

## Sandmeyer – 1. Research

My academic research focuses on two distinct areas: the German philosophical movement of phenomenology, particularly Husserl and Scheler, and the philosophy of ecology and of life, most characteristically expressed in the writings of two disparate individuals, Hans Jonas and Aldo Leopold.

My work on Edmund Husserl's philosophy has been defined in my book, *Husserl's Constitutive Phenomenology: Its Problem and Promise* (**see document 2.a.**). In that work I argue in that Husserl's extant writings one can discern the promise of a unitary conception of phenomenology. The problem is that no such articulation exists in any of his published works, and his unpublished writings typically advance only fragmentary analyses. While Husserl understood the need to articulate a unitary conception of phenomenology and, indeed, set about to produce a "System of Phenomenological Philosophy" in the 30s, he failed to bring this effort to fruition. This is the great unfulfilled promise of his philosophy.

I remain committed to the scholarship of Husserl's philosophy, and this is evinced in my commentary to James Hart's paper before the 2022 Husserl Circle (**see document 6.a.**) However, since the publication of my book, I have focused my phenomenological research on the early history of the German phenomenological movement. I presented a paper to the North American Society for Early Phenomenology in 2018. In this paper, I favorably evaluated a contemporaneous critique of Husserl's analysis of Franz Brentano's theory of time and time-consciousness (**see document 5.b.**). In 2021, I presented a revised draft of this paper (online) to the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (**see document 5.a.**). For several years now I have engaged the North American Scheler Society in my study of Max Scheler's concept of life and spirit. For an early articulation of this research, **see document 3.b.**, i.e., my *Compass* article titled "Life and Spirit in Max Scheler." Indeed, the philosophy of life is the preeminent philosophical theme tying all my work together. My review of Andrea Staiti's excellent book on the themes of nature, spirit, and life in Husserl's philosophy, which I published in the *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, exemplifies this concern (**see document 4.b.**) However, I hold that a philosophy of life which ignores the ecological context of relations constitutive of life, itself, remains inadequate to the phenomenon. This is clearly evident in my 2017 presentation before the International Association for Environmental Philosophy (**see document 5.g.**). In that paper, "An Ecological Understanding of Transcendental Subjectivity," I argue that not only is it possible to think of transcendental subjectivity in ecological terms, this, in fact, is the only proper way to think it.

Indeed, my research for the last several years is located directly at the intersection of the two areas stated above. My article in *Place and Phenomenology* titled "The Idea of an Existential Ecology" advances the basic thrust of my research program today (**see document 3.a.**). In that piece, I argue that Hans Jonas's existential interpretation of biological facts, which he articulates in *The Phenomenon of Life*, lacks an explicit ecological understanding of living entities. I seek to resolve this omission by extending Jonas's existential interpretation to the land concept as advanced by Aldo Leopold. What is most promising in this analysis, I show, is that this idea of an existential ecology coordinates well with certain evolutionary models of organism-environment interactions advanced today by neo-Lamarckian evolutionary theorists. There are several new publications which support such my research program. Thus, I reviewed Adam Konopka's *Ecological Investigations for Husserl Studies* in 2021. And I reviewed the new Library of America edition of Aldo Leopold's writings for *Environmental Philosophy* (**see documents 3.a. and 3.c.**, respectively).

Lastly, I have a well-documented history presenting on the concept of sustainability. These presentations relate directly to my pedagogical work in that area (**see section 6.a. of my Teaching**

**Portfolio** on my activities organizing pedagogy workshops). In 2018, Helen Turner and I presented our work on the sustain-able pedagogies faculty workshop here at UK before the American Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (**see document 5.e.**). I was invited to discuss the philosophical coherence of the concept of sustainability to the UK Symposium on Emerging Technologies (**see document 5.f.**) My 2019 presentation on the pedagogy of interdisciplinary education at the Kentucky Philosophical Association centered on my interdisciplinary coursework, particularly on sustainability education (**see document 5.d.**). Later in 2019, I presented my research on "The Animal in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals" to the Living with Animals conference (**see document 5.c.**). The Living with Animals conference is a recurring conference occurring at Eastern Kentucky University, and I have been presenting my work there for a decade now.

As I have suggested, my future research centers developing the idea of an existential ecology. The *Encyclopedia of Phenomenology* article on Hans Jonas which I am currently writing fits into that project. The work I am doing here at UK to establish and develop an Environmental Humanities Initiative is immediately relevant to my research plans. Not only do I plan on developing a cluster of undergraduate and graduate courses on the philosophy of ecology, but also I intend to organize a nearly carbon neutral (NCN) International Conference on the theme of Cultivating Diverse Voices in the Environmental Humanities, on the theme "#ecologies: (**see my discussion of University Service** in my Service Statement and the recommendations outlined in UK-EHI draft report [**service document 4a**] for more details.)



## DOSSIER: Research Materials (10% distribution of effort)

<https://www.uky.edu/~rsand1/dossier/research>

### Statement of Promotion and Tenure Expectations: STS Appointments<sup>1</sup>

As the DOE of STS faculty will not normally emphasize research but rather teaching or service, the department does not expect that faculty member will have a publication record like that of a Regular-Title Series colleague going up for promotion. The expectations will be commensurate with the effort represented by the DOE over the course of the probationary period. The department does expect, however, that the Special-Title Series faculty member will be able to show a commitment to philosophical or pedagogical research in the form of conference and workshop presentations and publications in journals as well as books. This achievement will be primarily demonstrated by (1) external letters of assessment solicited by the unit from leading authorities in the relevant field(s) and (2) the quality, quantity and regularity of the candidate's presentations and publications (already appeared or accepted for publication).

Faculty must demonstrate that they have established an independent research agenda and show evidence of a sustainable long-term commitment to scholarly research and publication. The department also expects successful candidates to have moved beyond the specific research they conducted in their Ph.D. dissertations (as evidenced by the contents of publications and presentations).

### 1. [RESEARCH STATEMENT](#)

#### 2. BOOK

- a. Sandmeyer, Bob. [Husserl's Constitutive Phenomenology: Its Problem and Promise](#). New York: Routledge, 2009.

#### 3. ARTICLES

- a. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["The Idea of an Existential Ecology."](#) In *Place and Phenomenology*, edited by Janet Donohoe, 39-55. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.
- b. Sandmeyer, Robert. ["Life and Spirit in Max Scheler's Philosophy."](#) *Philosophy Compass* 7, no. 1 (January 2012): 23-32.

#### 4. REVIEWS

- a. Sandmeyer, Bob. [Review of Ecological Investigations: A Phenomenology of Habitats](#), by Adam Konopka. *Husserl Studies* 37. (2021): 193-99.
- b. Sandmeyer, Bob. [Review of Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology: Nature, Spirit, and Life](#), by Andrea Staiti. *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 54, no. 2. (April 2016): 345-46.
- c. Sandmeyer, Bob. [Review of Aldo Leopold. A Sand County Almanac and Other Writings on Ecology and Conservation](#), edited by Curt Meine. *Environmental Philosophy* 11, no. 1. (2014): 138-40
- d. Sandmeyer, Bob. [Review of Edmund Husserl's Freiburg Years, 1916-1938](#), by J. N. Mohanty. *Husserl Studies* 30. (2014): 71-76.

#### 5. PRESENTATIONS

- a. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["A Contemporaneous Criticism of Husserl's 1928 Time Lectures."](#) Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (October 2021)
- b. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["Oskar Kraus' Criticism of Husserl's Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewußtseins."](#) North American Society for Early Phenomenology (May 2019)
- c. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["The Animal in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals."](#) Living with Animals (March 2019)
- d. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["Philosophy in an Interdisciplinary Key."](#) Kentucky Philosophical Association (March 2019)
- e. Sandmeyer, Bob and Turner, Helen. ["The University of Kentucky Sustain – able Pedagogies Faculty Workshop: An Overview."](#) Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (October 2018)
- f. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["Sustainability & Philosophy."](#) Invited Speaker, Symposium on Emerging Technologies and Sustainability: Interactions Between Science and Society. University of Kentucky (Dec 2017)
- g. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["An Ecological Understanding of Transcendental Subjectivity."](#) International Association for Environmental Philosophy (October 2017)

#### 6. COMMENTARIES

- a. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["Commentary on James Hart's 'Some Moments of Wonder Emergent Within Transcendental Phenomenological Analyses.'"](#) Husserl Circle (May/June 2022)
- b. Sandmeyer, Bob. ["Commentary on Simon Gurofsky's 'Kant's Principle of Significance.'"](#) Kentucky Philosophical Association (April 2018)