—that does not have some sort of symptomatology in order to deal with sickness) and a sign whose referent is inimitably concrete. Following arguments already given above, I would add that in pain and suffering this situatedness is announced more radically than in most other human experiences, especially in terms of Dasein's being-towards-death. What is meant by this “situatedness,” however?

Baer understands the symptom, qua a more or less explicit experience of the throwing-together of Dasein and its world, as “an all-pervasive mood which is not graspable. Rather, we find ourselves *in* such moods.”¹⁰⁵ Bluntly employing “mood” in a Heideggerian sense, he adds

In this dimension, symptoms are most deeply ‘ours’ in the sense of an absolutely individual reality: ‘Nobody can feel my pain.’ Or, ‘Nobody can share my insight.’ The symptom, at this level, is identical with prerational selfhood. It releases prereflexive feeling-tones (Merleau-Ponty), for example, a sense of total fragility, of vulnerability, despair. Or a sense of excessive power, of titillating pleasure, of deep ecstasy, peace. It refers only to itself as a self and is thus consubstantial, of one substance, with the world it discloses. In this universe, I *am* the feeling, I do not *have* it (Gabriel Marcel). The symptom here is an *Urgefühl*, an absolute primary feeling, prerational, prereflexive, preobjective, prerepresentational.¹⁰⁶

Baer's presentation and diction are misleading here, for what he means by this “absolutely individual reality” is the world *as one with* the “self,” that is, the self as “of one substance with the world it discloses.” Though the grammar leads one astray, the “it” refers not to the self (in opposition to the world), for his claim is that what is revealed, what is disclosed, in the symptom as *Urgefühl* is precisely *the world and self as*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 145.

¹⁰⁶ *Idem*.

one: the explicit throwing/falling together of Dasein and its world. The only way to make sense of an absolutely primary feeling which is prerational and prerepresentational, etc., is if a strict ontological division between the self and the world is *not* made.¹⁰⁷

The phrase “prerational selfhood” already exhibits the trouble Baer is having in accurately describing the phenomenon at hand. At least vis-à-vis its common usages, a self which is truly and solely “prerational” is, of course, not a self in any robust sense at all. Accordingly, while Baer chooses to retain the language of world and self, this is very misleading. I believe he does so to simply acknowledge that *I* am the one feeling my pain (yet, again, I am doing so precisely in terms of an *Urgefühl* which obfuscates and dissolves any reflective, rational, and/or critical distinction between my “self” and the “world”). While this retention makes sense on one level, he does not do enough to alert the reader that this distinction does not exist, at least in the manner he describes it, at the level of the phenomenon and only applies in terms of the mechanics of the phenomenological reconstruction he is performing.

Another problem is that Baer’s use of the term “world,” the primary meaning of which he admits borrowing from Heidegger, makes no sense if this world is not populated with other people. Thus, the phrase “no one can feel my pain” is far too simplistic. If one simply means that the pain I feel is not felt *as such* by another person, then of course this is the case. Yet, Baer ties this phrase to the “absolute individual reality”—the unity of world and self—which is a reality constituted, if not overdetermined, to a large degree by *others*. This is similar to the misstep Scarry makes in her argument regarding the division or intensification between inner/outer realms. The

¹⁰⁷ Though what to make of the “as one,” the unity, requires further precision, and I will thus return to this point.

reason he does this, as well as a refutation of its validity, can only be explained in terms of the metaphysics he presents, which is essentially that of Peirce.

Charles Sanders Peirce's metaphysics consists of three "realms," which he (in)famously and unimaginatively termed firstness, secondness, and thirdness. Baer adds a dimension prior to Peirce's firstness, and I will use the notation "B¹" (meaning: Baer's category of firstness) versus P¹ (Peirce's category of firstness) to differentiate between them. B¹—which, again, Peirce describes but does not recognize as a category—is the category of unbounded freedom...a state of absolute nothingness...pure zero. In Peirce's words, "the nothing of negation is the nothing of death, which comes *second* to, or after, everything. But this pure zero is the nothing of not having been born."¹⁰⁸ B² (which is P¹) is the category of origin. Baer glosses that Peirce "claims that pure idling, if it is any good, spontaneously produce something, a *quale*, a pure quality...experienced as absolutely original, irreducible to anything else but itself."¹⁰⁹

B³/P² is the category of otherness, wherein "everything is opposed, in conflict, clashing, irrupting. It is the moment of ek-sistence, of standing-out through contrast like figure from ground, a unity constituted by sheer difference." Lastly, B⁴/P³ is the category of meaning or of the sign, the category

in which incompatible or heterogeneous elements are brought into a relation of mutual containment. Circularity, reversibility, and chiasmus of the differentiated units are the main properties of this category. It is this fourth category, as universe of the symbol, which releases the preceding three. In this sense, the last category is the first and characteristically reverts the order of genesis adduced here. In other words—and this is typical of the symbol—it envelops that by which it is itself enveloped; it encloses that by which it is enclosed.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

¹⁰⁹ *Idem.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* 144. Peirce's precise description of these modes is as follows: "Firstness is the mode of being of that which is such as it is, positively and without reference to anything else...Secondness is the mode of

I will, for shorthand, refer to the realms as follows:

B¹/P⁰: absolute nothingness

B²/P¹: origin

B³/P²: opposition

B⁴/P³: meaning

Obviously, this system is quite abstract and, especially with relation to the category of absolute nothingness, only makes sense if one holds certain ontological assumptions (e.g., that there is no “ultimate ground” from which things emerge or that this ground is precisely groundless). I have elaborated Peirce’s metaphysics nonetheless, because without it, one cannot understand Baer’s symptomatology. In what follows, I attempt to put some flesh on these seemingly ethereal realms and, in doing so, will expose the rigidity and imprecision of the four distinctions as they apply to a symptomatology, however useful they may be with respect to other phenomena. This will then provide a proper framework within which I can make a critique of Scarry and Baer.

Following his metaphysics, Baer argues that there are “four absolute dimensions of the sign: absolute nothingness, the icon, the index, and the symbol.”¹¹¹ Leaving aside the terminology he uses for a moment, the first dimension is ultimately arbitrary, for whether one posits absolute nothingness or absolute plenitude, the other three dimensions function in exactly the same manner (i.e., the origin is “given” either way, whether randomly, purposely, or what have you). It is also arbitrary insofar as one does *not need*

being of that which is such as it is, with respect to a second but regardless of any thing...Thirdness is the mode of being of that which is such as it is, in bringing a second and third into relation to each other” (144-146).

¹¹¹ *Idem.*

it for a functional semiotic account, since semiotics, at least in general, has no intrinsic need to speculate regarding the “absolute” origin of signs.¹¹²

Moving away from the category of absolute nothingness, Baer ties the symptom qua *Urgeföhl* to the category of origin, and it is already at this point that his symptomatology begins to falter. Recalling my argument that what is disclosed in the symptom qua *Urgeföhl* is precisely *the world and self as one*, the ontology of such a disclosure is anything but “pure origin”—it is *not* “experienced as absolutely original, irreducible to anything else but itself.” It is, rather, the *immersion* into the radical interanimation and interpenetration of self and world. I find that this better accounts for “the undiscovered countries” and “ancient and obdurate oaks” Woolf reports as part of sickness’ revelations, as the “positive” focus and attenuation brought about by the constrictions of pain. The symptom, at this level, reveals the situatedness of Dasein, which is to say, it reveals Dasein *to itself* qua being-in-the-world. What is crucial to recognize, however, is that this disclosure is effected via *constriction*, via *limitation*. It is not an undifferentiated mass or unity (to return to the specification of “self and world as one”), but a differentiated unity, a unity shot-through with difference.

As I attempted to elaborate above, no ontological distinction is made between self and world at this level but that does not mean that one literally loses any sense of self

¹¹² I will grant, however, that the logic of the sign lends itself more easily to the hypothesis of absolute nothingness than to other possibilities insofar as “the sign, ultimately, has no identity because...it is essentially dialogic; and that means that it is always and forever lacking that other logos in which alone it comes into being,” a “constant turning over which implies the impossibility of identity also assures a kind of permanence, i.e. the permanence of the sign as a circle...which, paradoxically enacts the sign as a permanent flow and ebb of differentiation and identification,” Eugen Bear, *Medical Semiotics* (MD: Univ. Press of America, 1988), 30. I take this to imply that the ontogenetic view which lends itself most easily to such a view of the sign is that of “groundless givenness,” for since the sign is a mediation, on nearly any semiotic view, between sign-using beings and the worlds they inhabit, if it is ultimately impermanent, one could not give an account of an absolute plenitude (for that would leave no room for such differential play).

(i.e., not an *undifferentiated* unity). One does not think one *is* the pain one feels or the tree one sees. This is why the language of “pure origin” obfuscates the patent, worldly “origin-character” revealed to and in Dasein through sickness. Put very simplistically, as being-in-the-world, there are at minimum two primordial terms with which Dasein’s being must be described (being and world), and these terms simply cannot be understood outside of both their unity and difference.

When Baer moves to the category of opposition, his analysis rebounds a bit. He explains, “secondness [B³/P²: opposition] is the dimension in which the symptom appears as irrational brute force, an outside or inside aggressor, an irresistible impulse or inexorable blind fate...Here the relation is dyadic, a clash, brute conflict, struggle, resistance...sheer negation, without any sense, without meaning, without a third.”¹¹³ This constitutes a massive shift phenomenologically, however, of which he seems unaware. In short, the difference between these two levels (origin and opposition) marks, however tentatively and porously, the difference between pain and suffering as I have defined them.

It is no small point that Woolf titled her essay not “On Suffering,” but “On Illness,” and the type of illness she describes (influenza) falls much closer to my definition of pain than of suffering. Once one reaches the level of the CP sufferer, the category of origin is almost entirely inaccurate, for whereas in such a category, it is surely possible for “the sounds of festival [to] become romantic like a merry-go-round heard across far fields” and one to feel “exalted on a peak,” needing “no help from man or God,” this does not occur—at least not nearly as romantically—for the sufferer.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, 145.

Correlatively, such descriptions do not fit the category of opposition either. The symptomatology has passed into the realm of suffering precisely insofar as it is experienced as a recalcitrant, non-willfully induced, bearing of pain that substantively constricts the possibilities of being for the sufferer. Such an experience is distinctly conflictual, and as it moves to more extreme forms, it is indeed “without any sense.” Thus, it is in the continuum of the oppositional stage of the semiosis of suffering that one finds on one end a “mild” suffering and on the other the most extreme.

We are finally at the category of meaning, and, as Baer carefully observes, it is only at this level that one sees the paradoxical character of the symbolic whole as the sign reveals itself to envelop precisely that which envelops it. Yet again, however, he fails to point out the massive phenomenological shift it marks. Once one is at the category of meaning, the phenomenality of suffering has been diminished or, at the very least, its force is weak enough to allow meaningfulness to penetrate the suffering’s intrinsic meaninglessness. In other words, the sufferer for whom their suffering is meaningful is *not* experiencing their suffering as such; they are, rather, experiencing their suffering in terms of a whole which outstrips it, and this is a possibility open to the sufferer in all but the most extreme forms of suffering.

This is not to say they are somehow experiencing their suffering in an unauthentic way. Far from it, I am merely observing that for suffering to be meaningful, one has to, by virtue of one’s relation to the intensity of one’s suffering, have enough distance from that suffering for meaning to circumscribe it. This is part of what’s at stake in the distinction between suffering and extreme suffering, for I believe the latter marks a type of suffering wherein no distance is left for such circumscription. If that occurs, it could

only be *post hoc*, after the fact. The category of meaning, especially insofar as it details its circumscription by the very phenomenon it circumscribes, works to explain how the meaningless of suffering, though not in and of itself meaningful, *is* meaningful in terms of the whole of a person's life or even in terms of the whole of a singular experience which can reach beyond that suffering itself. On the lower levels of pain and suffering, this meaningfulness can be sighted at once with the meaningless one experiences. This is why we are "able, perhaps for the first time for years, to look round, to look up – to look, for example, at the sky." In extreme suffering, on the other hand, the "perpetual night" can entomb the sufferer completely, disallowing even a glimmer of meaning to pierce its utter darkness.

The metaphysics underlying Baer's symptomatology, except for the category of absolute nothingness, provides a useful framework to understand the semiotics of suffering. The category of origin relates to the experience of pain, an experience which, via the focalizing brought about by its constriction, attunes Dasein to its situatedness qua being-in-the-world; hence, its status as "the concrete universal." The category of opposition marks the transition to suffering, operating on a continuum whose beginning marks the imposition of a recalcitrant force and "blind fate" upon the sufferer and whose end marks an experience truly "without any sense." Lastly, the category of meaning explains how suffering can be understood and even experienced as meaningful, for in all but the most extreme suffering, room is left for meaningfulness to circumscribe suffering's intrinsic nothingness with meaning. Now that we have attempted to flesh out

Baer's metaphysics as it relates to his symptomatology,¹¹⁴ we can return to addressing Scarry's claim that pain has no referent.

Leiben and Sprache: The Speaking Suffering Body(ing)

Recalling the description of suffering's excessiveness as *nothingness*, the claim that there is no referent for pain appears accurate at first. Yet, phenomenologically, pain *does* have a referent, one which convincingly bears itself out symptomatologically: the body. The CP sufferer may not have a knife or gunshot wound to point to, but they are always *referring* to something when they speak of their pain: the pain *of their body*. The body, taken for the moment in the narrow sense of the "flesh and blood," is the ultimate referent for pain which otherwise "has no [obvious, external] referent." Behind this reference to a more narrow conception of the body is, however, ultimately the bodying of the sufferer. We can see this point more clearly by contrasting it with Scarry's account:

The central point here is that insofar as an actual agent (a nail sticking into the bottom of the foot) and an imagined agent (a person's statement, 'It feels as if there's a nail sticking into the bottom of my foot') both convey something of the felt-experience of pain to someone outside the sufferer's body, they both do so for the same reason: in neither case is the nail identical with the sentient experience of pain; and yet because it has shape, length, and color, because it either exists (in the first case) or can be pictured as existing (in the second case) at the external boundary of the body, it begins to externalize, objectify, and make sharable what is originally an interior and unsharable experience...In order to express pain one must *both* objectify its felt-characteristics *and* hold steadily visible the referent for those characteristic.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ It's important to mention that Peirce had his own symptomatology, which Baer finds too anemic. Baer notes that Peirce "had one of the most reductive notions of the symptom," because for him "it is merely an indexical reaction to a stimulus, 'without an utterer.'" (*ibid*, 141). This means, in turn, that "the person who has or, rather *is* the symptom is totally excluded from this conception." Besides the negative impact, which I have discussed all along, such a conception has on the sufferer, it is also patently wrong. Symptoms are not deictic—they are simply not indexical in the same manner as, say, symbols like "that" or "here." The extent to which such indexicals are truly deictic is arguable in its own right, but to say that of a symptom is a vast oversimplification.

¹¹⁵ Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 15-17.

The objectification or externalization of pain is not tied to its lack of referentiality nor is it primarily a result of the linguistic vacuum within which the sufferer feebly attempts to pull out suitable descriptions. It is the fact that unless one has felt such suffering *in one's own body and in relation to one's bodying*, then the reference to the suffering body is effectively *lost* on the listener. It is certainly the case, for example, that those who have not experienced torture *do not know* what it is like (though if one watches television news, one would think otherwise). That the communication of such pain often fails does not entail that there is no referent. Following the symptomatology presented above, the category of opposition marks an exceptionally heteronomous experience, one whose translational ability could easily be attributed to a fault of language and not to its *uniqueness* as an experience.

In other words, it is simply imprecise to attribute this primarily to language. I cannot do even remote justice to the staggering beauty of Iguazu Falls, but this does not thereby prove an unbreachable interiority of the subjectivity of my experience, nor an inherent fault on the part of language. I would argue, on the other hand, that it is primarily a matter of someone having such an experience as I have had in seeing such a sight. Were someone to have seen Niagra Falls or some other relatively comparable phenomenon, the imprecision of my words could be made irrelevant due to the similarity of our experiences—precise description is less necessary when one “knows” what the other means, that is, when one has had a similar experience. To argue otherwise, one needs to produce a thorough and critical ontological account of language and experience, and Scarry simply does not provide this.

If one agrees with my claim that the referent of pain is bodying, then it is easy to see how the lack of a more accurate understanding of it almost inevitably obfuscates the phenomenon of the “incommunicability” of pain. Furthermore, the most common conception of the body—that it is an object like any other—leads the sympathizer to narrowly understand pain physicalistically, which thereby almost automatically hinders them from understanding the way in which suffering constricts and restricts the very being of the sufferer. The symptomatology of suffering we investigated, presented in terms of a semiotic structure closely correlative to the delineations made between pain, suffering, and extreme suffering, illuminates further the complexity of meaning making and unmaking vis-à-vis the constriction of the bodying of the sufferer. Given its complexity—and especially with pop-cultural notions of the body and the role of medicine at one’s instant and subconscious disposal—it is nearly impossible for the person who has not experienced suffering to understand what it concretely *means* for the sufferer. This, obviously, has large ramifications for everything from health industry policy to global human rights, and yet the focus placed on *understanding* the sufferer (whether this is a loved one wishing to help assist a CP sufferer or a health official presenting testimony to the Secretary of Health and Human Services) is wholly incommensurate with its importance for their assistance and well-being.

The Sick and the Alien: Marginalizing the Ill

An aspect of suffering which I have yet to focus on, and which is necessarily brought to the fore by a discussion of the constricted world of the sufferer, is the way in

which the sufferer can be, by the very fact of their suffering, alienated from and marginalized by those around them and, more generally, society as a whole. From a certain angle, this is unavoidable without relatively large measures taken by the healthy. When one is bed-ridden, the ambulatory friend or lover must obviously make an extra effort in relation to almost any activity if they want to involve the other. Yet, the patent fact of alienation—the cutting-off of the sufferer from the “normality” of everyday life—is a dimension of sickness and disease that western medical practice has a difficult time addressing.

When one goes to the doctor, the friend, parent, or partner is not, as a matter of protocol, informed about their role and inevitable effect on the sufferer, even though, clearly, such explicit “social-psychological” factors are not tangential to the “purely” biological affliction going on for the sufferer. “Rather, the overwhelming focus is on the disease process, on the manner in which the patient’s experience manifests itself in terms of ‘objective,’ quantitative clinical data.”¹¹⁶ Yet, such a bio-medical understanding is a cultural peculiarity. For example, David Bakan argues that “the authors of the Bible considered being ‘cut off’ as the ultimate disaster, source of grief, or punishment that anyone might suffer. Thus, for example, in the story of Job...they [the authors of Job] hardly saw fit completely to separate psychological and physical suffering, the losses of children and property that he suffered and the boils of his body, separation-estrangement and conspicuous physical affliction.”¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ S. Kay Toombs, “Disability and the Self,” *Changing the Self*, 349. Toombs here cites Stetten, 1981: 458-460, and Rabin, 1982: 506-509.

¹¹⁷ David Bakan, *Disease, Pain, and Sacrifice: Toward a Psychology of Suffering* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968), 4.

Bakan cites a study which found that in a strain of experimental mice, in which mammary cancer develops almost invariably, “those raised in cages with cage mates develop cancer substantially, and statistically significantly, later than those raised in cages alone.”¹¹⁸ Also, similar experiments performed with rats found that the time at which cancer symptoms appear is notably delayed if the rats are handled regularly by humans. The importance of touch, which is at once a “physical” and “social” experience, for the continued development of humans is uncontested.¹¹⁹ Even with this one simple example, it is clear that understanding both the fear and the fact of being “cut off” as purely a socio-psychological need is patently false—it is equally a biological one. With regard to this phenomenon, the split between the socio-psychological and biological is wholly inappropriate, and this division has increasingly been reinforced not only in medical discourse as a whole, but also specifically with respect to the way in which chronic pain is understood.¹²⁰

David Gregory and John English, professors of nursing and health studies in Canada, note that “the medicalization of suffering can have serious repercussion in that patients, families, and clinicians are led to believe that suffering is treatable, that it can be cured.”¹²¹ They observe that clinicians who encounter suffering which is unamenable “to biomedical and pharmacological interventions experience defeat which may impel them

¹¹⁸ *Idem.*

¹¹⁹ On this point, see, e.g., Catherine Caldwell Brown, *The Many Facets of Touch* (USA: Johnson & Johnson Baby Products Company, 1984), esp. 51-72, 100-106, 130-138, and 175-189; David Katz, *The World of Touch*, ed. and trans. Lester E. Kruger (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1989); and Ashley Montagu, *Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin*, 3rd Ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), esp. 38-80 and 183-219.

¹²⁰ Consider, e.g., the articles in *Pain as Human Experience*.

¹²¹ David Gregory and John English, “The Myth of Control,” 19. Hereafter, I refer to Gregory alone for concision.

away from the sufferers they care for.”¹²² In a cruelly ironic twist, the myth of control works both ways, not simply alienating the sufferer away, in an “internal” direction, from those around her, but also actively pushing those around the sufferer away from her due to the delusion of effecting control over their suffering. This deleterious double reaction continually fuels the fires it catalyzes insofar as the clinician and, by extension, the “caretaker” or “helper,” implicitly assume “responsibility for directing” the sufferer’s suffering, thus conferring “a measure of omnipotence upon clinicians [and caretakers], i.e. they are in charge of suffering.”¹²³ Yet, on any thoroughgoing, non-scientistic account of suffering, this control—to the extent that it is not vacuous to speak of the “control” of suffering in the first place—is ultimately in the hands of the sufferer, not the clinician. Furthermore, in extreme suffering it is imprudent to speak of its control whatsoever.

The extent to which this is misunderstood, in turn, leads the clinician to encounter the sufferer qua omnipotent professional and not qua compassionate *person*. Gregory argues that it is as “presence,” as *being there* for the sufferer, that her suffering is truly palliated. One of the reasons, he argues, that the clinician-as-controller cannot be such a presence is because the control-mentality actually distances the clinician from the sufferer; it is ultimately a move of “self-protection and non-caring.” Gregory provides very little explanation of why this follows, but if we summon conceptions of the body operative under discourses which can, on their own terms, plausibly propose the control of suffering—conceptions of the body-as-object—the connection is clear: the sufferer is

¹²² *Idem.*

¹²³ *Idem.*

objectified, is made into an object to-be-fixed. The sufferer is, quite literally, dehumanized.

What is especially malefic about this is the fact that, in the desire to help others by addressing “medical” problems, the scientization of medicine has metamorphosed its incipient desire into its exact obverse: the physician, so far from taking a posture of assistance, instead adopts that of desistance—a standing away from the very person they are to draw near to. The patient, in turn, so far from being treated as human, becomes the non-human, the iteratively irrelevant object of study which the physician must work upon so as to complete their professional task: to fix, to repair, that object of medical study, the human body.

During his lectures on *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno speaks at one point of “social repression” and the ability of philosophy—and, one assumes, all humanistic disciplines—to “sense something of this repression, to sense what has been repressed in certain objects by the general consciousness, and to be attracted by the very things that pass unobserved or by what people prefer to regard as undeserving of scrutiny.”¹²⁴ I take it as not at all accidental that the body and its sufferings are marginalized by the “general consciousness,” and, like Adorno, I find it a responsibility of philosophy and the humanistic disciplines to bring such things back into that consciousness. One of the tasks which philosophy of medicine especially should embrace is to be the purveyor of a critical counter-part to the medical communities’ adoption of regional distinctions. As the sciences have advanced, medicine has increasingly become oriented towards what would eventually be termed the “hard sciences.” This, of course, coincides with the

¹²⁴ Theodor W. Adorno, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Rodney Livingstone, *Lectures on Negative Dialectics* (Massachusetts: Polity, 2008), 70.

history of conceptions of the body, a history which I unfortunately cannot narrate here. Suffice it to say that it is no accident that along with the increasing specialization and technologization of the sciences, the body came to be increasingly viewed as an object suited to the quantitative tools of biology, chemistry, anatomy, and physiology, and medicine increasingly became the study of the health and disease of a bio-chemical, organic object. In a certain sense, it eventually became inappropriate to term medicine a “human” science at all—a curious and cruel irony of medicine’s development from the modern period onward. It is a science which deals with humans, but one which sees itself as not having to go *through* the human, as the disciplines which fall under the term “humanities” all do—when honest with themselves, at least.

Such a view of medicine is, on any thoroughgoing account of health and disease, patently absurd, yet it is, nonetheless, the currently accepted view. While it is almost understandable that the physicist believes she is dealing with “facts” and purely empirical data devoid of human interference (interpretation), for medicinal practice to treat itself in such a manner is astounding. Moreover, the symbolic reality presumed by current medicinal practice is at odds with any holistic, phenomenological account thereof. For example, Arthur M. Kleinman, in the article “Medicine’s Symbolic Reality,” points to the socio-cultural-historical mediation *any* medicinal theory necessarily takes. “Comparative studies of medical systems,” he argues, “document that medicine, from an historical and cross-cultural perspective, is constituted as a cultural system in which symbolic meanings

take an active part in disease formation, the classification and cognitive management of illness, and in therapy.”¹²⁵

Such an argument finds notable harmony with Heidegger’s analysis of *Mitdasein* and the They. Both *that* one is sick and *how* one perceives that sickness cannot be disentangled from the socio-cultural-historical (factual) strictures in which one exists, for these strictures serve to structure the experience of that sickness itself. One does not autonomously perceive and experience a sickness and then look to one’s language and culture to then describe it; rather, it is the other way around. One is always already *in* one’s language and culture, and in keeping with the metaphor of movement to describe perception and experience, one is first *in* said language and culture before attempting, to the extent possible, to produce—stretch towards, bring forth—an “individual” or “unique” description.

Leaving aside Heidegger’s discussions of authenticity, the point to be emphasized is the extent to which the dominant interpretation of sickness and suffering invariably bears upon the personal, first-hand experience of it. I emphasize this because it makes explicit one of the major issues which I take to be at stake in this paper, namely, that how one understands the body and suffering reciprocally affects the body and suffering itself. Operating under the auspices of the body as *Körper*, such an argument falls flat, for what happens to such a body happens only in terms of bio-chemical interactions, interactions which modern medicine is remarkably apt to diagnose and treat. When a suffering person has this conception of the body, it opens the door to countless added hardships: questioning what’s “wrong with them” such that they can’t “be fixed,” wondering why

¹²⁵ Arthur Kleinman, “Medicine’s Symbolic Reality: On a Central Problem in the Philosophy of Medicine,” *Inquiry* 16 (1973): 206.

their suffering affects the entirety of their lives, why they can't just "get on" with things, etc. Operating under the auspices of the body as *Leib* and *leiben*, however, the socio-cultural and historical dimensions of Dasein all come to bear upon the body. Although clearly more complicated, I find such an account more accurate. I believe even a reflection on solely our own culture, especially vis-à-vis the "cognitive management of illness," convincingly shows this to be the case.

Aware that I am operating merely on an anecdotal level, I would suggest the body and its sufferings have been abstracted, commodified, and repressed in ways which allow the minimization and narrowing of its domain to seem justified. Upon getting sick, Emergen-C™, Airborne™, and countless herbal teas call out to us from every cashier stand, and upon further symptoms, a stroll down the massive rows of "cold remedies" suggests that every conceivable symptom has its cure. When these things fail to work within a number of days, we go to a doctor who treats our "body" in a way that regards its sufferings as aberrations from a "healthy state," aberrations for which, luckily enough, pharmaceutical companies have already produced a "side-effect minimized" drug. There *must* always be a quick fix, for the body is an object, just like any other, upon which we can apply our ever-increasing scientific and technological knowledge *to fix*.

This fix-it, object-like attitude towards the body reveals itself as structurally linked to more general suffering as we move towards broader levels of the social and political arena. The emaciated, invariably dark-skinned child on the TV screen—always accompanied by that white, affluent man who humbly presents himself as the sensitive care-giver of all such children—is just another advertisement, another way to spend one's money and manage one's tax deductions. Billy May's OxiClean™ follows immediately

afterwards to remind us that our money can *also* be effectively and frugally spent to keep our clothes stain-free as we walk down the driveway to fill our parcel-sized mailbox with the envelope (striped with urgent-looking bands and plastered with ominous warning-label stamps) laden with money to feed that poor child for a week. Luckily, the last episode of E.R. or the latest episode of House comes on to remind us that, yes, people die every day, but, worry not, for while the terminally-ill cancer patient in the ICU has no one by her side, alas, she is (by the end of the show, *was*) a good person. The last five to ten minutes of the show allow us to get more deeply “in touch” with our empathetic side by muting the dialogue in favor of a touching song, currently available on iTunes for only 99¢ (if, of course, you consent to give them your email and postal address for the occasional reminder to buy more touching, heartfelt songs). And, thank God, it’s not a season opener or finale, so the show only lasts an hour (38 minutes minus the ads), so that we can get back to all the things we needed to do before the show came on, such as getting that nasty stain out of our favorite white dress shirt and purchasing that new, catchy, and gut-wrenchingly heartfelt acoustic song (as heard on TV) off iTunes.

Any theory of the body which ignores it as determinate of our very being-in-the-world already takes steps to repress and minimize its sufferings. It is in the interest of a society which privileges individuality over and against communality and a medical system which privileges profit over people to marginalize the sick and the poor, the “disabled” and the “insane,” as much as possible, for the more attention paid to them, the less stable the hegemonies of individuality and profiteering become. The chronic pain doctor who treats his patient in the same manner as if they had a scratchy throat is a doctor who needs no conscience, a doctor who need not see the suffering person sitting

two feet away from him, a doctor who can turn a blind eye to the very people he took an oath to bring to health. In fact, such a response can be seen as an acknowledgment of the intrinsic meaninglessness of suffering, a meaninglessness which we seem to avoid wherever and whenever possible. Why do we turn away in the face of suffering? Why do we repress events which fundamentally affect our lives? Why was Darfur allowed to occur after Auschwitz? So long as we turn a blinding eye to suffering, so long as we leave it alone, in a space unto itself, we need not acknowledge the fact that enriching the meanings of the suffering is a real possibility, just as real as their suffering itself. We need not admit that there is nearly always something which we can do to circumscribe the meaninglessness of suffering with *meaning* in the life of a sufferer, even if that is simply by being by their side, by simply being there.

∞ Conclusions: The Ethics of the Body and The Remaking of the World

The most obvious question one might ask of this project can be stated in a single breath: Why suffering? Let me answer this by way of Adorno. Adorno argues that, contra his negative dialectics, the dialectics employed across the history of philosophy “unfolds the difference between the particular and the universal, [as] *dictated by the universal*,” thus serving the “end of reconciliation,” domesticating the nonidentical, ridding it of all coercion.¹²⁶ In this way, negative dialectics, for Adorno, is intrinsically a project of human freedom. Moving in a sweeping paragraph from matters epistemological to ethical, he later states, “freedom follows the subject’s urge to express itself. The need to lend a voice to suffering is a condition of all truth. For suffering is

¹²⁶ Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 2007), 6.

objectivity that weighs upon the subject; its most subjective experience, its expression, is objectively conveyed.”¹²⁷ Negative dialectics is, in summary, not simply the refusal to gloss over the difference between concept and thing, knowing and the known, thinking and being—thereby unfolding difference only to weave it back into the tapestry of the same—but the relentless persistence to investigate and question that divide, a divide ever held open by experience itself. It is a “philosophy” which is discontent with the need for the positive, finding that need to, most often by subterfuge, faithfully and unquestioningly bow at the feet of the hegemony of unity, identity, and totality. “In truth, all concepts, even the philosophical ones, refer to nonconceptualities, because concepts on their part are moments of the reality that requires their formation.”¹²⁸ What survives in the concept “is the fact that nonconceptuality has conveyed it by way of its meaning, which in turn establishes its conceptuality.”¹²⁹ The *meaning* of the nonconceptual, which is precisely what establishes the conceptuality of the concept, is what one must tease out, must investigate, must incessantly and critically (self-)reflect upon.

Suffering marks an experience par excellence of heterogeneity, of nonidentity and resistance. Pain and suffering is, in the end, a possibility due to the very openness of Dasein’s bodying, and these experiences ultimately present themselves as *other*.¹³⁰ To alter a wonderful phrase of Emerson’s, suffering “descends into us from we know not

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 17-18. It is interesting that Levinas makes a similar statement in saying, “the supreme ordeal of freedom is not death, but suffering,” *Totality and Infinity*, 239.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, 11.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 15.

¹³⁰ There is an interesting parallel between the statement I am making and the argument in Sufka and Turner that chronic pain’s highly maladaptive character “can be explained as an evolutionary by-product of the highly adaptive phenomenon of neural plasticity.” See Sufka and Turner, “An Evolutionary Account of Chronic Pain, 248-255.

whence.”¹³¹ Descending into us without warning or reason, there is an alterity to suffering which strips us of the peace and surety to which we delicately cling, for the horrors to which it subjects us *displace us*. In extreme suffering, they displace our being almost entirely. I thus take suffering to be a preeminent phenomenon to explore if one wishes to be true to experience, if one wishes to return to the thing and rebuff the concept from its necessarily disfiguring grip. “The thing,” here, is human be-ing, which, with Heidegger, I have argued all along is *no-thing* at all. Whatever one makes of such an account, the nothing that we are is always already environed by things and their meaningfulness, however much human being comes to be invaded by the nothingness of suffering. The words of Walt Whitman can be taken as a wonder and humility before the meaningfulness of the world when he says, “You objects that call forth from diffusion my meanings / And give them shape.”¹³² As a poem like *Song of the Open Road* describes and exemplifies so compellingly, the world is meaningful and excessively so.

As I suggested in the introduction, the trajectory of this project is viewed most clearly in a tripartite manner: (1) an analysis of Heidegger’s use and thematization of *der Leib* in *Being and Time* to orient us towards a more phenomenologically accurate conception of the body, (2) a critical analysis of the mode of readiness-to-hand with an eye to the way in which the referentiality therein reveals Dasein’s body(ing), and (3) a phenomenology of suffering, presented as a catalyst for further thinking through the problematic of *leiben* (pre)figured in both (1) and (2). Having arrived, we can only now

¹³¹ Porte, Joel, and Sandra Morris, eds. 2001. “The Over-Soul,” *Emerson’s Prose and Poetry*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. Cited in John T. Lysaker, “Relentless Unfolding: Emerson’s Individual,” *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2003: 155-163.

¹³² Walt Whitman, *The Portable Walt Whitman* (New York: 1969), 157. Quoted in Joseph Fracchia, “Dialectical Itineraries,” *History & Theory* 38, Issue 2 (1999): 169-197, 169.

see how the scaffolding of this investigation is less an imposition than a report of a journey taken. If the body is not just the flesh and blood with which the western medical community attempts to neatly circumscribe its field of inquiry, then accounts of pain and suffering are necessarily (and ironically) emaciated. In short, the “reality” of suffering, of what it really is, is obfuscated by an understanding of the body as an object present-to-hand. This obfuscation takes its most pernicious form, I would suggest, in the areas of inquiry that arguably bear most directly on human life—the most obvious of which are medicine, ethics, and politics—and can only be cleared in an examination of the body and suffering.

I would like to return to the words with which this thesis began, taken from Agamemnon’s *Aeschlyus*. “Zeus has led us on to know, / the Helmsman lays it down as law / that we must suffer, suffer into truth. / We cannot sleep, and drop by drop at the heart / the pain of pain remembered comes again, / and we resist, but ripeness comes as well.”¹³³ Whatever one may make of it, suffering is “a hard lesson,” and it is thus much easier “to discard the suffering as accidental” and just walk away—passing by on the other side of the road, just as two of the three men did in the parable of the Good Samaritan.¹³⁴

In addition to explicitly displaying some of the “hard lessons” of suffering, this way of seeing “the body” as well as the specific understanding of suffering it both entails and is explained by have wide-ranging implications and avoid two major ethico-political

¹³³ Agamemnon, Aeschylus, 177-179

¹³⁴ “The existing person nevertheless understands...suffering as accidental. Just as he abstractly wants to discard the body, so he likewise wants to discard the suffering as accidental, and the point is that the actuality of the suffering...would be a hard teaching.” See Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*, 445.

pitfalls. First, the idea that what defines the human—and, thereby, establishes the legal-political rights of the human—is something that is not, ultimately, bodily. This finds an instructive exemplification in the difference, poignantly elaborated by Scarry, between the constitution of the former USSR and that of countries like France and the United States. The former incorporate very “bodily” rights, such as the right to work and the right to eat, etc., whereas the latter are based on “mental” or “theoretic” rights, such as the right to happiness or the right to vote (so that one is *politically represented*).

The second pitfall avoided is that which separates the human organism from its environment, thus leaving a framework which can easily protect and adjudicate humans, but cannot as easily do so with a forest (except in relation to the already established rights of humans). By focusing on the bodying of being-in-the-world, we have a more holistic (and, in turn, phenomenologically accurate) picture of *what it is* to “be human” and how, in the words of Marx, nature is our “extended body” or, in the vocabulary of this paper, nature is as much a factor of Dasein’s bodying as is Dasein’s “body proper.”¹³⁵ Also, to the extent that bodying presents a way of thinking about the body that not only better accounts for its sufferings but also better addresses its more “social” aspects such as alienation and marginalization, I believe this understanding of bodying has fruitful implications for disability studies.¹³⁶ These are all areas, which I believe might benefit from the work undertaken here.

¹³⁵ Nonetheless, as Scarry reminds us, “the relative ease or difficulty with which any given phenomenon can be *verbally represented* also influences the ease or difficulty with which that phenomenon comes to be *politically represented*” (12). The reference to Marx is taken from Joseph Fracchia’s essay “The Capitalist Labour-Process and the Body in Pain: The Corporeal Depths of Marx’s Concept of Immiseration,” *Historical Materialism* 16 (2008): 35–66.

¹³⁶ Consider the fantastic essay “Disability and the Self” by S. Kay Toombs in *Changing the Self*. I read this essay after nearly completing this paper, and the similarities between claims she makes and claims I have made abound. In the context of (the suffering of) the disabled, she touches on a somewhat similar

Having cited possible implications of the conceptions of bodying and suffering, we can now see why Levinas could call suffering “the very bond of human subjectivity,” the only uncontested “principle which can go so far as to command the hopes and practical discipline of vast human groups.”¹³⁷ The nature of this principle, of this connective between the suffering of one and the suffering of another, is the deepest foundation of intersubjectivity for Levinas, and, accordingly, he argues that one’s relationship to the suffering of another comprises the very foundation and fabric of ethics—the foundation and fabric of every human institution.¹³⁸ Indeed, if suffering is ultimately a question of the very being of human being, it is one of, if not *the*, most important question of human existence.

Phrased negatively, however, this means for Levinas that “the source of all immorality” is found in “the justification of the neighbour’s pain.”¹³⁹ A single germ, the germ of justification, announces the death of ethics, and it is against this germ that Levinas’ ethics as a whole so ferociously fights.¹⁴⁰ To clarify, I do not buy Levinas’ notion of “infinite responsibility,” and I think his insight into the “germ” of the justification of suffering does not require such a notion. Rather, I believe this insight is accurate precisely insofar as it sights the *seminal* posture which precludes the possibility

concept of the body (338-339), similar treatment of suffering as restriction (339. 341), similar observations on the temporality of suffering (344-345), and similar observations of the empathetic possibilities of others in relation to dominant bio-medical concepts of the body (353). It is also very interesting that she links her reflections on disability more broadly to the experience of influenza, on one end, and to chronic illness/pain, on the other.

¹³⁷ Levinas, “Useless Suffering,” 159.

¹³⁸ For Levinas, saying “the suffering of the other” and saying “the other” amount to same thing.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, 163.

¹⁴⁰ It is interesting to note that commentators such as Richard J. Bernstein argue that “Levinas’s entire philosophic project can best be understood as an *ethical* response to evil”; see his “Evil and the Temptation of Theodicy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 253.

of ethics as that of *not needing to respond*, of indifference. Parading itself as both sympathetic and reasonable, when all the while it is ashamedly turned away from that which it promises to face, the justification of suffering falsely infuses meaning into suffering itself instead of into that for whom suffering exists in the first place: the sufferer. Dehumanizing and ultimately sadistic, the justification of suffering makes a derision of all those whose lives bear its indelible scars. If one wishes to heal these scars, to be a salve to those for whom relief is but a hope, one must work to make the *life* of the sufferer meaningful, to expand their possibilities—to truly address the constriction of their body and bodying. That, in short, is true compassion and care; that is how one remakes the world of the sufferer.

Appendix I

Heidegger argues that the *Vorhandensein* of objects (the mode of being which would see the hammer as a thing) only becomes explicit when, e.g., something doesn't work. The head of the hammer falls off, and one is forced to reckon with the object as present-at-hand, as abstracted (though never fully so) from its equipmental context. One inspects it as an *object*; the German is very helpful here, for in taking it as an object to be fixed, as *ein Gegen-stand*, one quite literally takes a stand against it. Thus, “*when an assignment has been disturbed*—when something is unusable for some purpose—then the assignment becomes explicit...the context of equipment is lit up, not as something never seen before, but as a totality constantly sighted beforehand in circumspection. With this totality, the world announces itself” (75). The world is disclosed (*erschließen*), is laid open.

The way in which Heidegger marks the breaking of the tool as the event whereby the world announces itself could lead one to think that this is the *only* way in which this occurs, yet it should go without saying that the world announces itself in other ways—in wonder, for example. Say that a hammer works extremely well; it's the best hammer one has ever used. It works so well that one inquires into *how* it is that the hammer works so well. Instead of conspicuousness, obtrusiveness, and obstinacy serving to reveal the hammer in its *Vorhandensein*, it is revealed by virtue of being *outstanding*. Taking this discussion out of the *Werkstatt*, one can also see how the phenomenon of wonder announces the world when, e.g., one is hiking in the hills or walking down the street and a sunset, a mountain range as it backgrounds the city sky-line, the design of new

intersection, a particular tree in the neighbor's front yard, or even the cut of the grass therein, *strikes* one as fantastic, amazing—as outstanding. Indeed, it seems hard to think of anything which could not be found outstanding in some way or another. Poetry is chock-full of such moments. In these moments, the world announces itself, whether or not one takes this as an opportunity to further think through the phenomenon of world or of the being of the being which stands out. (Also, Heidegger's discussion of the sign states explicitly that it "takes over the 'work' of *letting* something ready-to-hand *become conspicuous*" and that in such equipment "the worldly character of the ready-to-hand announces itself (80); in other words, the world announces itself through signs as well; see also 82).

For Heidegger, it is indeed the case that it is only thanks to interruptive—whether negative or positive, they each have positive phenomenal characteristics—moments that one is afforded the opportunity to phenomenologically inquire into being and the particular being of various beings in a more penetrating manner, but one should not get the impression that the hammer must break to have "real knowledge" of the hammer. Heidegger's whole point is that the carpenter *already knows* the being of the hammer, just not explicitly. Thus, all the philosopher is doing in her analysis is both probing and providing further explanations of what the carpenter already knows, and Heidegger's analysis surely suggests that that philosopher can only do so *if she is a carpenter* herself (or, at the very least, talks a lot with those who are carpenters). This is worth noting because it is easy to get the sense that in *SZ* there is a privileging of *theoria* over *praxis*—of the *vita contemplativa* over the *vita activa*. Substantive textual evidence to support such a claim is lacking, and, moreover, such a claim flies in the face of the entire *élan*

vital of the work: Dasein's pre-ontological understanding of being is the only way (and only hope) of being able to understand being at all; moreover, beings *lose* their worldhood when a break (*Bruch*) interrupts circumspection, and it takes careful phenomenological reconstruction to counteract the leveling and reduction which occurs in said interruptions (75). The entire "enterprise" of *SZ* and the *Seinsfrage* is based on and rooted in everyday Dasein, and the only aspect of Dasein's everydayness that Heidegger (implicitly) disparages is the extent to which Dasein is absorbed in the They (§27; §§34-38). Hardly a knock to *praxis*, such a critique is, at heart, a pedagogical, philosophical, and intellectual imperative.¹⁴¹

Table 1

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Sufka, Kenneth, and Derek Turner. "An Evolutionary Account of Chronic Pain: Integrating the Natural Method in Evolutionary Psychology." *Philosophical Psychology* 18, no. 2 (2005): 243-257.

¹⁴¹ The kernal of truth at the heart of this critique is best elaborated by Adorno in *Negative Dialectics*, where he presents a perspicacious critique of, among other things, the concept of "being" at the heart of fundamental ontology. See *ND*, 61-131, esp. 76-81.

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David Abrams' seminal work questions the relationship between the human and non-human world. It put him on the map, especially for ecological studies.

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This is a composite of Adorno's own notes and that of his students from an undergraduate seminar he gave on his work *Negative Dialectics*.

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Adorno attempts to expound the methodology behind his various projects hitherto, and this is here cast primarily in terms of the difference between the concept and the thing. He argues that only by dodging the inexorable sway of the unity principle (the unity of concept and thing, knowing and the known, thinking and being) can philosophy truly recoil from its defeatism of the last century and a half. To immerse oneself in the heterogeneous, to turn towards *nonidentity*, to allow the resistance of the thing to incessantly remold and remake the concept, this and this alone is “genuine philosophy” and the heart of negative dialectics for Adorno.

Alweiss, Lilian. *The World Unclaimed: A Challenge to Heidegger's Critique of Husserl*. Ohio: Ohio Univ. Press, 2003.

Alweiss claims that Heidegger did not, in fact, rescue the phenomenon of the world and that Husserl actually provides better phenomenological tools for such a recovery.

Baer, Eugen. *Medical Semiotics*. MD: Univ. Press of America, 1988.

This is the book length treatment of the article “The Medical Symptom” Baer contributed to *Frontiers in Semiotics*. He goes into much more detail and depth regarding the history of the medical symptom as well as his own theory thereof.

Bakan, David. *Disease, Pain, & Sacrifice: Toward a Psychology of Suffering*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968.

Bakan takes a pseudo-religious take on sacrifice, but he is mostly interested in probing the relation between more “medicalistic” views of suffering versus more holistic ones.

Bernasconi, Robert and David Wood, eds. *The Provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other*. New York: Routledge, 1988.

This volume contains essays on Levinas’ ethics, an interview with him, and responses to those essays from Levinas himself.

Brinthaup, Thomas M. and Richard P. Lipka, eds. *Changing the Self: Philosophies, Techniques, and Experiences*. Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1994.

S. Kay Toombs has an article, “Disability and the Self,” in this volume which deals with the onset of disability and how it affects how one can possibilize.

Brown, Catherine Caldwell. *The Many Facets of Touch: The Foundation of Experience: Its Importance Through Life, With Initial Emphasis for Infants and Young Children*.

USA: Johnson & Johnson Baby Products Company, 1984.

This volume deals with touch from psychological, biological, neurological, and developmental perspectives.

Buber, Martin. *Ich und Du*. Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1983. Translated as: *I and Thou* (trans. Walter Kaufmann). New York: Touchstone, 1970.

Buber's most famous work attempts to flesh out a dialogic and relational understanding of the self.

Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York: Verso, 2004.

This is the book where Butler begins to take up phenomenology again, primarily through the work of Emmanuel Levinas.

Cave, Jane. *Poems on Various Subjects, Entertaining, Elegiac and Religious. By Miss Cave, now Mrs. Winscom. The Fourth Edition, Corrected and Improved, With Many Additional Poems, Never Before Published*. Bristol, 1795. Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale Group. Dec. 2009. <<http://galenet.galegroup.com.janus.uoregon.edu/servlet/ECCO>>.

Jane Cave is a little-known 18th century poet, and, coincidentally, the only poet I found who wrote specifically about dealing with (chronic) headaches.

Carterette, Edward C. and Morton P. Friedman, eds. *Handbook of Perception: Feeling and Hurting*, Vol. VIB. New York: Academic Press, 1978.

A widely cited work on touch, with articles by leading researchers in multiple fields, all of whom deal work on haptic perception, especially in relation to pain.

Cerbone, David R. "Heidegger and Dasein's 'Bodily Nature': What Is the Hidden Problematic?" *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 8, no. 2 (2000): 209–30.

An essay that questions what is at stake in the few comments made in *Being and Time* about the body and, more specifically, Dasein's relation to animals.

Ciocan, Chriatian. "The Question of the Living Body in Heidegger's Analytic of Dasein." *Research in Phenomenology* 38 (2008): 72–89.

A fantastic and insightful essay that asks a very simple question: how, again, is it that a being such as Dasein, which *is not*, can factually die? The answer, of course, is that one *cannot* answer this question without adding some notion of the body into the analytic of Dasein.

Critchley, Simon, and Robert Bernasconi, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

As with each volume of the "Cambridge Companion," it contains a collection of essays from leading scholars on the philosopher or topic it is about.

Deely, John, Brooke Williams, and Felicia E. Kruse, eds. *Frontiers in Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1986.

A collection of essays on various topics in semiotics from leading scholars in the field (at the time).

Denker, Alfred. "Martin Heidegger (1889-1976): Chronology." Dec. 2008 <<http://www.freewebs.com/m3smg2/HeideggerChronology.html>>.

This is a fantastic chronology of Heidegger's entire life and publications.

Derrida, Jacques. "Geschlecht: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference." *Research in Phenomenology* XIII (1983): 65-83.

An essay which probes the relation between gender and Dasein, among other things.

———. *Margins of Philosophy*. Chicago: The Chicago Univ. Press, 1982.

This volume contains a number of seminal essays, each of which helped establish

———. “The Capitalist Labour-Process and the Body in Pain: The Corporeal Depths of Marx’s Concept of Immiseration.” *Historical Materialism* 16 (2008): 35–66.

An essay which attempts to “expose the corporeal depths of Marx’s notion of immiseration, and, in so doing, to show that immiseration is by no means a long-since disappeared attribute of early capitalism.” Fracchia convincingly points out the role of the body, usually ignored, in Marx’s writings, early and late.

Good, Mary-Jo Delvecchio, et al. *Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective*. Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1992.

A jewel of a collection on pain from various disciplines.

Gregory, David and John C.B. English. “The Myth of Control: Suffering in Palliative Care.” *Journal of Palliative Care* 10, Issue 2 (1994): 18-22.

An essay which criticizes the current, western, scientific model of the body, and, therewith, suffering as a phenomenon which is wholly under the control of science (and thus Western models of medicine).

Guignon, Charles, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993.

As with each volume of the “Cambridge Companion,” it contains a collection of essays from leading scholars on the philosopher or topic it is about.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*. 22 Vols. Edited by Eva Moldenhauer & Karl Markus Michel. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 1970.

Hegel’s (in)famous lectures on the history of philosophy.

Heidegger, Martin. *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. 2nd Ed. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1988.

A composite of personal lecture notes and student notes from the course of the same name Heidegger gave in 1927.

———. *Basic Writings*. Edited by David Farrell Krell. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.

A collection that attempts to capture the “essential” Heidegger—taking key sections from *Being and Time* and a number of his most famous essays written after it.

———. *Four Seminars*. Translated by Andrew Mitchell and François Raffoul. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2003.

These are the four ultimate seminars Heidegger gave before his death. They display, in many respects, Heidegger at his most retrospective.

——— and Eugen Fink. *Heraclitus Seminar*. Translated by Charles H. Seibert. Illinois: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1994.

Essentially a word-for-word transcript of a joint course given from 1966-67 at the University of Freiburg on the Heraclitus fragments.

———. *Identity and Difference*. Translated by Joan Stambaugh. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1969.

Two very revealing essays, the first of which Heidegger later designated as his most important writing since *Being and Time*.

———. *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*. Translated by Daniel O. Dahlstrom. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2005.

Contains the very first lectures Heidegger gave at the University of Marburg during the winter semester from 1923-24. Like *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, it offers invaluable insights into the period leading up to the writing of *Being and Time*.

———. *Nietzsche: Volumes I and II*. Translated by David Farrell Krell. New York and Evanston: HarperOne, 1991.

A series of lectures Heidegger gave on Nietzsche between 1936 and 1940.

———. *Ontology—The Hermeneutics of Facticity*. Translated by John van Buren. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2008.

A composite of student and lecture notes from a lecture course Heidegger gave at the University of Freiburg during the summer of 1923, wherein he deals with the hermeneutics of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Schleiermacher, among others.

———. *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. Translated by William Lovitt. New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1977.

Contains five selected essays, the first two of which (“The Question Concerning Technology” and “The Turning”) are arguably the most famous, due to the way in which they explicitly deal with environmental and architectural questions Heidegger seldom addresses elsewhere.

———. *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2001.

The text of a lecture course presented at the University of Freiburg in winter of 1921-22.

———. *Sein und Zeit*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2006. Translated as: *Being and Time*

(trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson). New York: Harper & Row, 1962. Translated as: *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein und Zeit* (trans. Joan Stambaugh). New York: State Univ. of New York Press, 1996.

Heidegger's magnum opus was supposedly only written in 3 months, under "publish or perish" conditions. It is arguably the most important work of philosophy of the 20th century.

Hirshfield, Jane. *Given Sugar, Given Salt*. HarperCollins: 2001.

Jane Hirshfield is an award-winning American poet. This collection was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award.

The International Association for the Study of Pain. 2009. Accessed March 2009.

<<http://www.iasp-pain.org/>>.

This is the official website of the IASP.

Katz, David. *The World of Touch*. Edited and translated by Lester E. Kruger. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1989.

A groundbreaking work on haptic perception from the perspective of experimental psychology.

Kierkegaard, Søren. *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments*, Vol. I and Vol. II. Translated and edited by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Kierkegaard's most extended work dealing with the ethical sphere (representative by the pseudonym Johannes Climacus) also contains some of his most piercing and perspicacious jabs at Hegel and Christendom.

Kisiel, Theodore. *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being & Time*. Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1993.

Although he did not have all of Heidegger's writings available to him at the time of its publication, Kisiel's work is breathtaking in both scope and acumen. It is a matchless work if one is interested in filling in many of the gaps left open in *Being and Time*.

— and Thomas Sheehan, eds. *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His Early Occasional Writings, 1920-1927*. Illinois: Northwestern Univ. Press, 2007.

As with the previous citation, this book attempts to fill in gaps of Heidegger's pre-*Being and Time* years, and what makes this work special is that it contains many previously unpublished personal documents of Heidegger.

Kleinman, Arthur. "Medicine's Symbolic Reality: On a Central Problem in the Philosophy of Medicine." *Inquiry* 16 (1973): 206-213.

Kleinman, drawing primarily on cultural-anthropological research, attempts to show how the world of (Western) medicine, contrary to its claims of objectivity, operates under a specifically Western worldview.

Levinas, Emmanuel. *Totality and Infinity*. Translated by Alphonso Lingis. Pennsylvania: Duquesne Univ. Press, 1969.

This is Levinas' most famous work, wherein he lays out his phenomenology of "the face" and chastises essentially everyone from Plato to Heidegger as working against first philosophy qua "ethics."

Lysaker, John T. "Heidegger's Absolute Music, or What Are Poets for When the End of Metaphysics Is At Hand?" *Research in Phenomenology* 30 (2000): 180-210.

Starting out with the claim that “the end of metaphysics is at hand,” Lysaker moves through Heidegger to probe the import and critical workings of poetry, dealing again with his notion of *Ur-poetry* first laid out in *You Must Change Your Life*.

———. “Relentless Unfolding: Emerson’s Individual,” *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 17, No. 3 (2003): 155-163.

An essay that lays out eight theses on Emerson, which Lysaker intends to work together to show how Emersonian individualism is a project which has massive implications for today, how it truly remains a “living project.”

———. *You Must Change Your Life: Poetry, Philosophy, and the Birth of Sense*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 2002.

A reworked version of Lysaker’s PhD dissertation, this book takes up questions of self-transformation and poetry through Heidegger, among others.

Malpas, Jeff. *Heidegger’s Topology: Being, Place, World*. Mass: The MIT Press, 2005.

A very interesting monograph that reinterprets Heidegger’s philosophy as an extended meditation on *place*. Although I don’t quite agree with Malpas, such a reading illuminates aspects of Heidegger’s work only dimly seen through other frames.

Mckim, A. Elizabeth. “Making Poetry of Pain: The Headache Poems of Jane Cave Winscom.” *Literature and Medicine* 24, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 93-108.

Mckim’s essay first pointed me to Jane Cave, and it accomplishes valuable interpretive work on her poetry.

Montagu, Ashley. *Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin*, 3rd Ed. New York: Harper and Row, 1986.

Another seminal work on touch, Montagu performs an arguably unmatched analysis of how (potentially surprisingly) central “touch” is to human life.

Murray, Michael. “Leibniz on the Problem of Evil.” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Fall 2008 Edition. Ed. Edward N. Zalta. <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/leibniz-evil/>>.

A concise and erudite exposition of Leibniz’s theodicy.

Richardson, William J. *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*. New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 2003.

A widely recognized landmark work in Heidegger scholarship, Richardson does a remarkable job tracking Heidegger across the whole of his life and oeuvre.

Although Richardson (like Kisiel) had incomplete access to the whole of Heidegger’s writings, it is an indispensable work for one interested in the “complete” Heidegger and not simply the author of *Being and Time*.

Sappho. *Sappho*. Translated by Mary Barnard. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1986.

The lone female ancient Greek poet whose writings are extant.

Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985.

This is a brilliant work on the relation of the body, suffering, language, and, at bottom, human nature. It contains implications for everything from Marxist theory to literary criticism to public policy, and it is perhaps the single best book

Amnesty International could hand to one interested in seriously understanding what occurs in torture.

Schalow, Frank. *The Incarnality of Being: The Earth, Animals, and the Body in Heidegger's Thought*. New York: State Univ. of New York Press, 2006.

As the title explains, Schalow attempts to think through various issues which are at best peripheral to Heidegger's corpus. Although I disagree with many of his findings, it is nonetheless a worthy attempt to bring these topics to the forefront of Heidegger scholarship, especially insofar as I believe that Heidegger's thought has much to say on these issues, his de facto (relative) silence on them notwithstanding.

Sinclair, David. *Cutaneous Sensation*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967.

A seminal work on haptic sensation.

Sobel, Reuven. "The Myth of the Control of Suffering." *Journal of Medical Humanities* 17, no. 4 (1996): 255-259.

From the perspective of a doctor, Sobel attempts to show how the belief that suffering is controllable has deleterious effects on every party involved, whether patient, doctor, or caretaker.

Sophocles. *Sophocles II*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1957.

The most famous Greek tragedian, the fifth century Sophocles is best known for his play *Oedipus the King*.

Staiano, Kathryn Vance. "A Semiotic Definition of Illness." *Semiotica* 28 (1979): 107-25.

Starting with semiotics, Staiano attempts to work out a nuanced understanding of illness. She relies heavily on the work of Baer and Kleinman, whom I was introduced to thanks to her bibliography.

Streeter, Ryan, "Heidegger's Formal Indication: A Question of Method in *Being and Time*," *Man and World* 30 (1997): 413-430.

Streeter takes on the issue of formal indication, taken almost directly from Husserl, in Heidegger's *Being and Time* and the extremely important methodological role it plays, despite the fact that Heidegger never even mentions it as a methodological principle.

Sufka, Kenneth, and Derek Turner. "An Evolutionary Account of Chronic Pain: Integrating the Natural Method in Evolutionary Psychology." *Philosophical Psychology* 18, no. 2 (2005): 243-257.

This article argues that chronic pain is maladaptive and does so in the context of a methodological argument for evolutionary psychology to approach its subject matter in a naturalistic, "bottom-up" manner (think Owen Flanagan).

Tilley, Mauren and Susan A. Ross, eds. *Broken and Whole: Essays on Religion and the Body*. MD: Univ. Press of America, 1995.

I found Pamela Ann Smith's personal, almost confessional, article, "Chronic Pain and Creative Possibility," encouraging. As far as I can tell, she is a committed evangelical Protestant who, due to her own physical suffering, cannot accept the traditional, platitudinous story given by her respective theological tradition to explain it. She also notes some very interesting links between creativity, possibility, and illness.

Toombs, S. Kay, ed. *Handbook of Phenomenology and Medicine*. Philosophy and Medicine, Vol. 68. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001.

This is the single most useful book I found for the second division of this paper. It abounds with fascinating articles on everything from the temporality of suffering to disability.

Welton, Donn, ed. *The Body: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.

A selection of some of the most important writings on the body from the continental tradition, stretching from the beginning of the twentieth century to present-day thinkers.

Wood, Kelsey. "ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ as Contrast of Being with Being." *Existentialia: Μελεται Σοφιας* XV, no. 3-4 (2005): 223-232.

An article in response to Sheehan's provocative argument that the real topic of Heidegger's thought is not "being" but "the thing itself" (die Sache selbst). I find that Wood completely and convincingly deflates Sheehan's argument.

Woolf, Virginia. *The Essays of Virginia Woolf; Vol. IV: 1925-1928*. Edited by Andrew McNeillie. London: Hogarth Press, 1994.

This is part of a four-volume collection of all the essays by the twentieth century English writer Virginia Woolf.