

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

Beauvoir shapes an account of lived experience that recognizes subjectivity and situation as radically irreducible, concrete, particular, and plural and that by means of this recognition moves EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY beyond impassés created by subtle, ongoing adherence to impersonal and falsely universalizing forms of philosophy. Beauvoir's critique of myth — whereby once a single myth is touched, all myths are in danger — shows that nothing, not even the most commonplace of beliefs, is essential or natural, and in so doing liberates a dynamic sense of becoming through which we take up our lives. Her insistence that it is in the knowledge of the conditions of our lives, in their ambiguity and multiplicity, that we draw our strength to live and our reasons for acting, makes women and groups marginalized by much of philosophy emerge as a topic of discourse in phenomenology.

Beauvoir was born in Paris, January 2, 1908, the daughter of Françoise Brasseur de Beauvoir and Georges de Beauvoir. She studied philosophy at the Sorbonne. After completing the *agrégation* in 1931, she taught philosophy in Marseilles, Rouen, and Paris. During the German occupation of France her relationship with Natalie Sorokine resulted in her teaching contract being terminated, and in 1944 Beauvoir decided to become a full-time writer. With JEAN-PAUL SARTRE, MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY, and others, Beauvoir co-founded the journal *Les Temps Modernes* in 1945. She traveled widely and was particularly affected by her visits to China, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and the United States. She took part in numerous political demonstrations, among which were the opposition to the German occupation of France, to French colonial rule in Algeria, to the war in Vietnam, and to sexism in women's lives. Her work inspired in great part the second wave of FEMINISM. Beauvoir died in Paris, on April 21, 1986.

In keeping with Beauvoir's belief that it is good for thoughts to be shaped by experience, as well as

with the notion that existential phenomenology is not primarily a matter of intertextual reading, but of reflection on experience in interaction with the persons, ideas, values, groups, institutions, etc., around us, her phenomenology grew significantly out of her friendships. In this regard there should be noted her conversations with Sartre, her lifelong companion since their initial meeting in 1929; with Sylvie Le Bon, who met Beauvoir in 1960 and who, Beauvoir reports, was thoroughly interwoven in her life by 1964 and remained so up to the time of Beauvoir's death; and with Beauvoir's friends among whom, at various times in her life, may be counted Elizabeth Le Coin ("Zaza" in Beauvoir's work); Hélène de Beauvoir, her sister ("Poupette" in Beauvoir's writings); Estepha Gerassi ("Stepha"); José Le Core; Maurice Merleau-Ponty (sometimes "Pradelle" in Beauvoir's books); Colette Audry; Jacques-Laurent Bost; Violette Leduc; Nelson Algren; and Richard Wright.

Beauvoir wrote a vast array of philosophical, literary, and political works, as well as letters and notebooks, *Lettres à Sartre* (1990), *Journal de guerre* (1990), which are now beginning to be published and will have much impact on current understanding of her work and of French phenomenology. *L'Amérique au jour le jour* (1948) chronicles her trips to the United States and her encounters with Algren and Wright. Interestingly, Beauvoir was the only European phenomenologist of her time actively to connect her descriptive thought with ideas and events in the United States. Her memoirs document the evolution of her ideas and the origins and development of phenomenology in FRANCE in vivid detail. *Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée* (1958) contains compelling descriptions of her relationship with Zaza, her childhood friend, as well as discussions of her rejection of religion and of the family as an institution. *La force de l'âge* (1960) brings forth Beauvoir's encounter with EXISTENTIALISM, her life with Jean-Paul Sartre, and her own process of becoming a writer. *La force des choses* (1963) highlights her life during the prewar and war years; *Tout compte fait* (1972) marks her relation with Sylvie de Bon and moves from the war to the late 1960s; *La cérémonie des adieux* (1981) traces the years preceding the death of Sartre. *Une mort très douce* (1964), which Le Bon encouraged Beauvoir to write upon the death of Beauvoir's mother, may well be one of her most

enduring essays. Among her highly acclaimed literary works are *L'invitée* (1943); *Le sang des autres* (1945); *Tous les hommes sont mortels* (1946); *Les mandarins* (1954), which she considered her best literary resolution of the problem of the Other and which received the Prix Goncourt; *Les belles images* (1966); and *La femme rompue* (1967).

Beauvoir's best known theoretical works are *Pour une morale de l'ambiguïté* (1947), *Le deuxième sexe* (1949) and *La vieillesse* (1970). *Le deuxième Sexe* was an immediate success in France, with the first volume selling 22,000 copies in the first week, June 4–9, and the second volume selling just as many copies, November 4–9. The cover of *Paris Match*, in August of that year, featured her photo and the statement that she was the first woman philosopher in the history of "man." With the appearance of the second volume, in which Beauvoir discusses the young girl, marriage, the mother, the lesbian, prostitutes, and hetairas, she became not only the center of controversy, but the object of rudeness and harassment as she was hounded out of cafés and the routine of her daily life was disrupted.

The devastating rise of Nazism in Germany and the Civil War in Spain shattered the lives of Beauvoir and her friends. When they found themselves again, reborn and radically different, the world around them had changed. This change, for Beauvoir, was marked by an awareness of the multiple implications of the historical moment. Thus when Beauvoir, like Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, criticized the philosophies prevalent during their time — in particular, NATURALISM, PSYCHOANALYSIS, and MARXISM — her critique, and with that, her existential phenomenology, was distinguished by its specific awareness of humanity not as a natural, but as a historical phenomenon. Naturalistic explanations, she argues, are inadequate insofar as nothing that happens to a person is ever natural. For instance, although human reproduction is founded on biology, it does not necessitate sexual differentiation, and old age is not exclusively a biological fact, but partakes of history. Psychoanalysis posits humans not as natural objects, but as subjects, or lived bodies. Yet the psychoanalytical criterion of normalcy, considered by Beauvoir to be identical to essentialist and prescriptive social custom, gives rise to an inauthentic picture of humanity. She claims that Sigmund Freud offers a masculine model that mistakenly assumes that sexuality is a given and

fails to account for the origin of male supremacy. Anyone who wants to work on women, Beauvoir writes, has to break completely with Freud. Historical materialism brings to phenomenological analysis the recognition that humanity makes itself what it is according to its material possibilities. A woman is defined not exclusively by her sexuality, but also by the economic organization of the society in which she lives. Beauvoir maintains, however, that historical materialism rejects the concept of choice and therefore views the subject as monolithic and passive. It reduces women to the capacity for labor and does not consider women's work in reproduction and childcare seriously.

Beauvoir was recognized early in her philosophical studies as an expert on Leibniz, whose philosophy she later came to find dull. HEGEL's phenomenology and logic were influential on her work, as they were on that of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. She often comments on the Hegelian sense of being and describes "to be a woman" as an instance of the dynamic Hegelian sense of the verb "to be," that is, a "to have become" in which the question is: should that state of affairs continue? She finds a basis for social philosophy in Hegelian representations of the need for a reciprocal recognition of consciousnesses. Yet in January 1941, upon discovering herself delivered from an undue optimism, Beauvoir rejects the optimism of Hegel's historical infinite and its positing of the particular only as a moment of the totality in which it must surpass itself. Although she gathers support from Kierkegaard's opposition to Hegel, in which Kierkegaard affirms the irreducible character of ambiguity, she considers his tales of the aloneness of the individual a subjective game of no use in the creation of authentic relations among people.

Beauvoir read widely the work of her contemporaries and developed aspects of her existential phenomenology out of that dialogue. She found fruitful Claude Lévi-Strauss's conception of the mark of otherness, which arises in the exchange of women by men, among men, in marriage. MAX SCHELER's account of *ressentiment* she characterized as very weak, and EM-MANUEL LEVINAS's account of the feminine as the full flower of otherness, absolutely other and in meaning opposite to consciousness, she termed an assertion of masculine privilege.

During the academic year 1932–33, Beauvoir, al-

ready familiar with Husserl due to her conversations with Fernando Gerassi, who had studied with EDMUND HUSSERL and had been a classmate of Sartre in Berlin, became extremely interested in Husserl's work. This interest, sparked by a conversation with Raymond Aron concerning Husserl's approach to philosophy, led to her detailed study, in 1934, of Husserl's *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* [1905] and to her translation of sections of that work for Sartre, who had read Husserl's work while on leave at the French Institute in Berlin during the spring of 1933. Beauvoir describes herself, in *La force de l'âge*, as initially being filled with enthusiasm by the richness and novelty of Husserl's phenomenology. Of particular interest is Beauvoir's thematization of Husserl's EPOCHÊ AND REDUCTION in *Pour une morale de l'ambiguïté*. There she compares the epochê to existential conversion: let a person put the will in parentheses and that person will come to an awareness of the genuine conditions of her life. Just as the phenomenological reduction prevents the errors of dogmatism by suspending all affirmation concerning the mode of reality of the external world — whose existence it does not contest — existentialist conversion does not suppress a person's instincts, plans, and passions. It merely refuses to set them up as absolutes and considers them in their connection with the freedom that projects them.

Beauvoir read MARTIN HEIDEGGER first in 1936, when she translated long sections of *Sein und Zeit* (1927) for Sartre to read, and then again more thoroughly in 1939. She refers positively to Heidegger's account of the future as bound up with the present and she contrasts that with the dream future posited by religion and with the tyrant's trick, which encloses a person in the facticity of the present. Yet she experiences human life not as a gradual being-toward-death, but as an unstable system in which balance is continually lost and continually recovered, in which change is the law of life. The analysis of the tool, given in *Le deuxième sexe*, vividly distinguishes her existential phenomenology from that of Heidegger. There Beauvoir details the life of the married woman as one of endless repetition, washing, ironing, sweeping, ferreting out rolls of lint from under wardrobes, and whose high point may be the preparation of food and getting meals, work that means marketing, often the bright spot of the day, gossip on doorsteps while peeling vegetables, etc. The

WORLD, Beauvoir claims, when considered from the perspective of a concrete and particular context, does not seem to women an assemblage of implements intermediate between her will and her goals, as Heidegger defines it; it is on the contrary something obstinately resistant, unconquerable. Woman comes to grips not with matter, but with life, and life cannot be mastered through the use of TECHNOLOGY.

Between Sartre and Beauvoir there are major influences of varied sorts. These influences are currently being re-evaluated in order to be more accurately determined. For instance, despite her assertions to the contrary, it is now apparent that Sartre had read *L'invitée* by the first week of February 1940, significantly prior to his completion of *L'être et le néant* (1943), and Sartre's theoretical impasse at combining his belief in absolute freedom with collectivity and history was not broken until after the initial publication of *Le deuxième sexe* in *Les Temps Modernes* in 1948. The divergences between the existential phenomenologies of Beauvoir and Sartre are especially evident in regard to their respective representations of voluntarism, of oppression and HISTORY, and of nature. While nature in Sartre's work appears as mere facticity, *l'être-en-soi*, nature for Beauvoir is to be considered in relationship with human being. Such a relationship forms one of the rare contexts in which woman is no longer mother, wife, housekeeper, but a human being, in which woman remembers that she is an irreducible free individual and lives not for others, but for herself. The freedom proposed by Beauvoir is individualistic, but not solipsistic. Each individual is defined only by relationship to the world and to other individuals; one's freedom is made by reaching out toward the freedom of others.

From Merleau-Ponty Beauvoir draws an understanding of the BODY as historical process. Yet as she comments, to say "a body is not a thing, it is a situation in itself," has no significance; rather, this body has this or that particular structure. For instance, she writes that woman, like man, is her body *and* that woman's body is something other than herself. Over the years Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty grew further apart, separated by their views of RELIGION, women's right to abortion, and family.

Lived experience, Beauvoir relates, was a form of consciousness she first became aware of from her refusal, as a child, to fit whatever she beheld with her

own eyes into a rigid category, and from her desire to express neutral tints, muted shades, and the gap between word and object. Her descriptions of lived experience are inseparable from her literary reading, and in particular, from the writing of Kafka, Lawrence, Woolf, Hemingway, Dos Passos, Faulkner, and Joyce. In the section “L’être-dans-le-monde” of *La vieillesse* (Old age, 1970), Beauvoir comes to a definition of lived experience as the inward experience of a subject, the inwardly experienced meaning of our being-in-the-world. Lived experience can be communicated from the standpoint of each individual’s uniqueness but, Beauvoir maintains, it cannot be known as a universal philosophical concept. The body — that is, our awareness of ourselves as particular, concrete, and embodied individuals — may offer a way of understanding lived experience, but it has no meaning apart from the relations that shape its context, or situation.

In *Le deuxième sexe*, when Beauvoir writes her perhaps best known and most controversial statement, “*On ne naît pas femme: on le devient*” [one is not born a woman: one becomes one], she attacks the myth of woman, a transcendent idea that defies lived experience and robs individuals of their self-defined projects and goals. Woman is a cultural formation that is imposed on females by the intervention of others in her destiny. Woman finds herself living in a world where man represents both the positive and the neutral, where she is defined relative to man and as the negative, where man is the subject, the absolute, and she is the Other. Moreover, Beauvoir observes, just as woman is not determined by biology, psychology, or economic fate, sexuality is in no way determined by matters of anatomical or psychological disposition. Thus for Beauvoir’s phenomenology there is no natural or necessary linkage between biological features, gender, and sexuality, between women or men, or heterosexuality or homosexuality, or femininity or masculinity. There are myriad possibilities for us to take up and give shape through our being in the world. Yet for Beauvoir, woman is not the only Other. She cites, in *La vieillesse*, the bourgeois myths of affluence that hide the experience of old age.

The awareness gained from analyses of lived experiences was not, for Beauvoir, to be relegated to a world of ideas, but was for the purpose of social change: she signed the *Manifeste des 343* and participated in the French feminist campaign for free abortion. She

publicly testified for Djamila Boupacha, a young Algerian woman illegally imprisoned by French military forces and tortured in 1960. In 1972 she named herself a militant feminist and joined the women’s liberation movement. She worked to actualize a partial response to her question, who cares for the aged?

Beauvoir’s phenomenology needs to be read in its entirety and studied, that is, it needs to receive the appropriate scholarly attention. Although there are serious obstacles to studying her phenomenology, these can be overcome. First, the English translation of *Le deuxième sexe*, the text from which the translations into other languages have been made, suffers from the deletion, arbitrary and unindicated, by the translator (H. M. Parshley), of more than ten percent of the original. Margaret Simons has shown that the text has many wrong translations and the translator has often rendered inaccurately and ignored altogether Beauvoir’s precise use of phenomenological terms. Second, Jo Ann Pilardi has shown that philosophers, including those in Continental philosophy, have with very few exceptions not even mentioned Beauvoir, and in the few cases where mention has been made, it is often woefully inaccurate. Beauvoir herself has not always facilitated accurate study of her work. She imposed major restrictions on interviewers, biographers, and those close to her who considered theorizing about her life, work, and influence. Such restrictions, accompanied by Beauvoir’s frequent knowing misrepresentation of information, have led in her memoirs and interviews to the creation of a fiction. It is interesting, though, that so many writers and readers have chosen not simply to represent, but to embellish that fiction. In this context, it is important to keep in mind Beauvoir’s experience of the reception of her ideas during her lifetime.

To date, new directions in the study of Beauvoir’s phenomenology are indicated by feminist scholars, including feminist philosophers, many of whom are re-evaluating her work. Further new directions are emerging as her notebooks are transcribed and her journals, letters, and other manuscripts published. The disruptive potential of these materials promises to bring about dramatic shifts in understanding Beauvoir’s work in particular and French phenomenology in general.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

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JEFFNER ALLEN
Binghamton University

BEHAVIORAL GEOGRAPHY As an academic discipline, geography is the study of the earth as the dwelling place of human beings. Behavioral geography is one important subfield of the discipline and examines the role of human behavior, experience, and meaning in understanding people's relationship with environments, places, and landscapes. SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY is another subfield. In that several other dis-

ciplines and professions are also concerned with the people-environment relationship at varying geographical scales, research in behavioral geography is often interdisciplinary and linked with other areas of expertise that include ECOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY, environment-behavior research, ARCHITECTURE, landscape architecture, and community and regional planning.

Research in behavioral geography first arose in the early 1960s as an alternative to the normative, economically rational approaches used by geographers to examine the distribution and pattern of human activities in relation to space and environment. This early behavioral work was positivist in approach and emphasized such topics as environmental perception, spatial cognition and learning, territoriality, and environmental and landscape preferences. By the early 1970s, however, some behavioral geographers sought an alternative to the dominant positivist tradition and turned to interpretive philosophical traditions like HERMENEUTICS and EXISTENTIALISM as a way conceptually to explore human experience, meaning, and values as the essential foundation for understanding human behavior and action in the geographical world.

Since 1970, when EDWARD C. RELPH published the first article on the topic in a scholarly geographic journal, phenomenology has contributed significantly to behavioral geography, both conceptually and methodologically. Although there has been considerable theoretical debate by such figures as JOHN PICKLES and BENNO WERLEN as to what phenomenology can best offer to behavioral geography and related interdisciplinary work, most of the research has moved away from Husserl's CONSTITUTIVE PHENOMENOLOGY and has drawn instead on the tradition of EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY pointed to by MARTIN HEIDEGGER and MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY.

In broadest terms, this phenomenological research has sought to understand human awareness and action as they both create and are created by such geographical qualities as place, SPACE, nature, landscape, home, journey, region, dwelling, and the built environment. Perhaps the fundamental topic is the *geographical life-world*—the taken-for-granted meanings, experiences, behaviors, and events in relation to environment, space, place, and landscape. How, for example, do qualities of the natural and built environments give and have

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