LIVING WELL TOWARDS OTHERS:

The Development of an Everyday Ethics Through Emmanuel Levinas and Alfred Schutz

Yvonne Haigh BA (Hons) Murdoch University

This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Murdoch University, 2003
This dissertation is concerned with what it means to live well towards others. It develops a form of everyday ethics that emphasises how existing in the world and being ethical are entwined. To develop this approach to ethics this study employs Alfred Schutz’s phenomenological descriptions of everyday world and Emmanuel Levinas’s concept of the ethical. The purpose of the thesis is to develop an understanding of ethics that operates at the everyday level of human-to-human contact. This form of ethics is significant in that it indicates that being ethical is an important aspect of human life. My intention is to show that ethics is always more than simply the institution of codes of conduct that govern the way people act. The significance of the thesis is that it contributes both to ways in which ethics can be understood and to the manner in which ethics can be operationalised at an institutional level.

My thesis has four specific aims. First, to examine the conditions and characteristics that constitute the everyday world as understood in Alfred Schutz’s work. Second, to explore Emmanuel Levinas’s understanding of the ethical. My third aim is to synthesise these theorists’ ideas through my heuristic device, Echoes of the Other. This device will allow me to extract the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. My fourth aim is to point to an in situ illustration of this approach to ethics. This will be drawn from my observations at the Western Australian Police Academy.

My argument is that synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas will enable the development of an everyday ethics. This will highlight the ways in which ethics functions at the micro levels of human life. This study contributes to approaches to ethics, and specifically, ethics derived from Levinas’s ethical relation. This approach can be of use to people interested in ethics, phenomenology, the works of Levinas and Schutz and those concerned with developing ways to live well towards others.
I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work that has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

Yvonne Haigh
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Ian Cook of the School of Politics and International Studies at Murdoch University who provided me with guidance, encouragement and the capacity to believe in myself. Without his support I would not be the person I am today.

I would also like to thank David Savat, my colleague and computer adviser. Over the course of four years David not only “fixed” every computer problem I encountered, he also provided me with support and some light relief when it was needed. I would also like to thank the wonderful group of “polgrads”, Jim, Stuart, Taul and a few others who have come and gone. These people helped make this experience fun at times and supportive when it was necessary. Thanks must also go to Gaye Mekensie and Liz Boase for the coffees and the laughter. I would also like to thank Sargent Di Wilkins and Senior Constable Keryn Macey of the Western Australian Police Service for making me feel welcome and answering all of my questions. Finally, I want to thank my partner, Mario Schmack for understanding what it means to be driven.
INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is about what it means to live well toward others. While living with others takes into account a multitude of relations between people, living well towards others is concerned with the capacity for respect, care and responsibility. For many, these approaches to living well with others are addressed through the development of ethical theory, and, as such, my project is also concerned with ethics. However, my project involves considering how living well towards others can inform an ethics that is part of everyday life. Current research into ethics involves broad perspectives that raise issues about the rights of people, what it might mean to be good and how to engender a just society. While there has been a distinct growth in the literature that addresses this concern with ethics there has much less, or only minor, research into the manner in which living well towards others can inform an ethics that is integral to everyday life. This thesis aims to add such an account of ethics to the current literature. It is my contention that ethics involves more than simply acting in ethical ways and applying ethical standards to govern the way people act. Rather, ethics is integral to human interaction. It plays an important role in attempting to understand oneself, one’s surrounding environment as well as negotiating the complex world of moral responsibilities and obligations that are part of human existence.

Specifically, this dissertation draws on the works of Emmanuel Levinas (1906-95) in order to explore how ethics can be grasped as an integral aspect of everyday human life. For Levinas, ethics is not concerned with rights, or judgements about how to live. For him, ethics refers to our moral responsibility to
the other person. This responsibility emerges as a reply to the mortality of another person. In other words, moral responsibility is grasped by taking the significance of the other, for my being, as first and foremost. For Levinas, this is the ethical relation. My aim, in this dissertation, is to inquire into how the emergence of this moral responsibility for another person can inform ways of living well toward others that constitute an ethics of the everyday world.

While my primary area of focus is the manner in which ethics can be grasped as an integral aspect of everyday life this requires an exploration of the intricacies of the everyday world. Here, I will draw on the work of Alfred Schutz (1899-1959). For Schutz, the everyday world constitutes the horizon, or background, for the practices of daily life. For him, the everyday world is the realm of human interaction. It provides the background to experiences, the development of beliefs and interests, and, as such, the everyday world highlights the fundamental qualities of social reality.

My intention in this thesis is to synthesise aspects of Levinas’s view of ethical responsibility with Schutz’s understanding of the everyday world. Combining together their theories will provide both a macro approach to the everyday world as well as a micro approach to the complexity of relations between people. My concern is with inquiring into ethics at a face to face level. That is, I seek an ethics that is not based on the institution of rules or norms that attempt to govern the way people act. My aim is to combine parts of Levinas’s and Schutz’s work in order to move towards an ethics that takes up this responsibility for the Other on an everyday level. In attempting this inquiry I do
not intend to undertake an extensive comparison of their respective works. Rather, I intend to draw out insights from both that can assist with my goal.

In keeping with my project of developing a sense of ethics as an integral aspect of everyday life I will also point to an *in situ* illustration. These experiences and forms of engagement will provide a concrete illustration of my attempt to develop an everyday ethics. I will draw these experiences from my time spent observing Western Australian police officers attending the Police Academy for various aspects of their training. These illustrations will be used to complement my discussion of the development of an everyday ethics. They are not meant to provide a representation of ethics in the Western Australian Police Service.

* * * * *

My primary reason for synthesising aspects of Levinas’s and Schutz’s work is to explore how existing in the world and the ethical relation are entwined. My intention is to develop a sense of ethics in the everyday world. I seek this in order to move ethics away from both the more abstractive approaches, wherein it becomes a philosophical discussion of ‘pure excess’, ‘deconstruction’ or ‘boundaries and limits’, and a procedural form of ethics, where it can be understood as an addition to one’s existence in the world. These approaches to ethics, in my view, appear to separate being in the world from being ethical in the world. My goal, in this thesis, is to use the works of Levinas and Schutz to move towards an ethics that is not so much concerned with the regulation of conduct or
with discussing forms of ‘pure excess’. Rather, it is an ethics that is an integral aspect of everyday human existence.

Levinas’s work provides an overarching perspective for my dissertation. The significance of Levinas’s project is his exploration of the ethical character that is integral to human existence. For him, the ethical relation, indicated through human contact, is the impetus that justifies human existence. As Levinas explains, it is the simple facing of another human being that provokes the ethical relation. It is ethical because this face to face encounter is founded on the irreducible difference between self and Other. For Levinas, the ethical relation does not evoke an ethical principle, is it not a particular perspective or an addition to being in the world. Rather, for him, it is the original dimension of human existence.

Levinas’s phenomenological descriptions provide one way to grasp the micro characteristics of human existence. These descriptions point to the intricate nature of subjectivity and identity. For him, subjectivity involves a process of both separation and identification. However, subjectivity also involves a relationship with the Other. For Levinas, this relationship provides the origins of subjectivity and, moreover, it is this relationship that provides the basis for encountering the ethical. His phenomenological descriptions point to the structure and character of the ethical relation as both asymmetrical and inherently peaceful. In keeping with his phenomenological descriptions of human existence, he also illustrates how the ethical relation is played out through language, expression and in the communal dimension.
Schutz also adopts a phenomenological approach. For him, of primary interest are the dimensions of the everyday world. His initial focus was directed towards developing an appropriate way to investigate and analyse the social world. His works generate a phenomenological description of the macro levels of everyday life, or, in other words, the levels of everyday life that constitute it as everyday. Schutz’s phenomenological descriptions of the everyday world provide one way to grasp the background processes, structures and relations that constitute the everyday world as everyday. His analyses and interpretations provide an intricate description of these macro processes in order to point to the everyday world’s inherent social character.

Schutz’s phenomenological descriptions of the structures of time, space and knowledge, together with his descriptions of the processes of language and human relations, highlight that the social realm provides the basis for all forms of thinking, acting and being in the everyday world. Further, Schutz’s analysis distils the conditions and characteristics of the everyday world in order to illustrate how the everyday world is constituted as “a taken for granted” reality. The significance of his phenomenological descriptions of the everyday world is that any inquiry into action, behaviour or existence in the world must take into account certain characteristics. The first of these is that objects and reality are only knowlable through the complex dynamics between people and the structures and processes in and through which they live. The second characteristic of the everyday world is that sociality is of primary significance for any enquiry into
human existence, and the third is that the manner in which this social character is manifested constitutes a taken for granted reality.

As my intention in this thesis is to develop an ethics that takes up the responsibility for the Other on an everyday level, I aim to bring together particular aspects of both Levinas’s and Schutz’s works. In short, I take Levinas’s phenomenological descriptions of the micro characteristics of the ethical relation and place these in relation to Schutz’s descriptions of the macro characteristics of the everyday world. This will allow the ethical to manifest in the everyday. Further, it is my contention that combining these two theorists work will enable me to extract the conditions and features that will make possible an ethics of the everyday world.

In order to achieve my goal, I will use Schutz’s phenomenological descriptions of the inherent sociality that lies at the basis of everyday structures and processes. I use Schutz’s descriptions of the structures of time and space, the processes of knowledge and language and the systems of relevance in order to highlight the social character of the everyday world. I also use his analysis of the dimensions of human relations to further clarify the dynamics involved in the everyday world. These components of Schutz’s work will be developed in three ways. First, I will draw out Schutz’s perceptions of and insights into the everyday world. Second, I will develop these perceptions and insights in relation to the significance of the Other in the everyday world. Third, I will extend Schutz’s insights into the everyday world by analysing the manner in which these conditions can act to both constrain and expand the ethical relation.
In the context of the ethical relation, I will use Levinas’s descriptions of subjectivity and identity, the structure and character of the intersubjective relation, and his description of the communal dimension. These will be handled in three ways. First, I will draw out the primary insights of Levinas’s description of subjectivity, intersubjectivity and community. Second, I will develop Levinas’s detailed descriptions of the significance of the Other in the constitution of subjectivity, intersubjectivity and community in relation to the structures and processes of the everyday world. Third, I will extend Levinas’s description of the structure and character of the ethical relation into the realms of the everyday world. This will allow the micro characteristics of the ethical relation to manifest in the macro levels of the everyday world.

My thesis, that synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s work will enable me to extract the conditions and features that comprise an everyday ethics, will be addressed in three ways. First, I will focus on the importance of the Other. Levinas and Schutz, in different ways and for different reasons, insist on the significance of the Other. Both insist that fundamental to all experience is an encounter with an essence that cannot be contained by the self and that this essence is indicated through the presence of another person. In order to inquire into the multiple ways in which the Other resides in the structures, processes and relations that constitute the everyday world I have developed an heuristic device termed ‘Echoes of the Other’. The purpose of this device is to allow Levinas’s micro-descriptions of the significance of the Other to manifest in the everyday
and through this enhancement to highlight the conditions that surround the everyday ethical relation.

It is important at this point to clarify my understanding of the term “the Other”. I have chosen to capitalize “Other’ in order to distinguish it from an other person and others in general. This distinction is relevant for my project because I am attempting to locate the “Other” in relation to others in the everyday world. I will refer, therefore, to all three understandings of “other”. In my view, the “Other” refers to the excess of another person, the infinite that cannot be grasped and “other” refers to other people.

The second area my dissertation focuses on derives from Levinas’s description of the ethical relation and its manifestation in the structures and processes of the everyday world. Here, I employ resonances of the Other, that form these Echoes of the Other, in order to discuss the conditions that surround the ethical relation in the everyday world. My aim is to allow the intricacies of the ethical relation to manifest in the structures, processes and relations that constitute the everyday world. I aim to draw out minute details of Levinas’s ethical relation and then “attach” these to Schutz’s descriptions of the everyday structures, processes and relations that constitute the everyday world. This will illustrate two points. First, that the ethical relation permeates all levels of human existence, and second, that the ethical relation can be both constrained and expanded by the dynamics that constitute the everyday world. These two points will emphasise the conditions, or pre-requisites, that make possible this form of everyday ethics.
These points of constraint and expansion form the next aspect of my Levinasian-Schutzian synthesis. My aim is to show that the ethical relation both affects and is affected by the dynamics that constitute the everyday world. My purpose is to emphasise the point that simply allowing the ethical relation to manifest itself in the everyday world will not render the everyday world ethical. Nor, for that matter, does illustrating how the ethical relation resides in the everyday world simply lead to an everyday ethics. Rather, my intention is to acknowledge that the everyday world equally contains the capacity for constraining the ethical relation as it does for expanding its effects. The features of an everyday ethics can be identified, in my view, through acknowledging these points of constraint and expansion.

It is my contention throughout this thesis that combining these theorists work will expose the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. This is developed in three ways. First, Levinas’s descriptions of the significance of the Other and Schutz’s analysis of the structures and processes of the everyday world will provide a solid base for comprehending how the Other resides in the horizons of the everyday. This lays the basis for an ethics that takes up the responsibility for the Other on an everyday level. Second, manifesting Levinas’s ethical relation in Schutz’s description of the everyday world will highlight the conditions that make possible this form of everyday ethics. Third, identifying areas of constraint and expansion of the ethical relation will expose the features that comprise an ethics of the everyday world. My contention is that allowing the micro characteristics of Levinas’s ethical relation to manifest in Schutz’s
understanding of the structures and processes of the everyday world will enable the development of an everyday ethics\textsuperscript{1}.

This introduction intends to serve three main purposes. First, to indicate the significance of the project. Second, to explain the rationale behind the project and third, to outline the structure of the dissertation. I will discuss the significance of this dissertation, in the following section, by pointing to the benefits that will be gained from synthesising Levinas’s ethical relation with Schutz’s account of the everyday world. The rationale behind the project will provide an opportunity to discuss the contribution that this project is attempting to make to the current literature. This will allow me to situate this project in relation to literature on ethics, Levinas, Schutz and the everyday world. The final task of this introduction is to outline the issues that will be addressed in each chapter.

\textit{Benefits of the Synthesis}

Synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s work in order to develop an understanding of everyday ethics is beneficial in four ways. First and foremost, my project illuminates how the ethical relation is an integral part of everyday life. It highlights that this relation permeates every structure, process and relation that constitutes the everyday world. This reveals that an everyday ethics is a constant

\textsuperscript{1} My adoption of the “micro/macro” distinction in the context of Levinas’s and Schutz’s work is not meant to imply that Schutz is only concerned with the “great” or “large” structures that constitute everyday life and Levinas is interested in the miniscule detail of relations between self and Other. My use of this distinction refers to Schutz’s investigation and analysis of the multitude of dimensions that constitute everyday life; while Levinas’s focus is more concerned with the discovery of the ethical in these dimensions.
process that is manifested in all areas of one’s life. It suggests that such an ethics would refer to an intensity and constancy that penetrates all aspects of human existence. One advantage of my synthesis therefore, is that it highlights that an everyday ethics is not simply a matter of choosing to be morally responsible or ethical in relation to one person, group or matter. Rather, it indicates that such an everyday ethics involves a constant process that is manifested in all interactions with others.

A further benefit that can be derived from synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas is that it enables an exposition of the conditions of possibility that permeate the everyday world. This will expose the conditions within the everyday world that act to enlarge and diminish the ethical relation. Exposing these conditions allows for strategies of interruption that could further expand the effects of the ethical relation within the realms of everyday life. Further, exposing these areas of constraint and expansion also takes seriously the notion that everyday life involves areas of contest, struggle, conflict and confrontation. The advantage of this point is that it highlights that an everyday ethics can involve struggle and confrontation on an individual and communal level.

A further advantage of this synthesis is that it enables a consideration of the manner in which one’s responsibility for the Other can be played out on an everyday level. This shifts the focus away from defining the Other and onto a multitude of ways in which one can take up responsibility for the Other. This points to types of action, practice and behaviour that can be adopted as forms of responsibility for the Other. The value of this resides in the possibility of
concretising ethics in everyday forms of action, everyday types of practice and everyday modes of engagement.

Another benefit from this Levinasian-Schutzian synthesis resides in identifying a form of ethics that links the ever growing demands for applied ethics in the realms of business, government and social policy with the more philosophical and abstract demands of ethical theory. The significance of this point is that insights derived from Levinas’s inquiry into the ethical can be included when ethical standards are considered. This provides one possible way to bridge the gap between those disparate conversations that revolve around the ethical.

The above points indicate the value of this project. I have raised four specific areas of benefit. First, combining these scholars work will allow Levinas’s ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world. This indicates that an everyday ethics involves a constant process that permeates all interactions between people. Second, this project will expose conditions that constrict and amplify the ethical relation. This indicates that an everyday ethics involves forms of struggle, conflict and confrontation. Third, my project focuses on adopting ways to take up responsibility for the Other on an everyday level, therein providing the possibility to concretise ethics in everyday forms of action and practice, and fourth, this dissertation provides the possibility to identify a form of ethics that links the demands of applied ethics with ethical theory. These four advantages highlight that synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas will provide the means for and features of an everyday ethics.
Thesis Rationale

My attempt to create an everyday form of ethics results from my concern with exploring how existing in the world and being ethical are entwined. On the one hand, this concern is an effect of my dissatisfaction with more traditional constructions of ethics. These constructions, in my opinion, take a procedural approach towards ethics that involves developing judgements about human conduct. They do not emphasise the significance of the Other and they do not emphasise taking up responsibility for the Other. On the other hand, my concern results from an engagement in phenomenological approaches to existing in the world. Such approaches raise many complex issues involving self and Other, the social world, points of excess and interruption, limits and boundaries. In effect, a phenomenological approach highlights the significance of the Other for any understanding of existence in the world. Thus, a phenomenological approach emphasises the significance of the Other for any understanding of ethics.

This section provides an opportunity to discuss the contribution I am attempting to make to the current literature on Levinas, Schutz, ethics and the everyday world. This will be handled in four ways. First, I will locate my project in relation to other works on ethics. This will provide an opportunity to differentiate my project from traditional approaches to ethics. Second, I will locate my project in relation to current literature on Levinas, Schutz, and the everyday world in order to point to specific groups of scholars who have constituted an important background to this thesis. Third, I will discuss the work
of other scholars who use Levinas or Schutz to delve into either the significance of the ethical relation for understanding forms of human conduct, or the significance of the everyday world for understanding human interaction. Fourth, I will locate my study in relation to current literature on the ethical dimension of policing. These four points will provide an opportunity to differentiate my project from current research into ethics, Levinas, Schutz and the everyday world.

This project is by no means the first to discuss a Levinasian derived ethics. Nor is it the first draw on Alfred Schutz’s insights into the everyday world. It is amongst the first, however, to bring together these scholars’ work in order to delve into how existing in the world and living well towards others can inform an everyday ethics. While a disparate group of scholars have informed the background to this thesis one overriding desire has inspired this project. That is, to inquire into what it might mean to be “good” in one’s everyday life. In common everyday usage, “good” “bad”, “right” and “wrong” have ambiguous meanings that can differ depending on the context. Considering what good conduct might include requires taking into account the way in which actions influence and affect others but need not do so.

What it might mean to be “good” is always open for discussion in the context of ethical theory. It is also paramount to Levinas’s project. As one of my colleagues in a discussion about Levinas explained, ‘it’s very simple to understand Levinas . . . basically he is arguing that it’s better to be good and nice to others than to treat people badly’. While this is a simple explanation of Levinas’s analysis of the complexities associated with the ethical relation, it
neglects the rich phenomenological insights his analysis brings to the nature of human existence. It does emphasise, however, the trajectory of Levinas’s work. Moreover, this statement enabled me to reflect on the multiplicity of ways in which the processes within the everyday world can act to both reduce and increase our capacity to act well towards others. This thesis, therefore, is an attempt to negotiate the terrain between the everyday practical world of people engaging with each other and the realm of ethical theory that emphasises a critical engagement with ideas about what it might mean to be ethical in everyday life.

My thesis is situated between an engagement with the ideas of Levinas and Schutz, a critical engagement with concept of the everyday life world in social theory and also considers the complex issues associated with discussions of ethics in practice. My project is intended to make contributions in four specific areas. First, my thesis identifies and subsequently adds to the current literature on ethics by demonstrating how acting well towards others informs an everyday understanding of ethics. Second, my thesis also adds to the current literature on Levinas by situating his ethical relation in the context of the everyday world. That Schutz’s work has not been viewed in relation to the ethical dimensions of everyday life represents another contribution that this thesis makes. A further contribution relates to the illustration I draw from my observations at the Western Australian Police Academy. As I have previously indicated, this part of my project is not attempting to examine ethics in the Police Service. Rather, this illustration acts to complement my discussion of this attempt to develop an everyday ethics. The current literature that discusses the ethical dimensions of
policing focuses on surveys, questionnaires, case scenarios and quantifiable analyses. These analyses do not refer to the ethical relation, Levinas, Schutz or the everyday world. My thesis aims, therefore, to contribute to four specific areas of study and, as such, attempts to make an original contribution to the study of ethics, and, specifically, an ethics derived from Levinas’s ethical relation.

*Approaches to Ethics*

In this section I will discuss my thesis in relation to literature on ethics. This will provide an opportunity to differentiate my project from traditional approaches to ethics. My attempt to extract an everyday form of ethics refers to both my dissatisfaction with more traditional approaches to ethics and my engagement with phenomenological approaches to being in the world. The works of four groups of scholars represent those who adopt traditional approaches to ethics. Ethics can be approached in several different ways,² but in contemporary times more dominant approaches are Kantian ethics, consequentialist ethics, virtue ethics and feminist ethics. Kantian ethics emphasises the ideals of universal law and respect for others; consequential ethics emphasise that it is the consequences of actions that form the basis for evaluating human actions; virtue ethics focuses on the constitution of the virtuous character of agents and feminist ethics, argues, in various forms, that traditional approaches to ethics fail to take into account the life experiences of women.

---

² For example, see Singer, P. *A Companion to Ethics*, (1991) for a good overview of many approaches towards ethics.
My dissatisfaction with Kantian ethics results from its emphasis on the significance of rationality. While Kantian ethics is understood in terms of adherence to particular principles or maxims that guide conduct (Baron 1997: 12) the manner in which these principles are taken up emphasise rationality. Placing emphasis on rationality covers over the significance of the Other for my being, and consequently, my responsibility for the Other. That these maxims always involve obligatory ends, that is, ends that we are required to adopt, they are based on adherence to the universal law. For Kant, and ethics derived from his work, the universal law refers to respecting others as rational agents. As Kant explains, ‘everything in nature works in accordance with laws. Only a rational being has the power to act in accordance with his [sic] idea of laws – that is in accordance with principles’ (Kant 1964: 412). The obligations of Kantian derived ethics are promoting the happiness of others and seeking to improve oneself. Thus, while Kantian derived ethics do require an acknowledgment and respect for others, this is always understood in terms of respect for the rationality of the other person. It is not based on respect for the other person, the other person’s mortality, or in Levinas’s words, the alterity of the other person.³

Kantian derived ethics also adhere to the Categorical Imperative. This imperative further neglects the significance of the relation with the Other. While the usefulness of this characteristic is open to debate⁴, it is still a central aspect of any Kantian derived ethics. The aim of this imperative is to provide a test to determine whether actions are morally permissible (Baron 1997: 35). This test

⁴ See Baron (1997) for a discussion of the issues involved in this debate.
emphasises self reflection such that one can determine their own maxims and then judge whether acting on these maxims also adheres to the universal law of respecting others as rational agents (O’Neil 1989: 81). Again this characteristic of Kantian derived ethics emphasises the rationality of beings. The assumption is that one can determine their maxims and judge how to act because one is a rational being. This core imperative of Kantian derived ethics again covers over the alterity of the Other. It thus neglects the significance of the ethical relation.

My project differs from Kantian approaches to ethics, in that I am attempting to articulate an ethics that is tied to the concrete “flesh and blood” existence of people. I am concerned with shifting ethics away from an attachment to rationality towards an attachment to the mortality of people. Further, I am concerned with demonstrating the manner in which such an attachment can be played out on an everyday level. A further area in which my project differs from Kantian approaches refers to the emphasis placed on the procedural guidance of the Categorical Imperative. My project is one of attempting to demonstrate that taking up responsibility for the Other can constitute a multitude of actions, practices and modes of engagement that occur in everyday day life. In other words, my project is attempting to demonstrate that ethics does not depend on logical deduction. Rather, ethics can be grasped through remaining open and receptive to others, and responding to another’s mortality.

The consequentialist perspective is another approach to ethics that does not articulate a connection between being in the world and being ethical. As such, I was dissatisfied with this approach for the purposes of my project. The
consequentialist perspective to ethics takes a teleological approach, and, once again, my dissatisfaction refers to the emphasis placed on rationality. Consequentialism emphasises that good results provide the basis for evaluating human actions (Pettit 1991: 230). This approach is premised on achieving the best consequences that could result from the options available for a proposed action. Further, every available possibility or prognoses has a value determined by its impact on the world and the way people treat each other (Pettit 1991 231). This approach, therefore, emphasises the promotion of a multitude of values that are associated with the way people treat one another. Rationality is emphasised by way of ascertaining the best consequences that will result from any proposed action. This approach to ethics emphasises maximising the realisation of values, or in other words, promoting the greatest good for the greatest number (Pettit 1997: 130).

Again, this approach to ethics does not relate these decision making processes to the significance of the Other. Insisting on the importance of weighing up consequences neglects that the constitution of selfhood, or the capacity to make decisions, always involves a relation with the Other. While this approach aims to emphasise ‘good results’ through ‘maximising the promotion of values’ it does not discuss the impetus or unconditional appeal that might provoke ‘good results’. Thus, without acknowledging that the human self is constituted as inescapably bound to the Other through obligation and responsibility this approach to ethics can only fall back on rationality as the means through which people take up an ethical stance.
My project takes a different approach, in that I am attempting to demonstrate that an ethics, derived from the ethical relation, is more concerned with how to articulate differences, generate dialogue and disturb the complacency of being. While I am concerned with promoting values, I am not concerned with maximising results or developing ethics as a form of ‘the greatest good for the greatest number’. Rather, I am attempting to move ethics towards the conditions of possibility that encourage those outside the majority, those marginal, or silenced voices to be heard. Further, as this approach to ethics also emphasises that maximising the promotion of values will provide an ethical base for human action it glosses over everyday forms of conflict, struggle and confrontation. My approach differs from these, in that I attempt to expose the conditions in the everyday world that can constrain the ethical relation. In so doing, my project takes seriously the view that everyday life involves living well towards others and that this can sometimes involve contest, confrontation and struggle.

Virtue ethics is another approach that does not provide, for the purposes of my project, an adequate understanding of how being in the world and being ethical are entwined. While this approach to ethics does emphasise that ethical theory places too much emphasis on obligations and adherence to universal law, it again falls back on the importance of reason. This approach focuses on features of the virtuous character. The basic premise is that the primacy of human character provides the justification for right action (Oakley & Dean 2001: 9). Based loosely on Aristotle’s view that virtues are intrinsically good (Cooper 1986: 79), this approach focuses on highlighting inner qualities that qualify one as being virtuous. Virtue ethics takes into account three specific characteristics.
These are acting in ways that accord with virtuous character traits, taking into account the motives behind actions and internalising these in accordance with the normative dispositions that govern human behaviour (Oakley & Dean 2001:27). This approach, therefore, constitutes ethics through the rational internalisation of appropriate forms of acting.

Virtue ethics attempts, as one might expect then, to tie being ethical to forms of acting in virtuous ways. These approaches constitute being ethical as a way of acting, or in other words, as an addition to one’s existence in the world. My project differs at this point in that I am attempting to demonstrate that ethics does not involve internalising norms. Rather, my project is one of demonstrating that being ethical is always and already a part of being human. It is played out in the simple facing of another person and it permeates everyday aspects of human existence. As a consequence, my project also differs from this approach in that I attempt to show how ethics must take into account the dimensions and structures that constitute everyday life. Therefore, the form of ethics my project is attempting to create illustrates how ethics always involves more than simply acting in virtuous ways.

The final approach to ethics that relates to my project comes under the heading of feminist ethics. This approach to ethics encompasses a broad range of views that emphasise the life experiences of women. Feminist ethics does not present a unified account of the moral development of women. Rather, this approach to ethics incorporates a diverse range of scholarship that constitutes a
challenge to more traditional approaches to ethics.\(^5\) The feminist approaches to ethics that relate to my project refer to ‘ethics of care’, ‘ethics of responsibility’ and an approach that can loosely be termed ‘Continental feminist ethics’. While I am not taking a feminist approach towards everyday ethics, my project sits in relation to these approaches in that they attempt to move ethics away from a connection with rationality, the adherence to principles and, in varying degrees, these approaches also articulate the significance of the Other.

Feminists who advocate an ethics of care argue that standard approaches to ethics neglect the aspects of care, concern and sympathy that can be felt for others.\(^6\) This approach to ethics focuses on the capacity of people to respond to self and Other, in other than rational ways. This approach is not based on developing logical decisions that can inform action, nor is it based on deciding what might bring about the best possible consequences. The starting point for this approach is being receptive to others. It therefore sits in opposition to Kantian and consequentialist approaches to ethics.

A further feminist approach to ethics that relates to my project is an ethics of responsibility. This is best articulated through Carol Gilligan’s “different voice” theory of morality. Gilligan argues that there are two distinct approaches to ethics, an ethics of rights and ethics of responsibility. An ethics of responsibility emphasises forms of engagement with others that include compassion, care and connection, whereas an ethics of rights emphasises

\(^5\) See, Gatens (1998), for a comprehensive account of the diverse range of feminist ethics.

\(^6\) Some approaches to this understanding of ethics can be seen in Noddings (1984), Houston (1987), Friedman (1993), Young (1990). Some criticisms of this approach to ethics can also be found in Stack (1986) and Held (1995).
obligation, judgement, equality, rights and fairness (Gilligan 1982: 17). For feminists who advocate this approach, emphasis is placed on the interconnections between self and Other, and thus, ethics is developed through relations of care and compassion. An ethics of responsibility, therefore, emphasises forms of an empathic response towards others as the basis for ethical action.

A final approach to ethics that sits in relation to my project is the Continental feminist approach to ethics. Based largely on the work of Luce Irigaray, this approach advocates an ethics of sexual difference. For Irigaray, the contemporary world requires rethinking the issue of sexual difference in terms of the ethical relation. According to Irigaray, sexual difference has traditionally set women and men in opposition. Thus, an ethics that attempts to redress this distinction requires conceptualising sexual difference in terms of alterity or absolute otherness. Irigaray’s attempt to articulate an ethics of sexual difference addresses what it means to think absolute difference without falling back on totalising discourses that define women in relation to men.

Irigaray’s project uses insights drawn from Levinas’s account of the ethical relation. However, her project takes up Levinas’s description of the encounter with the Other and analyses this in relation to sexual difference. Whereas for Levinas, the importance of his project is to illustrate how human existence is tied to the ethical relation. For Irigaray, the importance of her project is that there is a way to grasp pure difference. That is, difference that is not defined in opposition to an already known standard. According to Irigaray, sexuality can be understood in terms of radical difference, instead of a variation
of the same. Irigaray’s project to develop an ethics of sexual difference provides one attempt to use Levinas’s work in order to highlight the complex dynamics of human sexuality.

These three feminist approaches to ethics, grouped under the heading feminist ethics, relate to my project in several ways. First, each, albeit differently, attempts to move ethics away from a connection with the human capacity for rationality and second, each also attempts to link ethics to a connection with people. My project differs from these approaches in three specific areas. First, my project is an attempt to demonstrate how existence and being ethical are tied together. While those approaches concerned with ‘care’ and ‘responsibility’ tie ethics to these forms of action they neglect the impetus for these forms of acting. For these feminists, care and concern, sympathy and responsibility are set in opposition to rationality, rights and judgements in order to challenge the dominance of these traditional approaches. My project differs from this approach in that I am attempting to demonstrate that an everyday form of ethics involves all levels of human existence. Rather than set these particular capacities in opposition, I am attempting to show that the impetus for these actions is provoked by the force of the Other and moreover, that the effects of this provocation are played out on an everyday level.

The second way my project differs from these feminist approaches refers to those feminists developing an ethics of responsibility. While Gilligan emphasises that responding to the needs and traumas of others is an integral part of any construction of ethics, in my view, her work also glosses over that which
provokes a response to others. While Gilligan attempts to attribute different forms of responding to the differences between men and women, that is the interplay between biology, psychology and culture (Gilligan and Wiggins 1988: 114-116), her project does not account for the ways in which people are susceptible to the call of others. My project accepts that responsibility is integral to any development of ethics. However, I differ from Gilligan, in that I attempt to illustrate that responsibility is always an effect of the call of the Other. My project highlights, therefore, both how one is susceptible to the call of the Other and how taking up responsibility for the Other is played out as part of everyday life.

The third area where I differ from these feminist approaches to ethics relates to Irigaray’s attempt to develop an ethics of sexual difference. While Irigaray’s concern is with exploring how the alterity of the Other can inform an ethics of sexual difference, I am concerned with exploring how this alterity can inform an everyday ethics. In other words, Irigaray’s project focuses specifically on the manner in which sexuality is taken up and rendered significant for human existence. For her, of primary importance is her attempt to interrupt the dominant representation of female sexuality. My project takes a different approach by focusing on the dynamics of the everyday world. While I acknowledge that sexuality is an important aspect of everyday life, my aim is to expose how living well toward others can inform an everyday ethics.

*Background to Study: Levinas, Schutz and the everyday world*
As previously stated, the overriding theme of this dissertation is concerned with what it means to be “good” in one’s everyday life. I have pointed to several different attempts that address what it can mean to be good and how living well towards others might be understood and I have highlighted my dissatisfaction with these approaches. It is also important to indicate the work of four further groups of scholars who have contributed an important background to the development of my thesis. These groups of scholars are those who engage with complex ideas in Levinas’s work, of which there are two sub-groups, those who discuss the intricate nature of the everyday world through Schutz’s work and a group of scholars who emphasise the significance of the everyday world.

Two groups of scholars have contributed an important background to my understanding of Levinas’s work. These scholars have, in varying degrees, provided me with a way into and through the convoluted and, at times, turgid writing style that Levinas appears to favour. For the purposes of my project, these scholars alerted me to the complexities involved in Levinas’s understanding of the dimensions of goodness and his usefulness for attempting to understand how existence and being ethical are tied together. I have divided these scholars into two groups because they approach his work in quite different ways. The first group engages with Levinas’s work by drawing out the complexities of his thinking. The second group of scholars engage in a discussion of his work through the lens of postmodernism. Members of this group will often situate Levinas’s work in relation to figures such as Heidegger, Derrida or Ricoeur.

---

7 See, for example, Gottlieb’s (1994: 365) statement that, ‘my intellectual background often makes reading his work a sort of extended theoretical hallucination’.
The first group of scholars contributed to the development of my interpretation of Levinas’s work. These scholars have enabled me to grasp Levinas’s insistence on the significance of the alterity of the Other, and how human subjectivity is always susceptible to the call of the Other. These two aspects of Levinas’s work are significant for my project, in that they allow me to explore how living well towards others is part of existing in the world. While my initial introduction to Levinas’s work came through Irigaray’s (1986) essay ‘The Fecundity of the Caress’, the significance of his work was further highlighted through Derrida’s (1978) essay, ‘Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas’. Some further texts that also contributed to the development of my interpretation of Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation include Bernasconi (1989), ‘Rereading Totality and Infinity’, Bernasconi and Wood (1988), The Provocation of Levinas, Bernasconi and Critchley (1991), Rereading Levinas, and Peperzak, (1992), To the Other: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas. These writers have enabled me to develop my understanding of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation.

Those scholars who engage with Levinas’s ideas through the lens of postmodernism and through discussions with other theorists have also contributed to the development of this thesis. The importance of this group of scholars for my purposes is their insistence that ethics is not about the introduction of rules or norms that govern the way people act. Rather, ethics is concerned with ‘unsettling

---

8 In the context of my project, the significance of Derrida’s essay ‘Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas’ is paramount in that I am emphasising Levinas’s view of the significance of an anti-rational approach to being ethical. The significance of the essay is that Derrida accused Levinas of overlooking his own rational workings in his emphasis of the Other in Totality and Infinity. Levinas responded to these criticisms in his next work Otherwise Than Being or Beyond Essence.
‘essences’ (Cohen, Introduction to Levinas1985: 10) and ‘leaping into the great unknown’ (Bauman 1992: 75). This is significant for my project, in that I am attempting to articulate an ethics that is integral to being in the world and, as such, provokes and interrupts the complacency of the self. These writers include Bauman (1994), Bourgeois (2001), Critchley (1992), Cornell (1992), and Manning (1993). My thesis reflects and extends their work in that I attempt to show how this approach to ethics can be played out in everyday life.

The next group of scholars who have contributed an important background to my thesis are those who draw on insights from Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world. Older literature on the usefulness of his phenomenological descriptions of the everyday world can be found in the work of Garfinkle (1967) and Heritage (1984), more recent work by Gubruim (1998), and Rodgers (1983), however, contributed more to the development of my project. These scholars highlight how Schutz’s phenomenological approach to the everyday world exposes the complexities that constitute meaning, human relations and group dynamics in everyday life. My thesis reflects their work, in that I draw on these insights in order to emphasise how each of these dynamics constitute the conditions for an ethics of the everyday world.

A final group of scholars who have also contributed an important background to my thesis are those who use the concept of the everyday world. This group comprises those who discuss the everyday in terms of analysing power relations, forms of social change, organizational structures and problem solving activities. Some examples of this form of research can be found in de
Certeau (1984), Featherstone (1992), Maffesoli (1989, 1991, 1996) and Smith (1987). This group of scholars emphasise that everyday life provides a rich source of research for grasping a multitude of forms of human endeavour, from the capacity for understanding to forms of action and interaction. While my project does not discuss power relations or the dynamics of social change, the work of these scholars further illustrates the significance of the everyday world for undertaking research. My project reflects their work in that I focus on the underlying dynamics of the everyday world. As a result, my project will provide an attempt to illustrate how the everyday world is also a site for grasping ethics.

Continuing Applications: Levinas and Schutz

In this section I discuss my project in relation to other scholars who use Levinas or Schutz to examine either the significance of the ethical relation in terms of human conduct, or the significance of the everyday in terms of human relations. These scholars provide different perspectives on both Levinas and Schutz and further illustrate how either can be used as a crucial resource to counter “taken for granted” themes in ethics and assumptions about everyday human interactions. My project reflects the work of this disparate group of scholars, in that I emphasise the insights that Levinas’s work contains for considering ethics. I also emphasise Schutz’s descriptions of the everyday world in order to show how his work can be applied in particular ways, and my project

---

9 De Certeau also provides a phenomenological approach to everyday life. While his analysis provides a rich phenomenology of everyday life by linking historical communities to modern day domains his work does not provide an analysis of the structures and processes that underpin the everyday world. For the purposes of my project his analysis of the everyday world was not very helpful.
also illustrates that combining ideas from their work will provide some valuable insights into the manner in which an everyday ethics can be understood.

My attempt to synthesise the work of Levinas and Schutz continues the work of other scholars who use syntheses or comparisons between Levinas and others to extend his view of the ethical relation. Steven Hendley in, *From Communicative Action to the Face of the Other,* (2000) links Levinas’s writing with Habermas’s discourse ethics in an attempt to qualify the latter’s theory of communicative action. Hendley’s approach is broadly similar to my thesis, in that he explores how Levinas’s view of the ethical relation can add, or correct, some of the procedural constraints evident in Habermas’s construction of discourse ethics. Hendley’s writings deal much more, however, with the convergence of Levinas’s and Habermas’s conceptions of language and how it relates to the moral point of view. Hendley’s work is less focused on the structures and dynamics that constitute the everyday world, or on the manner in which the ethical relation is implicated throughout the everyday world.

Myra Bookman and Mitchell Aboulafia (2000) relate Levinas’s work to the work of Gilligan. They do this by focusing on the similarities between Levinas’s face to face relation and Gilligan’s notion of ‘voice’. There is also a convergence, they argue, between Gilligan’s and Levinas’s view of the asymmetrical relation with the Other and some similarity on their respective views on justice and responsibility. My project reflects their work, in that I also draw parallels between Levinas and Schutz in relation to the face to face encounter and the asymmetry of the relation with the Other. However, my project
differs from theirs, in that I am not discussing Levinas’s work primarily in the context of care. Rather, my project is attempting to extract from both his and Schutz’s work the conditions for and features of an ethics that permeates everyday life.

Kimberly Abunwarra (1998) discusses the usefulness of Levinas’s work for inquiring into relations between students and teachers. Abunuwarra argues that viewing education in the context of the ethical relation gives priority to discourse over comprehension. For Abunuwarra, Levinas’s work provides one way to challenge teaching practices in which the emphasis is on comprehension and knowing. My project also continues this form of engagement with Levinas’s work, in that I also point to the structures of knowledge and the priority of knowing. Abunwarra’s work, however, is focused much more on teaching practices and is less focused on the structures of knowledge that underpin everyday life. My thesis takes up this area of engagement in order to illustrate how ethics can inform ways of knowing.

Nel Noddings, in *Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy*, (2002) uses Levinas’s ideas in a bid to challenge the primacy of liberalism in the formulation of social policy. Noddings’ work deals with issues such as domestic violence, capital punishment, infanticide and abortion to demonstrate how an ethics of care can challenge a rights based approach to social policy. Noddings draws on Levinas’s work to develop an understanding of the relational self in order to challenge the liberal view of the autonomous self. Her work provides another way in which the usefulness of Levinas’s work can be developed. While
my project does not focus on the issues Noddings’ raises, I continue this form of engagement through my discussion of actions and interactions of police at the Western Australian Police Academy.

My project also continues the work of scholars who draw on Alfred Schutz’s insights. In this area, my project draws on Schutz’s insights into the everyday world as well as its usefulness for undertaking research. Austin Harrington’s *Hermeneutic Dialogue and Social Science: A Critique of Gadamer and Habermas*, (2001) draws on Schutz’s insights to counter Habermas’s and Gadamer’s dialogical model for social science research. Harrington recovers Schutz’s analysis of the structure of human relations and the manner in which attitudes come into play in everyday life in order to argue that social research benefits from a suspension of normative judgements made by researchers. Harrington’s use of Schutz’s phenomenological descriptions of human relations illustrate that suspending judgements is part of everyday life and, thus, is appropriate for undertaking social research.

John O’Neill also uses Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world in *The Poverty of Postmodernism* (1995). In this text, O’Neill draws out insights from Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world to question the effects of the influx of postmodern theory for inquiring into the social world. Steven Vaitkus, in *How is Society Possible* (1991) undertakes a comparison between the works of Schutz, Mead and Gurswitch in order to explore the complex dynamics of trust that provide the basis for interactions between people in their everyday existence.
Another use of Schutz’s work resides in the realms of social psychology. Karen Cronick (2002) uses Schutz’s work to explore different types of community intervention that can assist with facilitating change. Another use of Schutz’s work is found in Foss (1996). Foss explores the relationship between economies and the changing social order. These contemporary applications of Schutz’s work illustrate the diverse fields in which his work can be used. My project extends these disparate uses of his work into the realms of everyday ethics, and, as such, continues to point to the importance of Schutz’s work for any consideration of everyday life.

*Current Literature: Police Ethics*

In this section I will discuss my project in relation to recent work in the area of police ethics. As previously stated, my project aims to provide an illustration *in situ* to complement my discussion of this form of everyday ethics. This illustration will be drawn from my time spent observing police officers undertaking education and training procedures at the Western Australian Police Academy. As I have previously stated, my project does not provide a representation of ethics in the Western Australian Police Service. Rather, the descriptions I draw from the experiences of police are intended to “flesh out” my discussion of ethics in the everyday world. My research is intended, therefore, to add to more traditional investigations and analyses of police ethics, in that it explores the complexities that surround the ethical dimension of police work and how these complexities can occur on a multitude of levels.

These studies used interviews and, or, structured surveys to draw out the views of police officers regarding the ethical dilemmas that arose as part of their
work. These studies found that, over time, higher incidences of ethical dilemmas could occur. Six of these studies focused on statistical interpretations of the likelihood of such dilemmas, whereas one, (Miller S. et al, 1997) used case scenarios to discuss a range of issues faced by police in their work environment. Primarily, these studies found that ethics training is an important aspect of police work that needs to be encouraged over the course of an officers’ career. The Huon et al (1995) study found that there was a definite possibility that, over time, officers would slide into corruption. The studies by McConkey et al (1996) dealt with issues regarding training in ethics and improving the application of practical ethics. Miller’s (1997) study provided many case scenarios in a bid to help officers prepare for police work. Miller’s findings were consistent with Heon et al’s findings that over time officer can undergo a gentle slide towards aberrant behaviour. The British study (1999) found that good supervision, management and leadership were of primary importance in maintaining the ethical conduct of police officers. The Klockars et al study (2000) found that, in the agencies involved in the study in the USA, officers reported that they would by more likely to report misconduct if the offence was serious. The Ede and Legrosz study (2002) found that an increase in ethics training most certainly will result in a greater willingness to report inappropriate actions by other police officers.

My study differs from these more traditional studies in two ways. First, I did not conduct interviews or surveys. My research is concerned with using the experiences of police to act as an illustration of some of the conditions and features that comprise an everyday form of ethics. Using these experiences, my aim is to highlight ways in which these conditions function in everyday life, or to
use these experiences to point to the ways in which these conditions are constrained in everyday life. Second, my study also differs in the manner in which I encountered the police officers. My study focused on observing and interacting with a range of officers at a face to face level. At times my presence was purely observational and at other times I engaged in general conversation with officers over lunch and coffee breaks. These two types of interaction provided ample opportunity to note the ways in which police described their experiences over a range of conditions.

**Structure of Thesis**

My thesis is presented over six chapters. The first two chapters deal with some central themes in Schutz’s and Levinas’s theories. In the third and fourth chapters I bring aspects of their respective positions together in order to locate the ethical relation in the everyday world. In the fifth chapter I outline the methods I employ to gather and analyse the data from my observations at the Western Australian Police Academy, and Chapter Six presents this data in the form of an illustration that assists with my attempt to develop an everyday ethics.

In the first chapter I draw out significant points of Schutz’s view of the everyday world. This explanation of his understanding and analysis of the everyday life world is presented in four parts. In the first part I discuss Schutz’s engagement with phenomenology. I draw out his understanding of the conditions and characteristics that comprise the everyday world in the second part. In the third part I identify Schutz’s view of the dimensions and practices of the
everyday and the fourth part focuses on the manner in which human relations can be grasped on an everyday level. The second chapter focuses on Levinas’s work. I present this chapter in three parts. In the first part I locate Levinas’s position in relation to phenomenology. The second part focuses on the characteristics of the ethical relation and the third part points to the communal dimension of the ethical relation. These two chapters provide the basis from which I attempt to bring aspects of their respective positions together.

The next two chapters deal with developing my view of an everyday ethics. The aim of Chapter Three is to synthesise Levinas’s and Schutz’ ideas through a device I term Echoes of the Other. This device will enable me to combine Schutz’s and Levinas’s work in order to extract the conditions that will make possible the development of an everyday form of ethics. There are four parts to this chapter. The first part presents my reasons for undertaking a synthesis of aspects of their works. In the second part I provide an explanation of the heuristic device ‘Echoes of the Other’. In the third part I develop these “Echoes” through a discussion of Levinas’s and Schutz’s works in relation to the structures and processes of the everyday world. I extend these “Echoes” in the fourth part by focusing on Levinas’s and Schutz’s views regarding human relations. The purpose of this chapter is to develop a multitude resonances and reverberations that locate the Other in the everyday world.

In Chapter Four I move to identify the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I present this in three parts. In the first part I employ the resonances of the Other, derived through the Echoes of the Other, to locate the
ethical relation in the everyday world. The second part will illustrate how this relation can both expand and contract within the everyday realm. This will point to the conditions that make possible an everyday form of ethics. In the third part I discuss the development of this approach to ethics. I will present this in three sections. First, I will point to the conditions that make possible this approach to ethics. In the second section I extract the features that comprise this approach to ethics and in the third section I will demonstrate how these features represent taking up the responsibility for the Other.

Chapter Five marks a shift from the purely theoretical realms of Levinas and Schutz towards the actual situations of people engaging in their everyday lives. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the method I will employ to gather data from the Western Australian Police Academy, and how I will analyse and interpret that data and present my findings. As both Schutz and Levinas can be located, in varying degrees, within the realms of phenomenology I will employ phenomenological research methods for the purposes of my study at the Police Academy. There are four parts to this chapter. The first part will restate the basic tenets of phenomenology and re-establish both Schutz and Levinas’s positions in relation to phenomenology. The second part will establish how phenomenological research is undertaken, the third part will discuss the major processes and concepts that are significant for my study and the fourth part will outline the methods I use for organising the data I gathered from my research.

Chapter Six presents my research at the Western Australian Police Academy. My aim in this chapter is to develop a rich pictorial reference of the
conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I will present this case study in four parts. The first part will provide a brief introduction to my research process. The second part focuses on the Police Service and the ethical dimensions of police work. My purpose in this section is to establish who the police are, how they interact with each other and to consider what their work entails. The third part presents my analysis and interpretation of the data. I will present this over three sections. These deal with attitudes, relations and relationships and police actions. I use these sections to draw out descriptions of the experiences of police in order to provide an in situ illustration of the conditions and features that comprise this everyday form of ethics. In the final part I will present a brief summary of the study, point to some of the limitations of my research, and indicate some outcomes that can be derived from this research. The purpose of this chapter is to elaborate my discussion of an everyday ethics.

This dissertation has developed from my concern with exploring what it means to live well towards others. This involves delving into how existing in the world and being ethical are entwined. My thesis develops through synthesising the respective ideas of Emmanuel Levinas and Alfred Schutz. This synthesis provides a macro approach to the everyday world and a micro approach to the complexities of the ethical relation. Insights from Schutz’s and Levinas’s work point to the significance of the Other for existing in the world and for the ethical relation. My heuristic device “Echoes of the Other” provides the possibility to locate the Other in the structures and processes of the everyday world and further allows Levinas’s ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world. This aspect of my dissertation emphasises the conditions that surround the ethical relation
thereby pointing to areas of constraint and expansion of this relation. This will enable me to extract the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. My contention is, therefore, that this synthesis of Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas will enable the development of an everyday ethics.

In keeping with my concern of exploring what it means to live well towards other people I will be using personal pronouns in this dissertation. Rather than adopting a formal, and in my view, abstract approach to writing about people by referring to them as “one”, I will employ pronouns when I am discussing people in everyday life. I believe that adopting this practice is in line with both the works of Levinas and Schutz and, more specifically, it emphasises that I am attempting to develop an ethics that concerns flesh and blood people in the everyday world.
CHAPTER ONE

ALFRED SCHUTZ AND THE EVERYDAY WORLD

INTRODUCTION

The work of Alfred Schutz provides an examination of the intricacies and dimensions of the everyday world. He inquires into the events, actions and experiences of ordinary people. The everyday world is the world that encompasses the practices of daily life. It is the world in which humans carry out activities and pursue goals. For Schutz, it is in the realm of the everyday that we develop our particular beliefs and interests. It is also the world into which each person is born, grows, learns, plays, loves, hates, and eventually dies. The everyday life of humans carries the tacit assumption that the everyday world is there, that it has a past and a future and the moment in which one lives is also given to other human beings. Alfred Schutz explains this everyday world as a kind of ‘general background’ or ‘horizon’ in which daily events experiences and actions are played out (Schutz 1970: 6). His inquiry into this everyday world highlights the fundamental qualities of social reality.

Schutz is not the only person to inquire into the workings of the everyday life world and how such an analysis can add to understanding what it means to be human. The philosophical work of Leibniz (1646-1716), the psychology of Piaget (1898-1980), the phenomenological inquiry of Husserl (1859-1938) also investigated the intricate nature of everyday human existence, and Heidegger’s (1889-1976) examination of everyday existnece. Currently, there has been a
growth in the use of the concept as a diverse, non-totalising concept that can provide a rich source of analysis for a multitude of issues. Some of these include, the everyday as a site for resistance to power relations (de Certeau 1984), an analysis of the activities of women (Smith 1987). Featherstone (1992: 160) explains that ‘everyday life is the life-world which provides the ultimate ground from which spring all our conceptualisations, definitions and narratives. For Habermas, the everyday is the ‘storehouse of unquestioned cultural givens (1990: 135), and Maffesoli emphasises the dimensional character of the everyday in that it encompasses the ‘uneven and emotionally charged events of sociality’ (1993: 1). While these examples point to the divergent nature of understandings of the everyday, and what may come to light from such investigations, the common link between these rests on the assumption that the everyday world is a world of people and that it constitutes social reality.

The significance of Alfred Schutz’s examination of the everyday world is that he provides an inquiry into the conditions and characteristics that constitute the everyday world. Rather than assuming that the everyday world is the basis for cultural givens, or the site for resistance to power relations, Schutz’s analysis provides a way to grasp how these givens and power relations might arise. Therefore, his analysis illustrates how the everyday world is rendered and maintained as intelligible. Schutz’s investigation begins with an inquiry into the phenomenon of meaning. In other words, his approach undertakes a phenomenological inquiry into the structure of the everyday world.
Schutz based his philosophy on the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. Phenomenology provided Schutz with the instruments and techniques for ordering his inquiry into the features and relationships that make up the reality of the everyday common sense world. While Schutz agreed with many of the tenets of Husserl’s phenomenology, he was critical of some of Husserl’s ideas regarding subjectivity and sociality\(^\text{10}\). His work articulates an in-depth analysis of the structures, presumptions and meanings of the common sense everyday world in which humans live. Schutz described his work as a ‘phenomenology of the social world with an emphasis on determining what makes the social world tick’ (Schutz 1970: 1). He emphasised two main areas. First, that the common sense world involves a taken for granted system of constructs, and second, that this world is always a shared world in which individuals act within a particular common and reciprocal manner. For Schutz, it is these constitutive elements of the social world that require investigation and analysis.

This chapter will draw out the dimensions of the everyday life world in the work of Alfred Schutz. In keeping with my overall project of attempting to develop an everyday ethics, this chapter serves the specific purpose of identifying the underlying dynamics that constitute the everyday life world. This chapter also serves two subsequent aims. First, this chapter begins a discussion of phenomenology that is integral for my project, in that it provides an inquiry into human existence. Second, and also of significance for my purposes, this chapter highlights the inherent social character of the everyday world.

\(^{10}\) For a discussion on Schutz’s criticisms of Husserl’s treatment of subjectivity and sociality see Schutz (1970: 36-39).
I will present this chapter in four parts. In the first part I will discuss Schutz’s engagement with phenomenology. In the second part I raise Schutz’s understanding of the characteristics and conditions of the everyday world. In the third part I will identify the dimensions and practices of the everyday, and in the fourth part I focus on relations between people. The aim of the first part is to point out the significance of Schutz’s phenomenological approach. The second part deals with the conditions and characteristics of the everyday world in order to illustrate the underlying dynamics that actively constitute the everyday world. The third part attempts to build on this by pointing to the multi-dimensional dynamics that occur in the structures and organization of the everyday world. The final part aims to inquire into the manner in which relations between people can be grasped on an everyday level.

PART ONE: PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE EVERYDAY LIFE WORLD

Introduction

Alfred Schutz combined aspects of phenomenology with psychology in a bid to inquire into the relationship between the conscious workings of the human mind and the duration of life. Moving into the area of phenomenological psychology Schutz embarked on an examination of the essence of phenomena in a bid to understand how human action, meaning and experience function in everyday life. In this part I will provide an introductory discussion of phenomenology and then outline Schutz’s engagement with phenomenology. I will present this in four sections. First I will introduce the phenomenological
perspective as developed by Husserl. Second, I will discuss Schutz’s view of the role of consciousness. Third, Schutz’s application of the phenomenological method to the area of human action will be explained, and finally, I will present his view of meaning and the social world.

Phenomenology: Husserl and the Being of Beings

Originating in the work of Edmund Husserl, phenomenology provides powerful techniques for analysing concrete human existence. Phenomenology is an approach to being and knowing that provide an investigator with particular lines of inquiry. Phenomenology requires an attitude of active thinking that involves stringent reflection and questioning. Husserl characterised phenomenology by the slogan ‘zu den Sachen selbst’ (back to things themselves) (Husserl 1967: 12). This involves an attitude that requires an examination of the very first elements of knowable reality. Therefore, phenomenology is concerned with returning to things, rather like returning to the beginning. For Husserl, returning to the beginning plays a key role in phenomenology because it forms part of the phenomenological method of inquiry. He insisted on returning to the beginning moments of his own philosophical work and suggests that it is a good place to start for any philosopher. In Cartesian Meditations Husserl argues, ‘anyone who seriously intends to become a philosopher must once in his [sic] life withdraw into himself and attempt . . . to overthrow and build anew all the sciences that, up to the then he has been accepting’ (Husserl 1967: 2).

This return to the beginning requires the suspension of prejudices and an over turning of previous philosophical sources of knowledge (Fuchs 1976: 2). It
implies a type of bracketing of the everyday attitude. In other words, it requires abstaining from positing any judgements that concern existence (Husserl 1967: 100). Such an undertaking allows philosophers to continually return to their starting point, thereby determining its validity as well as confirming or challenging any knowledge or truth claims that have been generated from that starting point. This returning to things themselves institutes a type of radical questioning that allows one to confront the world, as well as the way in which the world is presented such that one is not deceived by that which appears as spontaneous or ready made (Levinas 1985: 30).

There are several reasons why, in Husserl’s view, phenomenology requires an emphasis on beginnings. First, any system of complex thought or knowledge requires the development of firm foundations that have been scrutinised and examined. If the foundation is weak or unintelligible then the entire system may be threatened. Second, an emphasis on beginning ensures that the inquiry undertaken is derived from such foundations and that these foundations are sound. Finally, the emphasis on beginning ensures that a phenomenologist can reflect on the entire process so that what is presented is always open to question.

The emphasis of phenomenology on beginnings and returning to things themselves involves an analysis of the role of consciousness in the constitution of the perceived world. Consciousness, within phenomenology, represents that which must be in order for humans to have a sense of existence. This is not to be confused with a sense of reality. Rather, consciousness is considered to be that
which makes awareness possible, or that which precedes understanding (Ricoeur, 1967: 17). Phenomenology insists that consciousness be studied precisely where it is experienced and that the relatedness of objects to consciousness is dealt with, as these are given in experience (Smith 1995: 9). The aim of phenomenology is to bracket or silence the personal and empirical irrelevancies that are attached to consciousness and inquire into its essential structures.

Schutz: the Being of Consciousness

Schutz agreed with the basic tenets of Husserlian phenomenology, in that it presents as a continual search for the very beginning of not just philosophical thinking, but also scientific thought and method. He also agreed that the aim of phenomenology is to illustrate the implicit presuppositions upon which all forms of thinking are based. Through his engagement with phenomenology Schutz attempts to demonstrate and explain the activities of consciousness of the individual within whom the life world is constituted (Schutz 1973: 120). For Schutz, phenomenology is concerned with the origins of awareness. He agrees with the Husserlian form of reduction, or ‘putting the world in brackets’ (Schutz 1967: 37), in a bid to grasp the pure life of consciousness. In Schutz’s view, this reveals the realm in which the whole world is experienced, perceived and remembered (Schutz 1973: 123), or in other words, ‘the flux of consciousness’ (Schutz 1967: 45).

The purpose of phenomenology is not necessarily to deal with what actually exists but with the essence of what exists. Essence, in this context, refers
to the Greek term ‘eidetic’ (Schutz 1970a: 113). It is not an attempt to undertake some form of mystical revelation as to the eternal truths hidden in some object, quality or thing. Rather, it goes to ascertaining the essential characteristics that make up the concrete thing that is perceived (Schutz 1970a: 113). By essential characteristics the phenomenologist means the many possible transformations available in one’s imagination of the perceived object. In short, this refers to the type of characteristics that remain unchanged no matter what variations are included in imaginings of the mind.

Phenomenological analysis highlights the underlying dynamics that revolve around any form of declaration or assertion. For Schutz, this reveals that there is always a pre-predicative level of human experience (Schutz 1973: 112). This revelation challenges the assumption that the world contains things with isolated qualities and meaning. It also raises questions about the relationship between things. In Schutz’s view, objects and qualities gain meaning through a field of experiences rather than existing within set limits or boundaries. Phenomenological investigation insists that it is the human stream of consciousness that draws out particular elements of human experience. This demonstrates that there is a connection between conscious thought, objects, things and qualities in the world. For Schutz, this reveals four important things. First, that the manner of being in the world can be made intelligible, second, that the definite characteristics of the world can be explained, third, that the practices of the social world, which are relevant to community forming process, are found in human conscious life, and finally, that all of these experiences can be examined and interpreted (Schutz 1973: 122-123).
Consciousness and Meaning

Consciousness and meaning are linked in two ways in the everyday world, for Schutz. The first link between consciousness and meaning situates the everyday world as an objective concrete reality for all to experience (Schutz 1967: 34). The world is viewed as complete, constituted and taken for granted. The second link between consciousness and meaning situates the world through a reflexive glance that identifies the world through the intentional functions of consciousness and the meanings that consciousness confers (Schutz 1967: 37). The first link establishes that there is a world of real objects and asserts that the world is meaningful for all. The second link identifies that the world is not complete. Rather, the world is continually constituted in the flow of consciousness (Schutz 1967: 36).

This distinction between the different ways in which consciousness and meaning are linked exposes a multi dimensional level of human consciousness. In the first instance, the world appears as real and concrete because there is no attention paid to the acts of consciousness that constitute it as meaningful. At this level the acts of consciousness that combine to render meaning meaningful are assumed, or taken for granted. In other words, what lies behind meaning is abstracted from its origin (Schutz 1967: 37). The second level of consciousness and meaning emphasises that the world is continually being constituted in the stream of consciousness. For Schutz, ‘the world is not a world of being but a world of constant becoming and passing away - an emerging world’ (Schutz 1967: 36). For the world to become meaningful requires, therefore, a point of
interruption, or reflection in which attention is focused on lived experience (Schutz 1967: 47). This indicates that the world is constituted as meaningful through the intentional acts of consciousness.

Following Husserl, Schutz argues that these forms of meaning serve different purposes with respect to human lived experience. In Schutz’s view, it is only through emphasising the level of reflection apparent in the phenomenological method that one can truly grasp the character of meaning. In the first phase of meaning, in which individuals are living in their acts, or in the now, the intentional characteristics of consciousness carry individuals from one moment of now to the next. Schutz explains this as ‘being immersed in the now, it is a phase not a point, where one phase melts into another’ (Schutz 1967: 51). This is the simple experience of living along a continuum without any sharp boundaries from moment to moment and experience is multiple and continually duplicating itself (Schutz 1967: 51). The second level, the act of attention or reflection, is what constitutes meaningful experience. For Schutz, this indicates that ‘only the already experienced is meaningful not that which is being experienced’ (Schutz 1967: 52).

Consciousness and Action

Human action, for Schutz, implies an ambiguity, in that it can mean a finished product or a complete act. It can also mean a process, an ongoing sequence of events or a series of present experiences (Schutz 1967: 39). Further to this distinction, Schutz differentiates between an act and action. An act is
always a projection into the future of the completed action, while action is the execution of that projected act (Schutz 1973: 20). Action is the constitution of events that together make up the completed act. All action requires, as a prior condition of any performing, an act, without an act action is meaningless (Schutz 1973: 22).

According to Schutz, action and meaning are always part of the operations of consciousness as an act of attention is required to interrupt the flow of immersion in the “now” (Schutz 1967: 51). Acts of attention light up particular experiences while leaving others to flow in the undifferentiated and unidirectional pattern that is characteristic of the flow of consciousness. These discrete experiences are selected out by a particular attitude of the conscious individual and rendered meaningful (Schutz 1967: 42). Meaningful action is only meaningful by ‘the certain way of directing one’s gaze at an item of one’s own experience’ (Schutz 1967: 42, emphasis in original). Every action, therefore, is not necessarily meaningful. However, ‘meaning is integral to the conception of action and needs to be viewed as vital to its formation’ (Natanson 1970: 105). In other words, without interruption to the flow of consciousness produced by the intentional characteristics of consciousness, actions have no meaning.

Consciousness and the Social

Schutz’s concern with the social world revolves around how one understands another person’s subjective experience of themselves, or in Schutz’s words, ‘how is it one can comprehend another person’s intended meaning’
Schutz takes a different approach from Husserl on this issue. Schutz’s concern is to analyse the phenomenon of meaning in ordinary social life. He does not require going into the complex world of the transcendental ego or transcendental knowledge favoured by Husserl (Schutz 1967: 97-8, fn 97). Schutz is not concerned with the composition of phenomena in the phenomenologically reduced space. Rather, his concern is with what corresponds to such phenomena in ordinary social life (Schutz 1967: 43).

Schutz’s inquiry into the social world works from an acceptance of its existence, as it is perceived in the ordinary standpoint of everyday life. In Schutz’s view, the human social world readily accepts the existence of others without question.\textsuperscript{11} This assumption is based on the formula that the other person is ‘wide-awake’ (Schutz 1973: 213). However, in comprehending the intended meaning of another self, Schutz argues, ‘such meaning is essentially subjective and in principle is confined to the interpretation of the person who lives through the experience’ (Schutz 1967: 99). Therefore, as the intended experience of another is ‘constituted within the unique stream of consciousness, of each individual, \textit{it is essentially inaccessible to every other individual}’ (Schutz 1967: 99, emphasis in original). In other words, the meaning I give another’s experience will not be the same as the meaning that this other person gives it.

Schutz’s phenomenological analysis of the social world indicates that comprehending another person’s intended meaning is, in the best possible

\textsuperscript{11} Schutz agrees that the phenomenological epoch reveals the dynamics of consciousness. However, he develops a different approach to the significance of the social world. Rather than bracketing all the empirical activities in a bid to return to the ‘sphere of oneness’ (Husserl 1960: 96), for Schutz, this brackets all reference to the concrete lived experience that makes up meaningful reality (Schutz 1967: 116, Schutz 1973: 140, Schutz 1971: 1-14).
circumstance, a limited experience. In short, whenever I have an experience of another person it is still my own; however, it is also a lived experience of another. Therefore, it can only be grasped as an intentional object symbolically. As Schutz explains, ‘it is symbolically grasped because I cannot live through the same experiences of another person’ (Schutz 1967: 100). In other words, grasping the lived experience of others always occurs in the “now”, or as it actually takes place. This is contrary to my own experience of myself, which only happens through reflecting on past events. For Schutz, this indicates a simultaneity and co-existence between our respective streams of consciousness. According to Schutz, this provides the basis for the social world. Schutz draws on the view of simultaneity in the work of Bergson.

I call simultaneous two streams, which from the standpoint of my consciousness are indifferently one or two. My consciousness perceives these streams as a single one whenever it pleases to give them an undivided act of attention. On the other hand, it distinguishes them whenever it chooses to divide its attention between them. Again it can make them both one and yet distinct from one another, if it decides to divide its attention while still not splitting them into two separate entities (Bergson, quoted in Schutz 1967: 103 emphasis in original) 

This is not to imply that the same experiences are given to each. Rather, it means that there is a point of reference beyond the experience of either. It illustrates that I equate another’s stream of consciousness as similar to my own. Moreover, it is this mutual equation of streams of consciousness that provides for the commonality of the social world.

Schutz’s analysis of the social world indicates that there are two intersecting spheres that provide the basis for identifying the means by which experience and action are constituted. First, there is the continuum of one’s lived experiences, which is open to self-explanation through the intentional character of one’s own consciousness. Second, there is the stream of the lived experiences of others. These experiences are not open to me. While, for the other, lived experience occurs on a continuum that is their own. I am not aware of the totality of the experience. I can only grasp it in portions. I can only interpret another’s lived experience from my own continuum or standpoint. In Schutz’s view, this indicates that what I believe I know regarding another’s conscious life is really based on my knowledge of my own lived experience (Schutz 1967: 106). It shows that any form of comprehending is never complete or full. It is rather, interpretive, thus illuminating the underlying assumptions that constitute all forms of comprehending.

Conclusion

This part has outlined the phenomenological perspective and the basis of Schutz’s engagement with phenomenology. I have pointed to Schutz’s view of phenomenological reduction to reveal a pre-predicative level of human experience. I have also drawn out his view of the connections between consciousness, meaning and action. This part has shown that, according to Schutz, human experience always gains meaning through a connection between thought, action and qualities in the world. In relation to the social world, I have
outlined Schutz’s analysis to indicate that, in the everyday world, the self only experiences others in fragments. Therefore, I have provided the beginnings of Schutz’s engagement with phenomenology in a bid to highlight that, in the everyday world, meaning, action and comprehension are always linked, and more specifically, that these human qualities are always interpretative, and therefore, never complete.

PART TWO: THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EVERYDAY WORLD

Introduction

For Schutz the everyday world is comprised of certain characteristics that necessarily render it as everyday. These characteristics provide the sense of familiarity and intelligibility to the everyday world that allows people to go about their daily lives in a fashion that is applicable and appropriate to the community or social group in which they live. This part serves two purposes. First, to outline the characteristics of the everyday world in a bid to indicate how it is considered to be “real”. Second, to draw out the main points of Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world in a bid to emphasise the underlying dynamics that constitute its everyday status. Initially, I will outline the conditions that comprise the everyday world, that of common sense reality and the natural attitude then I will point to the character of the everyday world as always typified.

Section One: The Conditions of the Everyday World
The first condition that constitutes the everyday world, according to Schutz, is common sense reality. This constitutes the view of the world into which all people are born. Common sense reality is largely taken for granted in that ‘human thinking accepts the reality of physical objects, facts, and events within the social environment and that these are common to others’ (Schutz 1973: 327). Common sense reality can be equated with the first level of consciousness discussed earlier. In short, the world is assumed to be an objective reality readily available for all to experience. Common sense thinking accepts that the self – ‘I’, exists in the world. It also accepts that others exist in the world, that communication between people is part of common reality and that what holds for myself holds equally well for another person (Natanson 1970: 103). Common sense reality is, therefore, grounded in the acceptance of a shared common reality.

According to Schutz, a common sense reality of the everyday world is accepted as solid and concrete in several ways. First, it is accepted in the perceptual sense, in that objects, or events, are seen and grasped and, therefore, taken as real (Schutz 1973: 326). By living with particular objects, matters and occurrences, human perception assumes the actuality of the surrounding elements of daily life. This applies to both the self and to others. This means that I take others to be substantially the same as myself and that I accept that others do the same with me. At the basis of common sense reality there is, therefore, an unquestioned belief that assumes, or takes for granted, the existence of others.
Common sense reality is also accepted as real due to the biographical nature of human being. Schutz argues that at any given moment one lives within a biographically determined situation (Schutz 1973: 9, Schutz 1970a: 167). This situates us in time and space. It orients us to the past, present, and possible future. It is determined, in that it relates us to what has occurred prior to our existence and it provides the context for the sequence of events that constitute our lives at any given moment. The biographically determined elements contain both shared characteristics as well as those that are unique and particular to the individual (Schutz 1973: 11). The shared characteristics come in the form of common perceptions and knowledge and the individual characteristics by way of intensity and the order of events that pertain solely to the individual (Schutz 1973: 12).

The acceptance of the common sense reality along these particular lines highlights that the world is an organised world. This organization allows for reference to past events, present experiences and future possibilities. This temporal structure in the everyday world, in part, determines the world as familiar and known. However, it also provides the backdrop for the different and unusual, in that all experiences and events arise against the horizon of familiarity (Schutz 1973: 9). Common sense reality constitutes a scheme of reference that organises the new and the different in relation to the mundane and familiar. It is this scheme of reference that, according to Schutz, helps to render the everyday world meaningful.

*The Natural Attitude*
According to Schutz, the natural attitude provides the basis for common sense reality. Following Husserl, Schutz agrees that the natural attitude is the world of human interaction and communication. It is a belief in the existence of the natural world, in its objects, elements and in other people. In the natural attitude we view the world as well circumscribed and knowable. Schutz argues that ‘in the natural attitude the world is not and never has been a mere aggregate of coloured spots, nor is it concerned with how the common sense world is interpreted or how the elements affect the human senses’ (Schutz 1973: 208). The natural attitude is the world of practical interest. It provides the field for all activities, it provides an ordering to the patterns of life and it is the ground of the taken for granted character of the everyday world.

As this natural attitude provides the basis for ordering the patterns of life it constitutes particular reference to the world. The world becomes a field of universal activities, or ‘a field of domination’ (Schutz 1973: 227). The natural attitude invokes a form of pragmatism, as it is always concerned with the practicality of our existence in the world. Individuals, living in the natural attitude, are primarily concerned with the part of the world that is within their own scope (Schutz 1973: 222). As a form of ordering, the natural attitude provides the basis for the meaning of phenomena. Schutz proposes a schema, functioning in the natural attitude, which shows how phenomena are rendered meaningful. In the first instance, meaning originates in the actual world within our reach. This is the world of touch, sight, and hearing, which is constantly open to change depending upon our position (Schutz 1973: 223). In the second
instance, phenomena in the natural attitude are rendered intelligible through the realm of potential reach (Schutz 1973: 224). Phenomena in these instances are viewed in relation to past experiences through conscious reflection and future possibilities through fantasy and imagination. This schema allows the everyday world to function as a coherent whole. However, as Schutz’s analysis suggests, within this apparent unity is an inner differentiation that constitutes the world as meaningful.

Section Two: The Character of the Everyday world

The Typified Commonsense World

Schutz’s analysis of the conditions of the everyday world, that of the natural attitude and common sense reality, identifies additional characteristics that underlie these conditions. In Schutz’s view, reality is rendered as both natural and common through a process of typification whereby experiences are rendered ‘typical’ in reference to sets of expectations (Schutz 1973: 8). This typification process relates to the pre-predicative level of human experience. It provides the field of experiences that actively constitute how experience and events are constituted as meaningful in the everyday world. For Schutz, the everyday world is always experienced through a ‘mode of typicality’ (Schutz 1973: 59) wherein objects, events and experiences are constituted as meaningful through the anticipation of some form of similar or familiar experience.
The process of typification refers to the layering of knowledge such that what is experienced in the actual perception of an object can be transferred to other similar objects. For example, the common shared world is experienced in groups of types, (such as animals, trees, mountains, people) rather than singular unique objects (Schutz 1973: 8). The confirmation of an anticipated typical experience adds to the knowledge of such a type, thereby enlarging our knowledge. In Schutz’s view, this suggests that ‘no object can be perceived as an isolated object; it is from the outset perceived as an object within its horizon, a horizon of typical familiarity’ (Schutz 1973: 279). Further, this indicates that what is considered as typical is always determined from the point of view of the interpreter (Schutz 1967: 192), and thus, suggests that typification is not universal (Schutz 1970b: xv).

Schutz further identifies three movements in the process of typification. First, passive receptivity situates us as always open to the outer world (Schutz 1973: 279) and second, predicative spontaneity or the asserting of something as something. This can be understood as the movement from what was passively grasped in the open horizon to what is now the topic or theme of experience (Schutz: 280). The final movement in this process of typification is the transition from the specific topic to the general (Schutz 1973: 282). For example, when I see a cat at the first level I see or grasp an object that is recognised as an animal, on the second level, the animal is predicated as a cat and on the final level, it is this particular cat. The concrete, common sense world of human experience is a
typical world that is founded on typical aspects of human experience, which, in the daily traffic of human life, remain largely anonymous\textsuperscript{13}.

This process of typification equalises traits (Schutz 1971: 234). As a process it levels out the unique in a bid to render objects, matters and experiences as meaningful in relational terms. However, as this typifying process remains unrecognised, it suggests that meaning and understanding always include abstraction and interpretation. This indicates, in turn, that only certain aspects of experience are meaningful. As Schutz explains, the everyday common sense world necessarily involves ‘sets of abstractions, generalisations, formalisations’ (Schutz 1973: 5). Therefore, the concrete facts of the common sense world can be seen as open to constant revision and adjustment.

\textit{Conclusion}

This part has situated the everyday as a complex combination of dynamics that involves particular structures of consciousness, certain attitudes and identifying processes. I have drawn out the main points of Schutz’s view of the conditions of the everyday world, that of common sense reality and the natural attitude. I have also pointed to the underlying character of the everyday world through Schutz’s understanding of the process of typification. Together these conditions and characteristics combine to constitute the everyday world as a taken for granted reality. In this part, therefore, I have demonstrated how Schutz’s analysis highlights how the everyday world is organised along particular

\textsuperscript{13} Schutz’s analysis of the process of typification is always underpinned, however, by the systems of relevance (see p. 76). For Schutz, it is the interconnections between these systems and processes that render human experience “knowable” in the everyday world.
lines that render it meaningful. I have also pointed to some of the underlying processes that constitute relations between people and, as such, indicate the inherent social character of the everyday world.

PART THREE: THE STRUCTURE OF THE EVERYDAY WORLD

Introduction

As the conditions and characteristics of the everyday world indicate the manner in which this world functions, Schutz’s phenomenological inquiry also aims to investigate the inner differentiation of the assumed “surface” unity of the everyday world. My aim, in this part, is to identify the dimensions and practices of the everyday world in order to point to the underlying dynamics that constitute relations between people. This analysis will highlight the inherent social character of the everyday world. This part will provide, therefore, an exposition of Schutz’s view of the structures and processes of the everyday world. I will discuss Schutz’s view of the spatial and temporal structures, knowledge and language processes and his view of the systems of relevance. I will use this part to illustrate the multi-dimensional dynamics that occur in the structures and processes of the everyday world.

Section One: Structures of the Everyday World

Spatial Structures
In Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world spatial structures orient the individual in relation to the outer world. The first aspect of the spatial component is the immediacy of awareness we have of the surrounding world (Schutz 1970a: 175). The spatial dimension locates the self in relation to others in the everyday world. As Schutz explains ‘the centre O in the system of coordinates’ (Schutz 1970a: 173) locates the self as ‘always ‘here’ over and against all other locations, which are ‘there’’ (Schutz 1970a: 175). Spatial structures determine the perspectives and dimensions that orient us in space. They provide the physical context for experiencing the outer world. ‘Objects are above or underneath, before or behind, right or left, nearer or farther’ (Schutz 1973: 306).

A further feature of spatial structures relates specifically to the human body. While situating the body in space, these structures also refer to the variability of bodily movements. Spatial structures ‘take into account the changing perspectives depending upon where one is positioned in space’ (Schutz 1970a: 174). This specific feature indicates that human experiences are always carried out in an open field of possibilities. This is not to imply that it is due to the kinaesthetic movements of our bodies in space that we are constantly altering the perception of what is encountered in the outer world. It is more that the interpretation of what is perceived is open to question. As spatial structures link the immediacy of awareness with the human body these structures emphasise that the experience of space is not objective. Rather, space is experienced in the form of lived through space, in that we are oriented in relation to the outer world (Schutz 1970a: 174).
While spatial structures orient the body in the outer world, they also provide the context for bodies to meet. Spatial orientation refers to both the physicality of human bodies and the psychological realm of human experience. As Schutz explains, we encounter other bodies in space through the interconnection between the psycho and the physical, ‘as a psychophysical being’ (Schutz 1967: 140). Spatial structures constitute fields of experience that enable a connection between physicality and cognitive ability. For Schutz, this refers to not only being immediately aware of another, which would be the case in a purely physical world, but in ‘actually living with others or growing older with others’ (Schutz 1967: 140). We do not necessarily have to physically cohabitate with another. Instead, it refers to the way in which we directly experience others by sharing the same spatial environment at any given moment.

Spatial structures also relate to the way in which phenomena are rendered intelligible. As previously stated, meaning is constituted within the sectors of ‘actual reach’ and ‘potential reach’. This relates to the spatial as we are always rendered in a particular position, or, in other words we can never be situated in some way outside of space. In terms of actual reach we are in a position of immediate accessibility to the outer world through sight, hearing, movement and manipulation. In terms of potential reach we are always potentially able to restore an experience or event into the ‘actual’, and we are potentially able to attain something that has previously not part of our actual reach (Schutz 1973: 140). The implication of this realisation is that, spatially, the human life world is open with regard to objects in the outer world.
The significance of Schutz’s phenomenological analysis of space is that it emphasises certain dynamics that provide insights into relations between people. First, it highlights the physicality of human existence. In this context, Schutz’s analysis illustrates that the experience of living through space provides the basis for questioning what is perceived in the outer world. Schutz’s analysis highlights that by altering our physical position in relation to the outer world can equally alter our interpretation of the outer world. Second, Schutz’s analysis also indicates the connection between the physical and the psychical. This indicates that spatial structures cannot be considered as an objective reality that exists outside, or prior to, the dynamics of human consciousness. Rather, both the physical and the psychical must be viewed as aspects of the horizon in which human experience is ordered and made intelligible.

Temporal Structures

Schutz also identifies what he takes to be underlying dynamics of temporal structures that constitute the everyday world. Temporal structures, according to Schutz, can be differentiated into two forms, or rhythms, of time, that are fundamental to human experience. Outer or world time, (which includes the changes in the day, seasons and plant life cycle) bodily time, (breathing and heartbeat) and inner time, or durée, which is continuous and marks the constant transition from an instance of now the next now (Schutz 1967: 45). World time accepts that we are born into an already existing world, that there is a transition through infancy and adolescence into adulthood and that the future holds a sense
of expectation. It also accepts the eventually of dying (Schutz 1970a: 180). World

time, according to Schutz, transcends inner time, as it concerns the world in
general; whereas inner *duree* is concerned with the continual coming to be and
passing away of moments (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 46). 14

For Schutz, temporal structures also correlate with spatial structures. The
mutual relationship between time and space can be seen in the everyday world
through the intersection of present time and actual reach. In other words, what
can be seen, heard, grasped and manipulated pertains to the immediacy of now. It
is in the present phase of the stream of consciousness and is only limited by what
is known (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 50). Restorable reach correlates with the
past. However, this past must have once been present for it to be recallable.
Attainable reach refers to expectation of future possibilities (Schutz &
Luckmann: 52). The importance of these correlations illustrates that the everyday
life world is always an open life world. This time-space connection makes
possible the conditions to open us to past present and future interpretations of
reality.

For Schutz, the fact that time is dimensional means that it replicates the
sedimentary character of consciousness. As previously stated, consciousness
functions in two ways, the constant flux of “now” and through particular acts of
attention. Therefore, temporal structures relate, on the one hand, to the constant
flux of moment-by-moment existence, the continual flow of experiences whereby
we are immersed in the stream of consciousness without clearly being able to

14 Schutz also mentions cosmic time. This is the spatialized time of the objective outer world. It
constitutes the time through which the present and the inner *duree* intersect therein suggesting that
there are three time phases that are relevant to the everyday world. See Schutz (1973) pp. 16-22.
differentiate between experiences. On the other hand, world time separates out these continual images by paying particular ‘attention to life’ (Schutz 1973: 45), thereby interrupting the continual flow of inner durée. In Schutz’s view, ‘human life is simultaneously existing in both dimensions’ (Schutz 1967: 45).

*Time and Meaning*

Schutz also inquires into linkages between time and meaning. He argues that temporal structures are linked to the constitution of meaning in the everyday life world through human lived experience. Experience in the everyday world has a dimensional character. These dimensions refer to the always already now of all actions that make up experience, the sum total of all past experiences that have led to the present one and the empty anticipations of future experiences (Schutz 1970a: 88). This highlights the fact that every present experience is projected into the future but carries with it already known past typical expectations, or as Schutz explains, ‘the present is always the outcome of the past and the past is pregnant with the future’ (Schutz 1970a: 88).

In relation to the ‘dimension of “now”’ there is a time lap in between the performance of an act and the constitution of its meaning’ (Schutz 1967: 69). This slippage of time allows the layering of actions to be accumulated continuously in a ‘polythetic’ structure (Schutz 1967: 77). This refers to a multitude of phases of experience that are not grasped consciously. Instead, the meaning of these experiences is grasped monothetically (Schutz 1967: 77), or as one single action brought together within one moment. This requires a point of
interruption or reflection that binds experience into a specific unity. The interrelationship between time and meaning indicates that the “now” of all actions can never be grasped in the now. Instead, it requires a context in which it can be viewed. For Schutz, this suggests that human experience can be grasped in different ways depending on the temporal distance from which it is reflected upon (Schutz 1967: 74).

The underlying dynamics of time in the everyday world point to some further insights into the manner in which relations between people are constituted. First, emphasising the dimensional aspects of time indicates that these conditions can influence perceptions, meaning and experiences in everyday life. Schutz’s analysis also indicates that time is an integral element of human experience. This further emphasises that human experience is never complete. Rather, these dimensional aspects of the temporal suggest that human experience is always open to constant revision and reinterpretation. Schutz’s analysis of these temporal structures, therefore, presents time, meaning and experience as intersecting in a dynamic relation that is played out through everyday life.

Section Two: Everyday Processes

Processes of Knowledge

In addition to examining the structures of time and meaning, Schutz also looks to the connections between knowledge and time. For Schutz, the temporal structures of past, present and future do not simply help render experience
meaningful, these structures also allow for the acquisition of knowledge in the everyday world. The continual sedimentation of past experiences builds into the stock of knowledge from which experiences are known as typical (Schutz 1970a: 78). As previously explained, according to Schutz, everyday experience always occurs in a mode of typicality. In every situation we build up a particular stock of knowledge that is always open to the acquisition of more knowledge through encountering the unknown in relation to the known. In Schutz’s view, embedded in a person's stock of knowledge is always the ‘province of typifications that relate to the typical aspects and attributes of objects, persons and events’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 143).

Knowledge, for Schutz, develops through these ‘provinces of typicality’ and, therefore, includes the dimensions of time. These typical aspects of knowledge incorporate both the inner rhythm of time as well as world time. In relation to inner time, knowledge is acquired in a ‘phase by phase’ process or ‘polythetically’ (Schutz 1970a: 80). These phases form the passive content of knowledge. For Schutz, this refers to ‘knowledge at hand’, in that it is taken for granted as part of the reserve of all prior experiences. These polythetic steps constitute the individual elements, placed in relation to one another that make up the essence of knowledge. This polythetic arrangement is ‘carried off’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 120), or remains in the passive state. Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge can be understood as being constituted from the typicality of experiences.
The outer rhythm of time brings together these phases into one unified meaning. Schutz argues that knowledge is always monothetically grasped. The multiplicity of events, prior to the point of knowing are covered over such that what is known appears as clear and distinct (Schutz 1970a: 81). The acquisition of knowledge relies upon the connection between these two forms of time. While the polythetic phase of knowledge cannot be grasped in the present, the steps to knowing something need to be accounted for in order to ascertain how this particular knowledge was acquired. The clarity and distinctness of knowledge depends upon whether it is possible to ‘account for the source of knowledge by indicating the single acts of becoming aware, conceiving, understanding, apprehending, and learning by which we become cognizant of or acquainted with an element of our knowledge’ (Schutz 1970a: 82).

The distinction between these elements of time and the polythetic and monothetic elements of knowledge illustrate the dynamic processes that constitute the everyday world as a meaningful reality. In the first instance, the connection between time and knowledge underlies the means by which people act in the world. It also points to the interconnections between knowing and acting in the world by clearly highlighting the links between experience and knowledge. The effect of this realisation is that, for Schutz, there can never be any element of knowledge that originates in some sort of ‘primordial experience’ (Schutz 1967: 119). Knowledge, therefore, is always knowledge in context. Finally, this relationship between time and knowledge provides the context for interpreting the actions and behaviours of other people in the everyday world.
Schutz not only identifies the temporal character of knowledge he also points to the social structure of knowledge. Knowledge, for Schutz, pertains to the social, as the greater part of all human experience originates in experiences we have with others. Knowledge is drawn from the biographical situation that we are born into, or, in other words, from the social world of everyday human life. This form of knowledge is handed down from our parents, teachers and associates and forms part of the habitual attributes of things that are known (Schutz 1970a: 84). Knowledge, in this instance, is grasped as a unity, or monothetically. This form of knowledge includes folklores and mores that are accepted over time. There is, in these instances, no reference to the polythetic steps that have constituted this knowledge.

Schutz goes further to suggest that socially derived knowledge is fragmentary and inconsistent, in that it pertains to the various dimensions of the social world in which we live. It is organised along particular lines and dimensions that enable the interpretation of the everyday social world. In Schutz’s view, there is a distinction between ‘knowledge about something, knowledge of something through to blind belief in things that are simply taken for granted’ (Schutz 1973: 55). Knowledge is multidimensional with ‘knowledge about’ corresponding to the world within actual reach and ‘knowledge of’ corresponding to the world within potential reach.
For Schutz, the first level of everyday knowledge refers to ‘knowledge in hand’ (Schutz 1970a: 143). This level of knowledge incorporates the integral elements of conscious life, such as ‘kinaesthetic knowledge, limitations on one’s body, knowledge that other people exist in the world, knowledge of social institutions and so forth’ (Schutz 1970a: 143). The second level of knowledge, or knowledge at hand, refers to potential knowledge. This can be something that is merely familiar but not in hand. This form of knowledge can lie dormant until sparked by a new area of interest and it is always open to investigation and interpretation (Schutz 1970a: 146-7).

Schutz’s analysis of knowledge also highlights its dimensional character. These dimensional aspects provide further insights into the way in which relations between people are constituted in the everyday world. First, people are understood to experience both themselves and others through these modes of typicality and thereby render each other knowable. Second, Schutz’s analysis also points to the fragmentary and contextual character of knowledge, which indicates that all forms of knowledge are embedded in continual and open processes. This suggests that the relations between people in the everyday world revolve around the push towards knowing and the fragmentary manner in which knowledge is acquired. Third, these dimensional characteristics of knowledge suggest that, while knowledge is integral to human experience, it always has the potential for reinterpretation. These characteristics of knowledge, therefore, indicate that human relations in the everyday world involve a dynamic process that is constituted through the intersections between these processes of knowledge.
Language and Communication Processes

For Schutz, the processes of language are an aspect of the dynamics that underpin the everyday world. Language, according to Schutz, enables one to interpret the world. It constitutes relations between objects, events and meaning and it has a multi-dimensional structure. Language, in the first instance, is always woven into early human relations. As we are born into a particular biographical situation we must take up a pre-existing language. According to Schutz, language is always pretypified for it contains the typical structures of previous generations (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 233).

The second dimension to language, that Schutz notes, is that it is both ‘an expressive act as well as an interpretative schema’ (Schutz 1973: 246). These aspects of language operate simultaneously, as both are required for language to be meaningful. Language is an expressive act, in that it projects the contents of one’s consciousness outward to the external world (Schutz 1967: 116). This refers to the ways in which I take up a sign and incorporate it into my scheme of expression. Schutz explains this as ‘having used the sign at least once, for that which it designates in either a spontaneous manner or in the process of imagination’ (Schutz 1967: 122). For Schutz, this indicates that there is no simple appropriation of a sign that has not, (in some prior fashion) been known to the user.

The dimension of language that is interpretative refers to the connection between the meaning of a sign and what the sign represents. In Schutz’s view,
this connection always includes reference to a past experience of the interpreter. Schutz explains this interpretative aspect to language as the ‘way in which, one has in the past, interpreted the sign as the sign of that which it designates’ (Schutz 1967: 122). For language to be intelligible it requires the ability to express a particular sign within a system that one has already interpreted. Schutz draws on the work of Meillet to explain this point.

We cannot apprehend the sense of an unknown language intuitively. If we are to succeed in understanding the text of a language whose tradition has been lost, we must either have a faithful translation into a known language, that is, we must be closely related to one or more languages with which we are familiar. In other words, we must already know it

(Meillet, quoted in Schutz 1967: 122-3).

Schutz’s analysis also points to the role of communication in adding to the manner in which everyday life is rendered intelligible. While language is a system of signs and representations, ‘communication is always the use of a sign that is addressed to an individual or anonymous interpreter’ (Schutz 1973: 321). It refers to the relationship between the speaker and listener and to the total sequential import of words that are relayed. Communication, in the foremost sense, refers to our ability to make ourselves understood to others. In the everyday world it incorporates the ‘conceptual kernel’ of signs as well as the ‘associated fringes or aura that surrounds each word in order to connect them within the structure of what is being communicated’ (Schutz 1970a: 94). Communication, in this instance, always includes some reference to expectation, anticipation and doubt, in that the communicator can only ever speculate that the addressee has understood the intended meaning (Schutz 1973: 326). Communication is, therefore, always an occurrence of the outer world in that
some event, idea or matter is communicated to another person who interprets this in the outer world (Schutz 1973: 223).

Schutz argues that communication operates in two significant realms of the everyday world. First, the communicator or speaker interprets the representations of the signs used and anticipates the interpretation of the listener. The listener must also interpret the signs used and anticipate the intended meaning. In the second realm, communication involves ‘a common set of abstractions and standardisations through shaped typifying constructs of the outer world’ (Schutz 1973: 234). Communication can be seen as a process that involves the presupposition of a mutual coincidence of the communicator’s interpretative scheme with that of the addressee (Schutz 1973: 234). For example, communication within the same language group moves between common typified frameworks, while communication between different language groups fluctuates and halts until coinciding frameworks can be established.

The underlying dynamics of language and communication also indicate the manner in which relations between people are constituted. First, as language is always pretypified, expressive and interpretative it presupposes a connection to the community in which we are located. The role of communication adds to this in that it presupposes an event between people. This again suggests that there is a dynamism involved in the constitution of relations between people, as there is a continual interplay between people, structures of communication and the social world in which interpretation occurs. Second, Schutz’s analysis emphasises that these dynamics contain a constant push for common ground as the basis for
rendering the everyday world intelligible together with an underlying sense of anticipation and doubt. This suggests that the underlying dynamics that constitute relations between people in the everyday world revolve around the dynamics between knowing and doubting, or in other words, between the known and the unknown.

Section Three: Everyday Systems

The Relevance System

Schutz’s phenomenological approach to the everyday world identifies a set of open ended structures and processes that render the world meaningful. While these structures explain how the everyday world is delineated into different sub-worlds, Schutz also inquires into how these structures and processes are maintained. Three issues can be raised in relation to the structure of the everyday world. The first concerns how something is selected and converted into some form of experience. The second issue relates to the determinates of the selective functions of interest, and the third with the influences that affect this selection process. Schutz’s work moves towards analysing these issues through his understanding of the systems of relevance that underlie human experience in the everyday world.

Schutz inquires into the ‘here and now’ of social structures to identify the first relevance system, or the topical relevance. For Schutz, this refers to the social matrix in which we are always situated. This system refers to the relevance
something acquires by becoming questionable. Schutz explains that ‘something is rendered as problematic in the midst of the unstructured field of unproblematic familiarity’ (Schutz 1970a: 26). For Schutz, something is ‘thrown before me’ (Schutz 1970a: 26) and thereby is constituted into a theme or topic of thought through an act of attention.

Schutz identifies two forms of topical thematic relevance. The initial form is an imposed topical relevance in which an unfamiliar experience is imposed upon the individual by its very unfamiliarity (Schutz 1970a: 28). This can refer to objects, people or interests. For example, an imposed relevance can originate in social interaction with others in which appropriate behavioural standards must be observed within particular groups. Temporal considerations can also be an imposed relevance. For example, there are distinct time differences from country to country, which are rendered noticeable if one moves between countries. Spatial limitations also form an imposed relevance, in that human bodies are limited with respect to types of physical movements and actions they can undertake. In addition, surprises or forms of shock can be an imposed relevance in that they force us to shift our attention from one particular realm to another (Schutz 1970a: 29).

The next form of topical relevance that Schutz identifies is intrinsic topical relevance (Schutz 1970a: 30). This system of relevance refers to the layering or process of sedimentation that are undertaken when we are concerned with a theme or topic. The intrinsic nature of this form of relevance is due to the connection between the topic at hand and the horizon in which it is situated
(Schutz 1970a: 32). There is a superimposition of themes wherein each new focus of attention always contains some element of the previous inquiry, therefore, establishing a type of reference system, or ‘home base’, that is intrinsic to the issue involved (Schutz 1970a: 33).

The second system of relevance that Schutz examines he refers to as interpretational systems. For Schutz, this relevance system interprets or grasps the meaning of what was previously rendered as a theme within topical relevance (Schutz 1970a: 36). Grasping involves the way in which a new and unfamiliar theme is superimposed onto the entire field of previous experiences. This suggests that meaning is constituted through forms of comparison. The interpretative relevance contains a double function. Initially, there is the comparison between the unfamiliar and the stock of knowledge, and second, the object or matter is rendered meaningful. However, interpretation only occurs in fragments. Schutz further explains that ‘only certain particular moments of the object are perceived’ (Schutz 1970a: 37). This suggests that interpretation requires the movement between the known and the unknown, but it is never a complete process (Schutz 1970a: 41).

The next form of relevance, Schutz identifies, is that of motivation. This form of relevance refers to the manner, idea or need that forces action in a particular way (Schutz 1970a: 48). Motivational relevance systems refer to the layers of previous experiences and knowledge that were once topically relevant (Schutz 1970a: 55). Two types of motivational relevance can be distinguished. First, action that is motivated towards the future, and second, action that refers to
past events. In relation to future events, Schutz identifies an ‘in order to motive’ that establishes the form of a particular action undertaken in a bid to bring about a particular state of affairs (Schutz 1973: 69). The “in order to” motive is situated at the point before action for which one imagines the end state of affairs, thus determining the type of action required (Schutz 1970a: 47).

The second form of motivational relevance that Schutz identifies is the “because motive”. This refers to the explanations for an already accomplished act (Schutz 1970a: 50). These “because motives” refer to past events wherein an actor must take up the position of observer of their own acts such that the motivational premise behind the act can be grasped. The “because motive” always deals with the motivation for the establishment of the project itself (Schutz 1970a: 50). “Because motives” form an objective category in which the actor reconstructs the steps that brought about the already completed state of affairs (Schutz 1973: 71). These motives can be viewed as the circumstances that have caused someone to act in a particular way. These motivational systems of relevance do not attempt to justify particular actions. Rather, as systems of relevance, they render the everyday world meaningful.

Schutz’s analysis of these systems of relevance suggests a continual interplay between these systems (Schutz 1970a: 15). These relevance systems do not act in any way as isolated or singular forms of social explanation. Rather, they are always interrelated, as each requires the other to actively constitute the surrounding world as meaningful. Interrelations occur in the topical and interpretational relevance whereby the latter presupposes the existence of the
former (Schutz 1970a: 66). Further, within the constitution of each new topic that is interpreted there are new topics and subtopics that require interpretation (Schutz 1970a: 70). Topical and motivational systems of relevance are linked, in that motivation actively encourages the constitution of new topics as well as newly constituted topics requiring the dynamic force of motivational relevance for further inquiry (Schutz 1970a: 69). Motivational and interpretational systems of relevance intersect because inquiry demands interpretation of the new and unfamiliar (Schutz 1970a: 70). These interrelations imply that any one of the systems can spark off changes and, furthermore, that no one system is more significant than the other two (Schutz 1970a: 70).

*Maintaining the Social Structure*

Schutz’s analysis of the systems of relevance illustrates the complex dynamic force that underpins the everyday world. Moreover, he suggests that these systems of relevance actively maintain the social structure (Schutz 1970a: 44). However, this maintenance is always contingent (Heritage 1984: 57). The everyday world is a world that is determinable, definite, knowable but also spontaneous, mysterious and open to the unknown. These three systems of relevance indicate that the everyday world is a predetermined world but that this predetermined character is always based on an indeterminable structure. The systems of relevance, therefore, act to shore up the duality of human life in the everyday world.
Placing spatial structures in relation to the systems of relevance highlights several ways in which structures of space are continually maintained. As spatial structures emphasise the physicality of beings and order the external world in terms of physical access, topical relevance intersects these structures by highlighting the physical movements and limitations associated with the physicality of bodies. This intersection raises the specific cognitive awareness that I am a body, and that this body exists spatially in the sense that I must learn to use my body, to move, to walk, run and play (Schutz 1970a: 44). Further, this intersection between the imposed topical relevance and spatial structures acts to maintain how we are always considered in relation to others, thereby continually reinforcing the fundamental relatedness of people. Interpretational relevance intersects with spatial structures, thus maintaining spatial structures by providing the context for spatial movement. This aspect of these systems enables the continual interpretation between bodies so that people do not continually collide, fall over or walk into other objects.

The intersection between the systems of topical and interpretational relevance and spatial structures produce concepts of proximity and distance. This divides the outer world into particular sectors (Schutz 1970a: 66). The interpretational relevance system underpins the kinaesthetic movements of the human body, and finally, the motivational relevance system intersects with structures of space, and maintains spatial structures due to the force of motivation itself (Schutz 1970a: 67). Motivational force continually seeks changing perspectives that occur due to spatial movement. This shores up the expectation
that bodies move spatially and that perspectives change spatially. This also allows spatial structures to function as taken for granted aspects of everyday life.

The analysis of time and the relevance systems also points to a further intersection that acts to shore up time as an aspect of taken for granted everyday reality. The topical relevance system intersects with time by drawing out differences in time, such as seasonal changes, daily time allocations or lengthy periods of time. For example, the very concept of aging, as a taken for granted aspect of everyday life, can be considered as an effect of the intersection between temporal structures and systems of relevance. The effect of this intersection is that these aspects of everyday life are taken for granted and rendered an intrinsic part of human reality. The interpretational relevance systems intersect with temporal structures and support the differentiation of time in the everyday world. This intersection enables the concept that we have a past, live in the present and plan for the future. The motivational relevance systems also intersect with temporal structures, which are witnessed in the encouragement to have future imaginings as well as instituting explanations for past experiences.

Schutz’s analysis of these systems of relevance is an attempt to explore the manner in which something is converted into experience. Therefore, his analysis requires pointing to the conditions that surround the constitution of meaning and experience in the everyday world. This analysis provides a framework from which we can consider the manner in which the status of the everyday world is maintained. The three systems that Schutz identifies, the topical, interpretational and motivational relevance systems, therefore, add to the
underlying dynamics that constitute relations between people in the everyday world. First, the topical relevance systems institute the thematic in relations between people. The interpretation relevance systems attempt to grasp at meaning through a continual process of comparison and the motivational systems of relevance attempt to seek out new experiences between people. These three systems of relevance indicate that there is a dynamic process that underlies relations between people.

Conclusion

In this part I have provided an account of Schutz’s view of the structures, processes and systems of the everyday world. I have outlined his theories concerning the underlying dynamics of spatial and temporal structures together with the knowledge and language processes and the systems of relevance. The purpose of this part was to identify, through the work of Alfred Schutz, the dimensions and practices of the everyday in a bid to point to the underlying dynamics that constitute relations between people. This has been achieved in five areas. First, I have pointed to the dimensional aspects of space to suggest that relations between people involve both the physical and the cognitive. With respect to time, I have pointed to the dimensional aspects of the temporal to indicate that relations between people are played out through a multitude of dimensions that can influence perception, meaning and experience in the everyday world. Third, the dimensional characteristics of knowledge indicate that relations between people involve fragmentary and contextual forms of knowing. This suggests that all relations between people are constituted through forms of openness. Fourth, Schutz’s analysis of the dimensions of language and
communication indicate that relations between people involve both a push
towards common ground and dynamics associated with anticipation and doubt.
Finally, the dimensional characteristics of the relevance systems indicate that the
push towards knowing and the intersection of the unknown together constitute the
taken for granted status of the everyday world. These points extracted from
Schutz’s analysis of the structures that constitute the everyday world further
highlight its inherently social character.

PART FOUR: EVERYDAY HUMAN RELATIONS

Introduction

The previous parts have pointed to the underlying dynamics that underpin
the everyday world and how the interplay between these dynamics constitutes
relations between people. Schutz’s analysis indicates that the everyday world
revolves around the movement between a determinable knowable reality and the
mysterious that is part of everyday life. According to Schutz, this dynamic
interplay points to the significance of the intersubjective relation for everyday
human experience. In Schutz’s view, this is the relation that provides the basis for
all forms of human interaction. In this part I will move from the structures and
processes that underpin the everyday world to the manner in which human
relations are played out through these structures.

The purpose of the previous part was to identify the dimensions of the
everyday world in a bid to inquire into the underlying dynamics that constitute
relations between people. This part builds on this discussion by looking specifically at human relations. I will draw out the main points of Schutz’s ideas concerning the stratified character of human relations, the significance of the intersubjective relation and the role of everyday social relations within the world of groups.

Section One: Social Stratification

Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world indicates that the structures and processes are dimensional in character. One of these dimensions is that of human relationships. For Schutz, human relations in the everyday world are stratified through particular fields of experience in which people encounter one another. It is within these fields of experience that we understand others and see others as understanding their own subjective experience (Schutz 1967: 137). Schutz identifies several strata, which constitute order in the everyday world and, as such, provide the manner in which all levels of human contact can be rendered meaningful.

According to Schutz, the first realm of social stratification is the world of directly experienced social reality. This is the world surrounding myself in the ‘here and now’. It corresponds to the world of actual reach, otherwise understood as the present. It includes others in my direct experience and takes into account their awareness of our world. For Schutz, this refers to ‘my fellow men’ [sic] who I directly experience and understand in terms of their subjective experiences (Schutz 1967: 142). As this occurs in the present, I can only experience this as a
fragment depending upon the state of my consciousness at any given moment. The second realm of social stratification is the world of contemporaries. These are people I live among. Instead of directly grasping their subjective experiences, as I do in the first realm of strata, however, I infer the subjective experiences they must be experiencing (Schutz 1967: 142). The third realm of the social world, for Schutz, is the world of predecessors or history, and the fourth realm is the world of successors (Schutz 1967: 142-143).

In Schutz’s view, the first realm of social stratification, the realm of the actual present, refers to time and space that I share with another person. This sharing is experienced as ‘flowing side by side . . . when I can at any moment look over and grasp his [sic] thoughts as they come into being . . . when we are growing older together’ (Schutz 1967: 164), this is the ‘pure we-relation’ (Schutz 1967: 164) for Schutz. It is pure because there is a mutual or reciprocal awareness of each other. In short, each person in this relationship is Thou-oriented towards the Other (Schutz 1967: 164). Schutz makes a distinction between the “basic we” relation and the ‘pure we’ relation. The “basic we” relation is the relation that is always and already given to us simply by our being born into a world of already exiting others. It involves a conscious judgement that there are others existing in the world. The “pure we” relation emphasises the presence of another. In its pure form it consists merely of ‘being intentionally directed toward the pure being-there of another alive and conscious human being’ (Schutz 1967: 164). It does not involve a conscious judgement. Rather, it relates to a prepredicative awareness of another human being.
The next stratification that Schutz identifies is the world of contemporaries. This stratifying realm is marked by a transition from direct social experiences to indirect social experiences. Another person is not directly apprehended in this realm. Instead, contemporaries are constructed through inferential and discursive knowledge that is constituted as typical of someone acting in that particular manner (Schutz 1967: 184). This can be viewed as a “they orientation”, in that people are apprehended as anonymous types (Schutz 1967: 183). In the “they orientation” one is not aware of the unique qualities of another person, thus there is no awareness of the ongoing flow of the other’s stream of consciousness (Schutz 1967: 184). When we live within a “they orientation” we experience the social world in general. In the social world in general “contemporaries” are always constituted from our stream of consciousness.

Schutz also treats predecessors as a stratifying realm. The realm of predecessors refers to previous ‘we relations’ and ‘they orientations’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 87). This is always the world of other people whose time has ended. The way in which one ‘interprets the world of predecessors is necessarily vague and tentative’ (Schutz 1967: 211) in that ‘knowledge of predecessors only comes through records and monuments’ (Schutz 1967: 209). In this realm there is no access to the stream of consciousness of any predecessor, and no possibility for future encounters. The orientation that we take up in relation to our predecessors is always passive, as it cannot be altered (Schutz 1967: 208). We can certainly be influenced by the actions of predecessors, however. The world of predecessors can have a one-sided other orientation (Schutz 1967: 210) on our
part, which may also add, in a limited manner, to our stock of knowledge of the social world.

Finally, for Schutz, the realm of successors is the world of the indeterminable and indeterminate (Schutz 1967: 214). This realm is fundamentally open and anonymous as we can only assume that there will be more people that come after ourselves. The effect of the stratifications discussed in this section can be summed up as follows. The realm of predecessors composes a world that is actualised and fixed, successors compose an uncertain and inconclusive possible future, the world of contemporaries is the probable world of typifications and the “we relation” is the world of open horizons (Schutz 1967: 214). These stratifications take into account all levels of human social life. Therefore, these stratifying realms suggest a matrix of relations that are the means through which everyday human contact is rendered meaningful.

**Section Two: The Intersubjective Social World**

Schutz’s analysis of the stratifying realms through which human relations are instituted place significance on the relevance of the “we relation”. For Schutz, this relation provides the structure for the everyday world as always an intersubjective world. As Schutz argues, ‘the everyday world is necessarily intersubjective, as it is the realm in which humans live amongst each other, influence each other and attempt to understand each other’ (Schutz 1973: 133). As the everyday world reflects the dynamics that render self awareness and the awareness of others apparent, the intersubjective relation is an integral aspect of
the everyday. According to Schutz, the everyday life world is the only site that can account for the manner in which humans ‘as finite social actors engage with other finite social actors, understand the actions of another and together form new meanings and relations in the world’ (Schutz 1973: 168).15

In Schutz’s view, the intersubjective relation is played out in the everyday world, on various levels. The first level of this relation resides in the “we-experience”. As Schutz explains, the ‘we-experience forms the basis of the self’s experience of the world in general’ (Schutz 1971: 25). However, the distinction he identifies between the “basic we relation” and the “pure we relation” is the starting point for the intersubjective relation. For Schutz, the first aspect of the intersubjective relation derives from a sharing of “the thou” orientation. This sharing indicates that another person is immediately perceivable and observable, and thus, his/her life is open to me. In other words, ‘both partners stream of consciousness flow in pure simultaneity’ (Vaitkus 1991: 79). According to Schutz, this is the basis of all sociality because this connection allows for mutual interpretation, communication and understanding. Situating the grasping of “thou” in the actual present indicates that “thou” cannot be totality contained by my stream of consciousness, ‘it transcends my own stream of consciousness’ (Schutz 1967: 167). Therefore, this suggests that we are open to others in the everyday world.

15 In Schutz’s view the everyday world is structured around this intersubjective relation. The structures and processes of the everyday world involve many aspects that transcend our experiences in the everyday world. Schutz points to the examples of seasons, family groups, aspects of physicality to suggest that all follow particular orders in which the essences of each are unknown (Schutz 1973: 331). For Schutz, this indicates that the everyday world is structured around a transcendent immanency that points to the dynamics between the known and the unknown (Schutz 1973: 26-8).
The pure we relation is, according to Schutz, truly social because it emphasises awareness and knowledge. However, this emphasis is, in the first instance, always prepredicative. As Schutz explains, the pure we relation is only possible within directly experienced social reality (Schutz 1967: 168). It is always immediate which means that it is not grasped reflectively and, as such, not brought to consciousness (Schutz 1971: 30). Further, the we relation institutes a form of experiencing oneself through another, which, for Schutz, provides the basis for genuine sharing (Schutz 1971: 3). That it provides this basis means that it constitutes the common point for the social world, in that it refers to something beyond the experience of both parties in the pure we relation.

For Schutz, the mode of contact for the pure we relation is the face to face encounter. This encounter requires that both partners share the same directly apprehended external world (Schutz 1967: 170). This sharing of a common social environment enables the constant examination of our own interpretations of it over and against others. It encourages a growth of understanding between each person in the face to face relation that derives from either the confirmation or denial of each person’s interpretation of the other’s subjective lived experience. This is because it is only in the ‘face to face encounter that I know another as a person in one unique moment of experience’ (Schutz 1967: 181). It is this layering of experiences that constitutes the world of “we”. This common environment is not the private world of each party but the shared world of “us”, and thereby affirms the intersubjective character of the everyday social world (Schutz 1967: 171).
For Schutz, genuine sharing bestows the world with its intersubjective character. As the everyday world is understood as ‘not my environment, nor your environment, nor even the two added together, it is an intersubjective world in reach of our common experience’ (Schutz 1971: 31). The intersubjective world, however, is still based on the typifying schemes specific for each partner in the face to face, but with each person’s stock of knowledge being open genuine modifications can occur (Schutz 1971: 30). As Schutz explains, ‘the typifying schemata are formal models without content and thereby deprived of their status as typifications’ (Schutz 1971: 46). In other words, the intersubjective relation, as the basis for social reality, involves both the push to know another through sharing the vivid present as well as the capacity to continually reinterpret another through the openness of the process of typification.

Schutz’s analysis of the “we relation” also suggests the possibility of different modes of this relation. As Schutz explains, ‘one does not experience all partners in we relations with the same intensity’ (Schutz 1971: 28). This marks the shift from the direct experience of another person in the face to face relation towards experiencing others in a more indirect manner. For Schutz, there are gradations between our direct experience of another and the indirect experience of others who co-exist with us but with whom we do not form face to face encounters (Schutz 1971: 37). Others, therefore, can be experienced simultaneously with oneself. However, this does not involve any form of direct connection with the experience of another. This indicates that relations between

---

16 In my view, it is in these instances that Schutz fails to adequately acknowledge the demand of the Other in the pure we relation. In so doing he fails to pay attention to the ethical character of this relationship. While Schutz’s analysis highlights the intricate nature of the relationship between self and Other in the everyday world his failure to attend to its ethical character demonstrates one of the limitations of his work.
people involve both forms of directness and immediacy as well as co-existence with others in various degrees of attachment, detachment and anonymity.

For Schutz, this move towards the indirect experience of another also marks the shift from the face to face world to the world of contemporaries. The contemporary, in Schutz’s view, refers to the ‘Other who is not given to me directly as a unique particular self’ (Schutz 1971: 41, emphasis in original). The manner in which others are experienced relies on typifications, inferences and derivations. We can only draw inferences about another by attributing typical characteristics to him or her. Therefore, our experiences of another in the realm of contemporaries are always mediated by our experiences (past, indirect and direct) as well as our stock of knowledge.

This experience of others as contemporaries is further explained through Schutz’s understanding of the “they orientation”. This orientation refers to the manner in which I experience others through an ‘objective context of meaning’ (Schutz 1971: 44). In other words, this orientation does not refer to the direct experience of another or their ongoing conscious life. Rather, this orientation, according to Schutz, refers to ‘my interpretations of the other’s experiences’ (Schutz 1971: 44). Therefore, I understand him/her ‘as a personal ideal type’ (Schutz 1971: 44, emphasis in original). The ‘they orientation’ refers to acts of thought that project constant attributes on another and disregards any variations that might occur in the life of this other person. As Schutz explains ‘the personal ideal type merely refers to, but is never identical with, a concrete Other or a plurality of Others’ (Schutz 1971: 44, emphasis in original).
This ‘they orientation’ which constitutes others through a matrix of typical experiences allows us to experience others in a subjective form. As the modes of typicality refer to an objective meaning context the meaning ascribed is translated into a subjective experience of others. People, as contemporaries, therefore, are apprehended as people like others or as people like me (Schutz 1971: 47). In short, while people are grasped as a type they are also endowed with an ongoing conscious life. However, we can only infer the conscious life of another and, as such, the contemporary remains, within varying degrees, an anonymous ideal type (Schutz 1971: 48).

Schutz further explains that relations between contemporaries involve elements of chance and probability (Schutz 1967: 202, Schutz 1973: 53, Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 84). This indicates that all parties in relations between contemporaries share the same typifying scheme. For Schutz, ‘a social relation between contemporaries consists in the subjective chance that the reciprocally ascribed typifying schemes will be used congruently by the partners’ (Schutz 1971: 54, emphasis in original). Therefore, relations between contemporaries involve a mutual dependence, which, on the one hand, enables people to engage with one another. However, on the other hand, it always takes on a form of hypothetical character (Schutz 1971: 53). In Schutz’s view, this suggests that relations between contemporaries undergo modifications and variations. However, as one is not directly experiencing the ongoing conscious life of a contemporary, such modifications will be minor. For Schutz, this entails the
addition to our ongoing stock of knowledge. It does not involve continuous modifications, as is the case in the face to face encounter.

Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world indicates that the significance of the intersubjective relation is that it renders self awareness and the awareness of others possible. His analysis points to the various levels of the intersubjective relation. In Schutz’s view, the first level begins in the “we-experience”, as this forms the basis of our experience of the world. For Schutz, the we relation is indicated in the face to face encounter. It is direct and immediate and enables genuine sharing to occur. In Schutz’s view, human relations in the everyday world can be grasped as an effect of this pure form of the “we relation”. The next level of human relations in the everyday world involves a shift from the direct face to face encounter to more indirect engagements through the realm of contemporaries. This level enables others to be experienced simultaneously with our self. These relations, however, are not direct or immediate. Experiences of others in the realms of contemporaries involve mediation through our own experiences. Therefore, people are grasped as “people like me” and people “not like me”, according to our own typifying attributes. Schutz’s view of these levels of human relations indicates that the intersubjective relation is the basis of all human relations. Thus, his analysis points to the inherent social character of the everyday world.

Section Three: Intersubjectivity and Group Dynamics
Schutz’s analysis of everyday world highlights the various degrees and levels of the intersubjective relation. The first means by which the intersubjective relation is played out in the everyday world can be seen in the pure face to face relation of a directly experienced social reality. This segment of the intersubjective relation lays the ground for the experience of awareness, in that we require another for the very experience of awareness. It is this unique moment of the actual present of the face to face relation that constitutes the world of we and us. The primary aspect of the intersubjective relation is a sense of simultaneity, in that both parties are aware of each other, together with the knowledge that each is held in similar regard (Schutz 1967: 90). The next level, as has been indicated, is the realm of contemporaries in which the other is understood through processes of typifications that rely on inference and derivation. Another level of this intersubjective relation is the realm of group dynamics. Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world also includes an inquiry into the structure of groups. This aspect of his analysis also points to the inherently social character of the everyday world.

For Schutz, the dynamics of groups is a further way in which the everyday world is rendered meaningful. In his view, the processes of the everyday world render others identifiable through reference to particular group membership, such as kinship organizational, sex and age groups (Schutz 1971: 29). Schutz explains that ‘human groups act as the taken for granted commonly shared historical sedimentation of experiences’ (Schutz 1973: 343). The intersubjective relation is constituted through group dynamics because the original we relation provides the basis for groups formation. Schutz explains that ‘everywhere we find sex groups
and age groups; more or less rigid kinship organizations . . . and hierarchies of subordination and superordination; and we also find an accepted way of life that is a conception of how to come to terms with things’ (Schutz 1971: 230).

For Schutz groups are ‘a set of common modes of typification and systems of relevance that constitute some form of common situation for the people involved’ (Schutz 1971: 25). He identifies two forms of groups in which people readily engage, existential and voluntary groups (Schutz 1971: 250). The former are groups to which I belong but over which I have no choice concerning my membership. Such groups include family, sex, race, language, and social and economic groups. Schutz explains that ‘my membership in these groups and the social roles I have to assume within them are existential elements of my situation which I have to take into account, and with which I have to come to terms’ (Schutz 1971: 250). Voluntary groups are those that I choose to join. These include friendships, intimate relationships, occupation groups, and nationality and religious groups (Schutz 1971: 251). The everyday world is comprised, therefore, of numerous groups of which an individual may be a member. (Of course, an individual may be a member of a number of groups at any one time.)

According to Schutz, groups act to standardise people through common systems of typification and relevance. This enables a common view of the world through a shared social heritage and it creates the basis for group dynamics that produce roles, positions and status for each member (Schutz 1971: 252). Schutz’s point is that groups act to equalise and homogenise the behaviour of members so that people can come to terms with the surrounding world. Standardisation,
according to Schutz, enhances all forms of interaction within groups, it ‘transforms the unique into the typical’ (Schutz 1971: 237). The effect of group structures is that the direct grasping of another in the face to face relation is covered over in a bid to render others knowable through modes of typicality. As Schutz explains ‘the everyday world is organised through human group activity’ (Schutz 1971: 251).

While the manner and function of groups are crucial in the production of the everyday world Schutz also insists that we are always situated at the intersection of several groups (Schutz 1971: 252). Groups function to equalise and standardise each of their members but our continual cross over between groups is one of the conditions for our individuality and uniqueness. Schutz’s analysis indicates that, while groups render the everyday world meaningful through standardisation, they do not turn us into carbon copies of each other. Groups function within particular systems of relevance but we also carry our specific elements of knowledge and actual interests. This makes it possible for us to respond to others in different ways.

Schutz’s analysis of human group dynamics highlights that human relations at the everyday level involve the filtering of direct experiences of the face to face relation into the margins of human experience. While, on the one hand, these direct experiences provide the basis for all human encounters, on the other hand, the unique character of each individual is often homogenised through group dynamics. Schutz’s analysis indicates, therefore, the ways in which group dynamics function in everyday life.
**Conclusion**

In this part I have identified Schutz’s view of the manner in which human relations are played out in the everyday world. I have outlined Schutz’s view of the stratified character of human relations in the everyday world, the significance of the intersubjective relation and how this relation is implicated within the everyday world of group dynamics. Therefore, this part has highlighted the dimensional character that human relations take in the everyday world. This refers to the immediate relation between self and Other in the face to face encounter, the move towards indirect experience of others through the world of contemporaries and the world of group dynamics, where the unique specificity of each of us can be covered over through the standardising practices of groups dynamics in the everyday world. Schutz’s analysis of the structure and dynamics involved in the constitution of human relations provide further indication of the inherently social character of the everyday world.

**CONCLUSION**

I have identified in this chapter the underlying dynamics of the everyday world as presented in the work of Alfred Schutz. The purpose of the chapter has been to inquire into his analysis of these underlying dynamics in a bid to grasp the manner in which human relations can be understood on an everyday level. I have also pointed to the manner in which Schutz’s phenomenological approach illustrates how the everyday world is rendered meaningful. I have highlighted two important points for the purposes of my project. First, that a phenomenological
approach provides the possibility to grasp the manner in which meaning and comprehension are constituted and second, that the everyday world has an inherently social character.

The underlying dynamics of the everyday world that have been identified reveal the conditions and characteristics that render the everyday world a coherent and concrete whole. The everyday world can be understood to revolve around a taken for granted character that is based on a common sense view of reality. The attitude that is associated with this common sense view is a natural attitude that assumes that the everyday world is real and concrete. Schutz’s analysis illustrates that underlying these conditions is a process of typicality that generalises and standardises human thought, action and behaviour such that the surrounding social world can be rendered intelligible. Therefore, this analysis has suggested that underlying the taken for granted status of the everyday world is a process of abstraction that indicates an inner differentiation in the constitution of the everyday world.

In relation to the underlying dynamics that constitute relations between people I have discussed Schutz’s view concerning the structures, process and systems that intersect to render these relations meaningful. Specifically, with respect to structures I have identified the significance of time and space, I have raised the significance of knowledge, language and communication for processes; and in the context of systems I have discussed Schutz’s emphasis on the role of the systems of relevance. Together these underlying dynamics indicate that
human relations in the everyday world revolve around the constitution of meaning and the continual revision and reinterpretation of meaning.

These dynamics indicate the dimensions involved in human relations and the stratified character of human relations in the everyday world. Relations between people differ, then, depending on the structures, processes and systems of the everyday world. The intersubjective relation is significant, in that it involves the direct immediate experience of another. Therefore, according to Schutz, this relation provides the origins of the social world in that it constitutes genuine forms of sharing with another person. In the area of human relations the intersubjective relation must be understood as being covered over in the realm of contemporaries and in the context of group dynamics.

This chapter has demonstrated that the everyday world is a world of complex relations constituted through the dynamics of consciousness and the historical and physical situations in which we are located. Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world illustrates that the everyday is both constitutive of and constituted by the dynamics that surround human existence. His analysis, therefore, demonstrates how human relations are played out on an everyday level, and thus his work points to the inherent social character of the everyday world. The importance of this chapter for my project has been highlighting the social character of the everyday world and exposing the macro structures and dimensions that render it as everyday. In the next chapter I move to the micro structures that inform relations between people. In other words, I will move into the realms of Levinas’s ethical relation.
CHAPTER TWO

LEVINAS: ON BEING ETHICAL

INTRODUCTION

Emmanuel Levinas undertook an inquiry into the meaning of ethical experience. His interest was with the manner in which ethical experience informs the existence of beings. In Levinas’s view ethical experience is not concerned with seeking a comprehensive code or universal principle that could govern actions and behaviours. Rather, it is oriented to the justification for existence. This leads Levinas to explore human experience prior to the imposition of rules or codes of conduct.

Levinas's concern with ethical experience could be understood as an effect of both his intellectual rigour and the political environment in which he was writing. The political questions that concerned him related to the treatment of marginal groups, particularly Jews, during the Second World War. Levinas, born to Jewish parents, was not incarcerated in a concentration camp during the war. However, he spent some time in a military prisoners’ camp in France. His parents and family members were killed in Eastern Europe during the war. In Levinas’s view, the totality of these experiences raised questions regarding the manner in which one nation, under the leadership of one person, could commit mass murder. These issues raised by this revolve around a discarding of moral norms during extreme situations wherein acts of violence become normal, or patriotic and discussions regarding justice and responsibility continue despite the fact that the
belief systems that sustained these terms were in disarray. Rather than looking to political institutions in his inquiry into these complex situations, Levinas preferred to undertake an inquiry into the very Being of being in a bid to grasp the essence of humane relations between people.

The intellectual questions that governed Levinas's thinking were reflected in his philosophical practice. His work acts, on the one hand, as a response to the struggle against the predominance of metaphysics and, on the other hand, as a refusal of anti-humanist orthodoxies. According to Levinas, the Western philosophical tradition is characterised by its failure to think of the ‘Other as Other’. Rather, it supports ontology and the privileging of Being. It also provides a dominant subjectivity that offers no admission of the Other, therefore occluding any possible ethical dimension (Levinas 1969: 43). For Levinas, the history of philosophy is similar to the story of Ulysees who 'through all his wanderings only returns to his native island' (Levinas, quoted in Davis 1996: 33). His point is that philosophy has always returned to familiar ground, that of Being, truth and the Same. Levinas's goal is to move philosophical questions in a different direction. Rather than viewing the Other as a problem that needs to be investigated and known, Levinas attempts to grasp what it might mean to think of the Other as Other.

This chapter serves one primary purpose, but has two subsidiary aims. The main purpose of this chapter is to identify the central characteristics of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation. The two subsidiary aims involve the practises of phenomenology. The first is to extend the discussion began in the previous
chapter in order to demonstrate how a phenomenological approach requires an inquiry into the Being of beings, rather than beginning with the assumption that beings exist. This will flesh out the way in which phenomenology provides an inquiry into human existence. The second subsidiary aim is to present Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation as an effect of phenomenological inquiry. These two aims attempt to illustrate how, from a phenomenological perspective, being ethical is an integral aspect of Being in the world.

This chapter will be presented in three parts. In the first part I will explain Levinas’s position in relation to phenomenology. The second part will discuss Levinas’s view of the ethical relation and in the third part I will draw out Levinas’s understanding of the ethical communal dimension. My aim in the first part is to expand on the basic characteristics of phenomenology identified in the first chapter, as this will point to the manner in which, for Levinas, a phenomenological approach engages with the Being of beings. The second part is discussion of the characteristics of the ethical relation in order to identify the way in which this relation emphasises people instead of rules or universal frameworks. The third part builds on Levinas’s view of the ethical relation by illustrating its communal dimensions.

As this chapter is concerned with drawing out the main characteristics of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation it is important to mention the aspects of his work that I will not be considering. Colin Davis (1996: 93) states that Levinas's work can be roughly divided into two categories: philosophical studies and essays
on religious studies, specifically Jewish subjects. Some commentators suggest Levinas’s religious themes flow into his philosophical ideas. Others argue that his work is a type of theology; whereas others, writing from a purely philosophical perspective, pay little attention to this aspect of his work. Levinas himself states clearly that he never viewed his work as theology. Rather, it was always a philosophical endeavor even if this endeavor included commenting on biblical texts (Levinas, quoted in Peperzak 1993: 210). Etienne Feron justifies his preference for Levinas the philosopher by insisting that ‘Levinas’s major works are genuinely philosophical . . . they do not in any way transpose any Jewish theology into his philosophical discourse’ (Feron, quoted in Davis 1996: 94). As my concern is with attempting to inquire into an everyday ethics that is derived from his view of the ethical relation I will not be engaging directly with his discussions of biblical or Jewish issues.

PART ONE: THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF ETHICAL EXPERIENCE

Introduction

Phenomenology, according to Levinas, is a form of investigation that is neither purely intuitive nor based on some form of dogma. Rather, it institutes a type of radical questioning of the ways in which the world is presented. Phenomenology occupies a central place in Levinas’s work, as it is through phenomenology that he identifies an ethical lacuna. My aim in this part is to illustrate Levinas’s engagement with phenomenology along with his gradual development.

17 Handleman (1992) suggests that Levinas’s religious themes feed into his philosophical ideas, while Gibbs (1992) argues that Levinas offers a type of theology.
attempts to overcome aspects of phenomenological inquiry in order to delve into the manner in which ethical experience forms part of human existence.

This part will provide a discussion of phenomenology that has been derived from the works of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. These two writers are integral to Levinas’s engagement with phenomenology. My purpose is to outline the significance of their respective positions and point to tensions and gaps in their works as identified by Levinas. This part will be presented in four sections. First, I discuss phenomenology and I present a phenomenological approach, to what I will refer to as, the Being of beings. In the second section I deal with phenomenology and Being in the world. The third section is an examination of phenomenology and the Being of the Other. Finally, I discuss phenomenology and Being towards the ethical.

The first section will extend the characteristics of phenomenology identified in the first chapter. I do this by drawing out the main characteristics of Husserl’s and Heidegger’s analyses of consciousness and intentionality. In the second section I will discuss the manner in which phenomenology engages with the intersection between Being and acting in the world. The third section presents different approaches to the Being of Others and points to the effects of these different approaches to the social world. In the final section I discuss Levinas’s early attempts to move towards the ethical relation. My intention in presenting this part is to show how Levinas’s engagement with the ideas and methods of phenomenology provided a basis for his understanding of the ethical relation.
Levinas’s engagement with phenomenology continued throughout his intellectual career. Many of his central ideas were developed in response to the ideas of both Husserl and Heidegger. Levinas acknowledges that it was through the work of Husserl that he discovered ‘the concrete meaning of the very possibility of working in philosophy’ (Levinas 1985: 30). Levinas’s first book was a response to Husserl’s ideas and many of his later works continued this engagement. While Levinas never fully abandoned Husserl’s phenomenological method, he challenged some of Husserl’s central ideas (Davis 1996: 8, Peperzak 1993: 8, Manning 1993: 3). Heidegger, as is to be expected, provided Levinas with radical transformations of important aspects of Husserl’s phenomenology. Levinas describes Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (1962) as ‘one of the greatest books in the history of philosophy’ (Levinas 1985: 37). Certainly, Levinas’s early writings did appear to be more aligned with Heidegger’s particular ontology (Peperzak 1993:12). In Levinas’s account Heidegger’s works provided insights crucial to modern philosophy, especially those that derive from his meditation on Being (Davis 1996: 16). Levinas’s engagement with Heidegger is more restrained and cautious, however, due to the latter’s involvement with the Nazis during the 1930’s. Levinas spent some twenty-five years working through Husserl’s and Heidegger’s texts and ideas before he developed his own ‘metaphysics’. For it is was these ideas that led him to seek to express that movement in thought that goes beyond the realm of Being, and which, for Levinas, institutes radical human ethical experience.

In the previous chapter I used Schutz’s work to discuss the abstention from positing judgements that is required within a phenomenological perspective.
Schutz’s work suggests that it is through phenomenology that the linkages between consciousness, meaning and action can be explored. Schutz’s work focuses much more, however, on the macro structures of the everyday world. His main concern is to highlight how the everyday world is constituted as everyday. His work does not necessarily seek a description and structural analysis of the intricate nature of consciousness. These analyses are developed in the works of Husserl and Heidegger.

*Husserl: the Being of Consciousness*

As has been previously discussed, phenomenology enables reflection on what is taken to be natural through questioning not only ‘what is’ but more importantly ‘how is what is and what does it mean that it is’ (Levinas 1985: 30). The phenomenological attitude begins with this radical reflection aimed at the ‘natural attitude’. The natural attitude describes our pre-theoretical immersion in the familiar and everyday world as the reality of our intentional lives (Husserl 1967: 105). It is the taken for granted or unnoticed aspects of everyday life that make up this natural attitude. In this attitude a human individual is assumed to be a living being, one who thinks, feels and acts. In the natural attitude another person does not question the relationship between my physical body and mental processes. I do not question the way I experience the world. The natural attitude presumes that the world exists independent of consciousness, that there is a world ‘out there’ and that my consciousness exists separately from this external world. According to Husserl, such thinking is naïve and cannot form the basis of any philosophical endeavour. For Husserl, what is required is a structural analysis of
consciousness in order to demonstrate the relatedness of objects or matters in the world and my perception of them in consciousness.

The phenomenological understanding of consciousness is derived through a particular method that Husserl terms the phenomenological reduction or epoché. This literally means ‘abstention’ (Husserl 1973: 72). This method owes some of its insight to Descartes methodological doubt. In brief, Descartes insisted that nothing but the existence of thought itself is certain, because everything else could be called into question or doubted. In other words, after subjecting everything he knew, or experienced to doubt, Descartes was left with doubt itself, as the only thing that could not be doubted was doubt. Descartes described that which doubted as the ego. Hence, the dictum “I think, therefore I am”.

Husserl’s phenomenology, however, unlike Descartes’, does not encourage us to doubt the existence of everything. Rather, Husserl encourages us to refrain from affirming or positing the existence of the objects of consciousness. In other words, the phenomenologist’s abstention refrains from positing the existence of the natural world. The phenomenological epoch involved in the ‘return to things themselves’ requires suspending belief in the independence of the very things to which it is attempting to return. This bracketing of belief of the ‘in–itself’ of things institutes a series of reductions that is integral to phenomenology. These reductions are vital to phenomenology because they

\[18\text{ It is important to point to the distinction between phenomenology and phenomenalism. Phenomenalism holds that there is only access to phenomena, not to real things. Therefore, phenomenalism does not follow the idea that ‘things in themselves can be returned to’. Husserl maintains that everything must be traced back to what is given in direct experience. There is, in phenomenology, overlap between consciousness and reality and reality impinges on consciousness (Smith 1995: 83).]
illustrate the particular means used to ‘return to things themselves’ and ensure that phenomenology stays within the realms of certainty (Manning 1993: 19). Husserl states that to ‘view this method of reduction as unnecessary would destroy the very essence of [my] work’ (Husserl 1931: 23).

The series of reductions begins with what Husserl termed the eidetic reduction. This reduces consciousness of something to how it is perceived as an essence of something, or in short, to how our minds construct it as something (Husserl 1982: 61). Husserl uses the example of a tree. He posits it not as a thing in nature, as its existence cannot be proved as one could be dreaming or hallucinating. Rather, there is the essence of the tree, or the concept of ‘tree’ that is in our minds (Husserl 1982: 216). By bracketing the empirical inconsistencies that are associated with “things” Husserl’s phenomenological method posits a direct relationship between human thought and the idea of reality.

The next reduction Husserl called the phenomenological epoch. Bracketing ‘things-in-themselves’ reveals not only the mind’s construction of things but also, according to Husserl, ‘pure consciousness’ or what he terms the “transcendental ego”. This ego is integral to human experience, not because it is part of the empirical or objective world, but because it actually constitutes reality (Husserl 1982: 48). The phenomenological method of reduction is not an attempt to subtract the “natural attitude” from some definite consciousness, nor is it a denial of the objective world. Rather, bracketing ontological judgements concerning entities and experiences of the world reveals the very nature of consciousness.
Consciousness in itself has a being of its own which in its absolute uniqueness of nature remains unaffected by the phenomenological disconnection. It therefore remains over as a phenomenological residuum, as a region of Being which is in principle unique, and can become in fact the field of a new science – the science of phenomenology (Husserl 1982: 65-6).

The phenomenological epoch provides an understanding of consciousness as the Being that remains as residue after a belief in the factual character of the world has been suspended. For Husserl, it is upon this region that all others depend (Husserl 1931: 154). Accordingly, consciousness is taken to be primary and absolute and the transcendental ego is understood as the region of absolute Being. It is the region that is the bearer of both a sense of the world and a field of experience in the world. ‘It is the region in which I gain myself as a pure ego’ (Ricoeur 1967: 88). It is the region that constitutes the Being of beings.

This analysis suggests that, within phenomenology, consciousness can be understood as the basis for the Being of beings. All subsequent acts of consciousness are taken to be modifications of this original region. For Husserl, these acts involve an actual mental occurrence or episode of perceiving, thinking, desiring, wishing, recollecting and imagining (Husserl 1933: 104). However, these acts do not neatly divide into singular or unitary acts. Consciousness is complicated and interwoven. It is like a field with an open or unlimited horizon, as every situation of thought, perception, will or imagination implies the possibility of continuing to act (Ricouer 1967: 97). Consciousness is not self-
enclosed. It is open to contact with the world. It is always directed outside itself to the world (Howells 1999: 6) or as Husserl states, ‘it is a bursting out towards the world’ (Husserl 1933: 129).

Consciousness is characterised by this movement towards something ‘consciousness is always consciousness of . . .’ (Fuchs 1976: 12). This means that every act of consciousness has an object, something that is immediately experienced. This does not necessarily require a spatio-temporal ‘thing’, but it does involve a turning towards something. For Husserl, there are different types of objects and different acts of consciousness, however, an object is always an effect of an act of consciousness. This characteristic of consciousness as ‘directing itself towards something’ is the essential structure of mental experience. Husserl terms this intentionality.

Intentionality, according to Husserl, fills out the structure of consciousness. It refers to consciousness of something as having two poles, the noetic or subject pole and the noematic or object pole. The noetic phase refers the acts of consciousness, while the noematic names the objects of consciousness (Smith 1995:110). The object of consciousness is always a sense, a meaning, something intended, and the acts of consciousness are what make this meaning present (Husserl 1933: 257). In short, every intended object of consciousness carries with it the act of intending. This illustrates that what is grasped as an object in consciousness also contains the intentional act involved in this grasping. For example, when I think about or remember another person, the noesis can be understood to refer to the remembering and the noema to the person as
remembered. For Husserl, this reflects the fact that the world exists as phenomena that are given meaning as they appear to consciousness (Husserl 1931: 147).

Heidegger and the Being of Beings

Heidegger draws from Husserl’s phenomenology in his investigation of the meaning of existence, but his focus is not on the relations between consciousness and objects. Rather, his concern is with the meaning of Being. He makes this point very clear in the introduction to Being and Time (1962) when he writes that ‘it is one thing to tell about entities . . . but it is quite another to grasp entities in their Being’ (Heidegger 1962: 63). One Heideggerian commentator, Quentin Lauer, maintains that Heidegger opposed Husserl in that he believed that ‘consciousness does not constitute Being, but is simply the means Being has to reveal itself. Thus, to speak of Being is to speak of an activity whereby what is, reveals itself to and in consciousness’ (Lauer 1958: 150). Heidegger makes a careful distinction, therefore, between Being and the Being of what is. He is concerned with the meaning of existence. He is concerned with the ways in which existence is revealed and how finite and historical beings, such as humans, come to understand existence (Davis 1996: 14).

By placing the search for the meaning of Being at the centre of phenomenology, rather than bracketing lived experience, Heidegger raises questions about Being that do not rely on traditional understandings of being. For Heidegger, traditional understandings posit that Being is derived from the existence of things (Heidegger 1962: 22), whereas, for him, Being becomes the
‘appearing of what appears’ (Critchley 2000: 2). Heidegger takes phenomenology to be a method of grasping things in their being. Phenomenology provides the means ‘to let that which shows itself be seen by itself’ (Heidegger 1962: 58).

While this appears similar to Husserl’s ‘return to the things themselves’ the difference between them lies in Heidegger’s desire not to consider the manner in which things are constituted in consciousness. Instead, his aim is to consider ‘things as they actually are in their Being’ (Heidegger 1962: 58).

Heidegger’s analysis of Being in the world can be understood to provide a reinterpretation of intentionality. Heidegger supports Husserl’s understanding of intentionality as an essential structure of mental experience but rejects his views as to where the intentional aspect of consciousness lies. For Husserl, the fundamental quality of intentionality resides in the contemplative actuality of consciousness (Critchley 2000 :2). For Heidegger, intentionality is not ‘divorced from the things themselves but is had there, outside and alongside things’ (Heidegger 1962: 64). This outside and alongside of things is the process, or event, through which existence, or Being, reveals itself and is comprehended. Heidegger terms this Dasein, as in Da - sein, ‘there- to be’, or Being-there. According to Heidegger, Being is a definite characteristic of Dasein and Dasein is necessary for any comprehension of Being, yet Being pre-exists Dasein (Heidegger 1962: 32). The implications of Heidegger’s analysis of Being and Dasein suggest that Being is always there and that beings can be understood to emerge out of Being.
Several implications can be drawn from Heidegger’s analysis of Being and Dasein. First, situating Dasein as the point through which Being comes to be known, indicates that existence is always constituted by the fact that it is already engaged in time and history. In other words, there is no space outside time and history from which Being emerges. According to Heidegger, Being gives itself over to Dasein in comprehension and is then thrown into an already existing world (Heidegger 1962: 219). Dasein, as the event of existence, reflects the fact that situatedness is the inescapable condition of Being. Heidegger’s analysis treats temporality and historicity as inextricably tied to Being. In his analyses Dasein replaces consciousness as the foundation upon which meaning and human existence is based.

Heidegger’s analysis of Being also opens up the possibility of consciousness encountering something other than itself. This is of prime importance to Levinas because it is through such an encounter that he is able to develop his idea of ethical experience. It is Heidegger’s analysis of Being that, for Levinas, shows clearly that Being exists before the existence of Dasein. In other words, that there is some impersonal and anonymous Being from which beings emerge. For Heidegger, attention must be directed to the nature of this anonymous Being that yields to Dasein’s characteristic of ‘thrownness – geworfenheit’ (Heidegger 1962: 219). Levinas, on the other hand, is concerned with the fundamental question of the emergence of beings out of Being. Therefore, Levinas draws from his reading of Heidegger’s work the question ‘what is the meaning of the fact that in Being there are beings?’ (Levinas 1978: 101).
Heidegger’s analysis of the Being of beings can be understood to extend Husserl’s analysis by emphasising the significance of situatedness in the world. As the fundamental characteristic of Dasein is ‘being in the world’, Heidegger’s analysis leads to the view that human being, or the self, is implanted in the world. Dasein is the active ingredient as it propels the self into the world to actualise its own potentialities (Heidegger 1962: 8.). This process is one of ‘ecstasy’, taken from the Greek as displacement. One is displaced from Being and ‘given over’ to being (Heidegger, quoted in Haar 1993: 149). The emergent human being actualises itself through its situatedness in the physical world. Heidegger’s analysis suggests that this relationship between Being and the world is not a matter of personal choice. One does not choose to be ‘thrown’ into the world, nor is this only an occasional occurrence. Rather, to be at all means that I am in the world and it is a world that pre-exists myself. As Heidegger states ‘Dasein is never ‘proximally’ an entity free from Being-in . . . which sometimes takes the inclination to take up a relationship toward the world. Taking up relationships toward the world is only possible because Dasein, as being in the world, is as it is’ (Heidegger 1962:10).

Heidegger provides an analysis of being-in-the-world that can be understood to focus attention on everyday activities. Heidegger concentrates on the embodied quality of human life. He suggests that ‘the human body is something essentially other than an animal organism’ (Heidegger 1978: 204). Heidegger also argues that daily activities have always to do with something,
accomplishing something, making use of something, discussing, considering and producing something. All of these are ways of being in the world (Heidegger 1962: 90). Dasein also encounters the world in the form or manner of things and objects. My self’s immersion in the world is, therefore, cemented through the relationship between Dasein and the external world in which I am situated.

For Heidegger being in the world involves both a ‘presentness-at-hand’ and a ‘readiness-to-hand’, wherein presentness involves an emphasis on looking and readiness emphasises doing (Heidegger 1962: 97). The distinction, according to Heidegger, is that presentness is speculative and, therefore, cannot add to an understanding of human being. On the other hand, ‘readiness-to-hand’ illustrates the way that Dasein reaches out to the world and actively constitutes the being of self. Heidegger uses the example of hammering to explain his point.

The process of hammering does not simply have knowledge about the hammer’s character as a tool, but it has appropriated this tool in a way, which could not possibly be more suitable. In dealings such as this, where something is put to use, our concern subordinates itself to the in-order-to, which is constitutive for the tool we are employing at the time. 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 (Heidegger 1962: 103).

In Heidegger’s phenomenological analysis of being in the world, the Being of human being precedes any kind of objectifying knowledge and representation. His analysis illustrates the interwoven nature of human being, in that all beings are continually caught in the movement towards the coming into being of all phenomena as well as the comprehension of our being.
Husserl and The Being of Others

As was evident from Schutz’s work, phenomenology also provides a way to consider the individual and the social world. Both Husserl and Heidegger develop their respective positions in relation to the emergence of ‘other selves’. According to Husserl, the self is that which is when all the phenomenological reductions have taken place. By executing a particular type of reduction, that is a bracketing of all empirical activities associated with other minds or consciousness, the universe is reduced to what Husserl terms the ‘sphere of ownness, to my concrete being as a monad’ (Husserl 1967: 96). This suggests that meeting others can only be intentionally constituted within the self. The problem for Husserl is twofold. First, to explain the very notion of other selves as both object and subject, and second, to explain how these other selves can actually meet in a social world.

Husserl’s solution is to single out one unique object within the sphere of ownness, that is ‘my body as an animate organism. It is different because, in accord with my experience of it I can ascribe fields of sensation to it’ (Husserl 1967: 97). The transcendental ego possesses a physical body, which brings it in contact with the world and in contact with other physical bodies. According to Husserl, other bodies engage in ‘continually harmonious behaviour’ and ‘I recognise this as familiar from my own experience of myself’ (Husserl 1967: 108-110). This indicates that recognition, for Husserl, is based on similarity. He asserts that this ‘familiarity is more like a “mirroring” not the same as myself, as the other body always appears as there, whereas my body is always here’ (Husserl
1967: 115-116, emphasis in original) but familiar from experience. This experience of familiarity does not reveal the transcendental ego of the other. Rather, I acknowledge it because of its similarity. I acknowledge it as ‘alter ego’ (Husserl 1967: 94). According to Husserl, this experience of familiarity implies a sense of belonging to the same world, to the same systems but these are purely differentiated by the ‘here’ and ‘there’ (Husserl 1967: 123). For Husserl, the social relation is based on empathy and reciprocal recognition. The Other is never fully present to the self, as it is always ‘there’, it is drawn in and known because it is a reflection of the self. 19

Heidegger and the Being of Others

Heidegger presents a different approach to an understanding of the Being of others from that presented by Husserl. For Heidegger, the world that Dasein is thrown into is a world that always and already is shared with others. Heidegger is not faced with the problems of the solipsistic ego encountered by Husserl. Understanding Dasein as being in the world clarifies that ‘a bare subject without a world never ‘is’ proximally from the beginning, nor is it ever given. And so in the end an isolated ‘I’ without others is just as far from being proximally given’ (Heidegger 1962: 116). Heidegger rejects Husserl’s concept of ‘empathy and reciprocal recognition’ as the basis of the social relation. Rather, he provides a view of sociality that is more fundamental than this. He states that it is ‘only on the basis of being in the world with others that empathy becomes possible’ (Heidegger 1962: 162).

19 Schutz disagrees with Husserl’s analysis of the social relation and his emphasis on empathy and reciprocal recognition. See Schutz (1970: 82-84).
Heidegger’s account of the social relation relies on the fact that Dasein is not merely being in the world but being in the world with others. He states ‘the world of Dasein is a with-world. Being-in is Being-with others’ (Heidegger 1962: 118). Insisting that Dasein is ‘Being-with’ allows Hiedegger to argue that any understanding of being implies an understanding of others. Therefore, ‘Dasein is essentially for the sake of others’ (Heidegger 1962: 160). Heidegger does not believe that we derive this understanding of others from empirical interactions. Rather, it functions as a ‘primordially existential kind of being’ (Heidegger 1962: 163). This means that it is a mode of knowing that occurs irrespective of whether others are present. This form of knowing Heidegger likens to care or concern that can manifest itself in both positive and negative ways. Dasein, therefore, can ‘take hold of this concern, with, for or against others’ (Heidegger 1962: 163).

Heidegger’s treatment of the self in the context of the social relation suggests a negative view of sociality. As each individual’s Dasein is thrown amongst already existing others our inherent capacity of ‘being-with’ can lead us to become lost in the social collective (Manning 1993: 50). For Heidegger, Dasein is absorbed in the communal world in an attempt to flee from its own potential (Heidegger 1962: 229). This represents a “fallenness” into the “they-self” in which we come not to be ourselves. Rather, we come to ‘exist in reference to and in respect of others’ (Heidegger 1962: 163). This form of being is inauthentic, for Heidegger, as the fact that Dasein’s being is interpreted by the “they” means that it does not understand its own being correctly (Heidegger 1962: 166). The authentic form of being requires a movement through the “they”, or, as Heidegger says, ‘an existential modification of the they’ (Heidegger 1962: 168). This means
that I cannot completely detach myself from the “they”. Rather, through a combined understanding of my they-self and a modified understanding of myself, my authentic self is actualised. For Heidegger, this can only be achieved through solitude and self-reflection. Without a withdrawal from the “they”, there is only commonality, and herd-like existence. This can lead to alienation and anonymity. This following quotation from Heidegger further explains this point.

*Dasein* knows what it is itself capable of, inasmuch as it has either projected itself upon possibilities of its own or has been so absorbed in the “they” that it has let such possibilities be presented to it by the way in which the “they” has publicly interpreted things. The presenting of these possibilities, however, is made possible existentially through the fact that *Dasein* as a Being-With, which understands, can listen to others. Losing itself in the publicness and idle talk of the “they” it fails to hear its own Self in listening to the they-self

(Heidegger 1962: 315).

In Heidegger’s account of Being and the social relation, the world of others is posed as a problem, or negative situation state, that we must work through to achieve our understanding of our own being. Insisting that the comprehension of our Being is central to understanding the meaning of being and that this comprehension can only be derived through solitude implies, Heidegger argues, that the individual has a certain priority over the collective. As Manning points out, ‘Heidegger sees the role of the social dimension as one of assisting or hindering *Dasein* in its solitary task of actualising its own potential’ (Manning 1993: 52). While Heidegger’s analysis situates us in a world with others, it denies a possible existence outside the understanding and comprehension that is taken up in the world. Levinas’s concern regarding Heidegger’s treatment of the social world is that human interaction appears to preform his ontological inquiry. Levinas’s questions include: ‘is the relation of man [sic] to Being strictly
ontology; does ontology exhaust the possibilities of relationship with Being, or is there something which exceeds ontology?’ (Levinas, quoted in Davis 1996: 13).

For Levinas, Heidegger’s analysis of understanding and comprehension does not allow for the possibility that human beings can present themselves as they are. This is due to Heidegger’s insistence that the analysis of Dasein begins at the point where Dasein is always already being-with. This is a point prior to individuation, or the point of thrownness. The consequence of Heidegger’s analysis of Dasein is that any thought concerning the intersubjective relation and sociality is always secondary and derivative of the primordial state of being-in-the-world. In other words, other people are reduced to that which they are not. Levinas acknowledges Heidegger’s ontological project, however, he moves in a different direction.

If in the beginning our reflections are in large measure inspired by the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, where we find the concept of ontology and the relationship which man [sic] sustains with Being, they are also governed by a profound need to leave the climate of that philosophy, and by the conviction that we cannot leave it for a philosophy that would be pre-Heideggerian

(Levinas 1978: 19).

*Levinas and Phenomenology: the Movement towards Being Ethical*

Phenomenology provides Levinas with an authentic spiritual life because it identifies the capacity of consciousness to freely reflect upon itself. It is through such reflection that, according to Levinas, we are ultimately free, as we are not
tied into a continual search for the objective world out there. For this reason Levinas understands phenomenology as a philosophy of freedom.

The philosophy of Husserl is ultimately a philosophy of freedom, of a freedom which is realised as consciousness and is defined by it; of a freedom which does not only characterise that activity of a being, but which is posited before being and by relation to which being is constituted

(Levinas, quoted in Davis 1996: 13).

Levinas raises two main areas of concern, however, regarding Husserl’s understanding of the structure and function of consciousness. First, Levinas argues that Husserlian phenomenology is intellectualist (Levinas 1973: 94). This means that it emphasises the relationship between human being and the ‘reality’ that is constituted in consciousness. In Levinas’s reading, this emphasis of Husserl’s analysis prevents him from understanding the fullness of human being because it limits an inquiry into the meaning of human reality and Being. For Levinas, what is required is an analysis that takes into account not only the relation between the cognitive aspects of human life and consciousness but also includes a focus on the historicity and temporality of human beings. For Levinas, ‘philosophy seems, in this conception as independent of the historical situation of man [sic]’ (Levinas 1973: 220).

The other concern that Levinas raises with respect to Husserl’s phenomenology relates to the question of the existence of other minds (Levinas 1969: 108). In Levinas’s reading of Husserl, the world is rendered meaningful through the intentional characteristics of consciousness and the world can only ever be encountered as already constituted by and within that very consciousness (Levinas 1973: 214). There is no way for consciousness to encounter anything
other than itself because the external world is, in Levinas’s reading of Husserl, a product of its own intentionality. These concerns occupy many of Levinas’s early works, though he acknowledges that what is significant in Husserl’s phenomenology is that, by revealing consciousness as absolute, there is ‘for the first time the possibility of passing from and through the theory of knowledge to the theory of Being’ (Levinas 1973: 37).

In relation to Heidegger’s analysis of Being in the world, Levinas insists that ontology is not first philosophy (Levinas 1969: 304). This does not imply that Levinas rejects Heidegger’s or Husserl’s works. Rather, Levinas directs himself to those aspects of being that he feels they interpreted incorrectly or wrongly neglected. Levinas’s view of the ethical relation is a culmination of this endeavour. For Levinas, ethics has priority over ontology because ethics is not a branch of philosophy, but is first philosophy (Levinas 1969: 303). As Harold Durfee points out, Levinas manages this while still speaking from within the phenomenological movement (Durfee 1987: 213).

*Levinas: On the Being of Beings*

Levinas’s different interpretation of the Being of beings begins with a reinterpretation of the role of intentionality for consciousness. Levinas’s concern is that, if meaning is given in consciousness, consciousness cannot experience something that it did not already contain (Levinas 1978: 143). To resolve the problem that derives from intentionality as taken to be both an act of consciousness and its relationship to objects in the world, Levinas proposes that
consciousness is not an act that occurs outside of, or is separate from the world, but rather it is part of the world. Looking at Husserl’s understanding of intentionality and consciousness through the lens of Heidegger’s work, Levinas is able to reinterpret the intentional capacity of consciousness. It changes from something that proclaims into a process of interestedness, or continual interchange. Consciousness, therefore, encounters the world as a mystery, as open to different perceptions (Levinas, quoted in Davis 1996: 21). Reinterpreting intentionality as interestedness allows Levinas to interrupt the assumption that consciousness is the means through which the meaning of Being can be understood.

The second aspect of Being that Levinas reinterprets relates to Heidegger’s account of Being and Dasein. As was previously pointed out, Heidegger insists that one of the fundamental characteristics of Dasein is my capacity to flee from my own Being and lose myself in the inauthentic sociality of the ‘they’. Levinas agrees that there is a fundamental characteristic of human being that requires it to escape Being. However, for Levinas, this escape is not a movement through the inauthentic ‘they’ to the more authentic ‘self’. Rather, the self flees itself due to what it actually is, a weight or heaviness that enchains the self to itself. ‘It is exactly that there is weight in Being that the escape turns away’ (1978: 76). Prior to cognition of the self as a being separate from being in general, for Levinas, is a feeling, or sensibility, indicated as a weight. Levinas counters Heidegger’s claim that the beginnings of the emerging self are active. He suggests that the self is constituted through a passivity, as we need to the accept weight of Being before we can move beyond it.
Levinas reinterprets Heidegger’s understanding of Being and Dasein to suggest that, instead of ‘thrownness’, there is simply a ‘shapeless something that murmurs in the depths of nothingness’ (Levinas 1978: 67). Levinas chooses the term *il y a* (there is) to denote this impersonal Being that is prior to Dasein’s encounter with Being. The *il y a* is not something that can be identified. It refers to phrases such as it is raining, it is dark, or it is hot (Levinas 1978: 10) in which the ‘it’ refers to no identifiable subject. Levinas uses the image of darkness to express this point. In the darkness of night, lying awake, unable to sleep, one hears some something, but cannot identify it. It is similar to the silence that is heard when there is nothing (Levinas 1978: 58).

“There is”, in general, without it mattering what there is, without our being able to fix a substance to this term. “There is” is an impersonal form, like in it rains, or it is warm. Its anonymity is essential. The mind does not find itself faced with an apprehended exterior. The exterior . . . remains uncorrelated with an interior. It is no longer given. It is no longer a world. What we call the I is itself submerged by the night; invaded, depersonalised, stifled by it. The disappearance of all things and of the I leaves what cannot disappear, the sheer fact of being in which one participates . . . anonymously (Levinas 1978: 58).

The *il y a* is not a part of Being that gives itself over to Dasein and comprehension. It is, rather, constant and anonymous.

*Being and the Self*

The anonymity of the *il y a* suggests to Levinas that the comprehension of Being involves a form of separation. Separation, for Levinas, signifies an
acceptance of the weight of Being and the manifestation of human consciousness. For Levinas, separation is the awakening of consciousness, the ‘very upsurge of consciousness against the amorphous il y a’ (Levinas 1978: 35). The self emerges through separation from the il y a, not through the ecstatic form of displacement that Heidegger describes. Levinas’s account of the emergence of the self implies the existence of a self in the world that is separated from the world, (Levinas 1978: 42) and is always won through a struggle away from the anonymous weight of Being.

Levinas’s account of the emergence of a human being relating to the world “across a distance” implies effort, or work, on the part of this being to emerge. Human beings must work not only against the weight of Being, but also against themselves. Human beings must take up the weight of and responsibility for their own being (Levinas 1978: 42). This effort, Levinas insists, does not entail a fall, as Heidegger suggests. That being emerges out of Being means that there is no falling, for Levinas, only work and effort. Levinas rejects Heidegger’s view that the basic state of human being is fallenness and inauthenticity. Instead, Levinas posits a type of ‘sincerity’ that is found in the commonplace activities of daily life.

The ontological adventure of the world is an episode which, far from deserving to be called a fall, has its own equilibrium, harmony, and positive function: the possibility of extracting oneself from anonymous being. At the very moment when the world seems to break up we still take it seriously and still perform reasonable acts and undertakings; . . . To call it everyday and condemn it as inauthentic is to fail to recognise the sincerity of hunger and thirst

(Levinas 1978: 45).
Levinas’s contention that the basic state of human being is one of sincerity leads him to a different interpretation of sociality from Heidegger. For Levinas, sociality is the space where the self encounters and is encountered by the Other. It is the space in which a being first encounters another being in a bid to ‘uncover the fearful face-to-face situation of a relationship without intermediary, without mediation’ (Levinas 1978: 144). Levinas also rejects Heidegger’s understanding of solitude and sociality. For Levinas, solitude is universal, not individual. Solitude does not summons the individual back from the inauthentic they-self. The Other does not bring solitude to the self, as the self is solitary due to the weight of work required for existence. Levinas explains, ‘I am not the Other. I am all alone’ (Levinas 1978: 42). Thus, ‘the self is absolutely unique’ (Levinas 1969: 118). Solitude, for Levinas, is not something that one moves toward, as in Heidegger, but something one moves away from. It is in this movement that Levinas locates the ethical relation.

For Levinas, the Being of the Other is revealed as a fundamental mystery, in that the Other is always seen across a distance. Focusing on the social relation itself, rather than the role the social relation plays in the “drama of being”, leads Levinas to argue that any pre-understanding of the Other is a reflection of what is already known. For Levinas, this distance between myself and the Other suggests that ‘the Other as Other is more than just an alter ego: The Other is what I myself am not’ (Levinas 1978: 83). In Levinas’s account, ‘the relation with the Other is a
relationship with a Mystery. The Other’s entire being is constituted by its exteriority, or rather by its alterity’ (Levinas 1978: 75-6). Accordingly, for Levinas, the encounter with the Other is the place to begin an analysis of the very meaning of human being.

**Conclusion**

Levinas’s engagement with phenomenology led him to develop his own understanding of the manner in which people come in contact. Levinas spent many years working through Husserl’s and Heidegger’s works and, while there are those who consider he has misinterpreted or misunderstood their respective positions²⁰, few would argue that Levinas has not drawn on the insights of his former teachers. His engagement with Husserl’s and Heidegger’s views of consciousness and intentionality led him to rework Heidegger’s concept of Dasein and being in the world, and to challenge Heidegger’s view of the self as initially inauthentic. Inspired by Husserl and Heidegger, Levinas initiated an understanding of the social relation that suggested the possibility of preserving the independence of both the self and the Other while still understanding them as existing in relation to one another. In the next part these points will be examined in order to show how Levinas develops his view of the ethical relation.

---

²⁰ See for example, Gans (1972), Derrida, (1964), Keyes (1972) and Moran, (2002).
PART TWO: THE HUMAN FACE OF ETHICS

Introduction

This part moves towards an identification of the characteristics of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation. This relation, according to Levinas, resides at the most basic level of human contact, that is, in the simple facing of another human being. While ethics, in general, can be understood as being concerned with people, Levinas’s view of the ethical relation leads him to focus on the way in which facing another human being always carries a sense of an ethical relation. As this ethical relation is always situated between people it provides the possibility for an ethics that emerges in concert with others, rather than an ethics that is situated at a distance from people.

This part will provide an account of Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation. I will present this in two sections. In the first section I will discuss Levinas’s understanding of ethical subjectivity. In the second section I will draw out Levinas’s view of the ethical intersubjective relation. The aim of the first section is to “flesh out” Levinas’s view of subjectivity in order to emphasise the manner in which the subject, or self, can be grasped as both independent and open. The aim of the second section is to draw out the manner in which the Other can remain Other. This part, therefore, is an attempt to outline how being in the world always carries the conditions of possibility for Levinas’s ethical relation.
As this part is an attempt to draw out the main characteristics of Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation, it functions, on one level, as a description of Levinas’s work. This is integral to my overall project, as I am attempting to develop an everyday ethics that is derived from this relation. Further to this, as Levinas’s ethical relation attempts to focus on people and as the form of ethics that I am attempting to develop begins with the significance of people, this part will indicate the manner in which Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation shifts ethics away from a preoccupation with rules and universal frameworks.

Section One: Ethical Subjectivity

To develop an understanding of ethical experience as the source of contact between people, Levinas requires that the subject is understood as separate and self-sufficient, but still open. While Levinas presents his work as a defence of subjectivity (Levinas 1969: 26, 1981:127), he is not defending the assumption of an autonomous subject. Levinas supports those who argue that subjects are determined, in part, by the structures in which they are inserted. However, he also argues that to declare ‘the death of the subject’ negates the significance of the demand of the Other (Levinas 1981: 127). Indeed, subjectivity is integral to Levinas’s work. Beginning with his description of the emergent subject out of the anonymous il y a, and continually developed throughout his writing, Levinas seeks a way to view the subject as unique, receptive and free.

Subject As Subject
Levinas founds his analysis of subjectivity on the concept of infinity. In so doing he gestures toward Descartes meditation on the idea of the infinite (Descartes 1970: 85). In short, Descartes argues that subjects cannot be the source of ideas that are greater than themselves. According to Descartes, the idea of infinity is beyond the capacity of a finite subject, therefore, this idea must have been come from some truly infinite substance (Descrates, quoted in Peperzak 1993: 57). Levinas takes this to suggest that there is something beyond knowing. For it points to the fact that there is always something that exceeds what is known, ‘there is an overflow of the idea’ (Levinas 1969: 46). The effect of this, according to Levinas, is that the subject can no longer be understood as purely interior to itself. This does not mean, however, that it is defined through its relation to some externality. Rather, the subject is contingent and autarchic. Levinas argues that ‘Descartes, better than an idealist or a realist, discovers a relation with a total alterity irreducible to interiority, which nevertheless does not do violence to interiority - a receptivity without passivity, a relation between freedoms’ (Levinas 1969: 211).

As Levinas founds his description of the subject on infinity he avoids conceiving of the self in terms of difference from, or opposition to, the Other. To simply posit the self and the Other as different denies the alterity of each and implies that there is a neutral and objective standpoint from which all qualities can be observed and compared. To think in terms of some opposition between self and Other would only provide a definition of one in relation to the other. This would simply perpetuate the tradition of Western thought, thereby instituting the
same totality. ‘The identification of the same is not the void of a tautology nor a
dialectical opposition to the Other, . . . if the same would establish its identity by
simple opposition to the Other, it would already be a part of a totality
encompassing the same and the Other’ (Levinas 1969: 38, emphasis in original).
Instead, for Levinas, the self is separate because there is an absolute distance that
separates the same and the Other (Levinas 1969: 36)

Levinas develops an understanding of the subject, or self, as separate and
open by re-working Husserl’s view of the intentional character of consciousness
and Heidegger’s ontological view of being-in-the-world. In Levinas’s view, the
intentional characteristics of consciousness are always constituted by the material
conditions of existence. In response to Heidegger’s, more utilitarian, view of
selfhood, Levinas focuses on sensory elements of human life. Life, for Levinas, is
‘love of life’ (Levinas 1969: 112). This derives from our immersion in the
activities of living. Rather than understanding subjectivity in terms of the
instrumental value of tools, as Heidegger does, Levinas prefers to characterise
selfhood in terms of ‘sentience, happiness, enjoyment and nourishment’ (Levinas
1969: 112-114). Levinas stresses the physicality of human existence, and believes
that this requires recognition of the fact that Being in the world contains the
conditions of possibility for being ethical.

The self encounters the world, according to Levinas, through immersion in
the elements. ‘We live from food, soup, air, light, spectacles, work etc . . . these
are not objects of representations. We live from them’ (Levinas 1969:110).
Needs, in Levinas’s reading, are not to be interpreted negatively. On the contrary,
being able to satisfy our needs signifies both our independence as subjects and illustrates the capacity of the self to find nourishment, happiness and enjoyment. This reflects the physicality, or concreteness, of being human. This is a process in which the self ‘takes in the other of life’ (Levinas 1969: 115) and appropriates it for itself. This ‘living from . . . is the dependency that turns into sovereignty, into happiness’ (Levinas 1969: 114, emphasis in original), therein confirming the sovereign subject and its egocentrism. The world is not considered to be a distorting influence upon a naïve subject. Rather, in Levinas’s Eden, the subject is charmed by what it consumes.

The I is, to be sure, happiness, presence at home with itself. But, as sufficiency in its non-sufficiency, it remains in the non-I, it is enjoyment of ‘something else’, never of itself. . . .it is nevertheless independent and separated (Levinas 1969: 143).

This separate, isolated subject is characterised by what Levinas terms ‘interiority’ (Levinas 1969: 118). Interiority contains two equally compelling forces. On the one hand, the inner life of the subject involves the incorporation of many others into the self in a continual process of self-identification. On the other hand, there is a continual attempt to escape the weight of identity. The self is continually caught between distancing itself from itself and being pulled back upon itself. In the ‘Introduction’ to Levinas’s Otherwise Than Being or Beyond Essence, Alfonso Lingis describes this as a ‘breathlessness of one unable to catch up with oneself that is because it is somehow under obligation to catch up with itself, to be at the level of its own resources’ (Lingis, in Levinas 1981: xxxi). This constant movement is, according to Levinas, what remains outside the distinction
between the singular self and the general world (Levinas 1969: 118). It is the level of subjectivity that both precedes and motivates acts of self-identity.

Subjectivity: Sensuous Lived Experience

By aligning the subject with infinity and with the sentient aspects of life Levinas positions subjectivity in relation to sensibility. For Levinas, sensibility suggests an immediacy that ‘acts as the flow of the lived that is always on the verge of coagulating into ideal identities’ (Levinas 1981: 32). In this respect, Levinas reinterprets Husserl’s understanding of the distinction between the lived and the sensed. For Levinas, sensing is not necessarily ‘real’, but is lived at the corporeal level and forms an integral part of human psychic life (Levinas 1981: 31). In Levinas’s reading of Husserl, the lived and the sensed are treated as always separated by the conscious meaning ascribed to them through intentionality. This, for Husserl, suggests that the lived and the sensed are ‘distinguishable from each other by their fullness of content and richness’ (Levinas 1981: 32). Levinas does not agree with this understanding of the lived and the sensed. Instead, he believes that intentionality does not reveal in the sensible its fullness. What is revealed are the attributes of sensing, such as colour, sound, softness, hardness etc. These attributes are always an abridged version of the original impression. There is a resembling of the sense. This means that there is a gap between the primary impression and the knowledge of the sense based in receptivity, which is played out in words (Levinas 1981: 32-3).
Sensibility is experienced through the self’s immersion in the sensuous elements, such as light, air, water, food. These give life its content, volume and intensification. For Levinas, it is these sensible aspects of corporeal existence that our egos absorb. Levinas’s happy subject is a sensible subject, in harmony with itself through the abundance of pleasure and enjoyment.

A gustative sensation is not a knowing accompanying the physico-chemical or biological mechanism of consuming, a consciousness of objective filling of a void, a spectacle miraculously interiorised in the tasting; . . . To bite bread is the very meaning of tasting. The taste is the way a sensible subject becomes a volume, . . . Satisfaction satisfies itself with satisfaction. Life enjoys life, as though it nourishes itself with life as much as with what makes it live . . .

(Levinas 1981: 73).

Levinas’s insistence that there is meaning in enjoyment and happiness is a response to the work of his intellectual predecessors. For him, to focus on the ‘being of existents’ and to view the world as a place of ‘equipment’ does not capture the weight of the ‘il y a’ and the enjoyable aspects of living21. To view the world in such an abstract way removes the corporeal, forgets the reality of human embodiment and negates sensitivity in human life.

The second aspect of sensibility that informs Levinas’s understanding of the self is affectation, or the susceptibility to being affected. While Levinas considers sensibility as immediacy with the joyous savouring of sensuous life he also perceives a possibility for exposure and vulnerability. In Levinas’s view, our

---

21 Levinas states that ‘the world offers the subject participation in existing in the form of enjoyment, and consequently permits it to exist at a distance from itself . . . In the perspective that one opens up the tool, beginning with the modern tool – the machine – one is more struck by its function which consists in suppressing work, than in its instrumental function, which Heidegger exclusively considered’ (Levinas 1987a: 67).
humanity provides the basis for the ethical relation. The exposure to alterity carries with it the ‘imperfect happiness, which is the murmur of sensibility’ (Levinas 1981: 64). However, the subject located within the sensuous, has the capacity for pain and suffering. According to Levinas, ‘the immediacy of the sensible is not reducible to the gnoseological role assumed by sensation is the exposure to wounding and enjoyment, which enables the wound to reach the subjectivity of the subject’ (Levinas 1981:64). It is vulnerability to wounding and outrage that shakes the subject from its contentment and joy, thereby, revealing that its majesty is not absolute.

The absoluteness of our exposure to vulnerability and suffering is an effect of the movement of alterity. While we can assimilate the alterity of others, we cannot contain the alterity of the truly Other. This movement of the truly Other is felt in the existence of another person in the sensuous world of the self. This Other is not considered to be empty in any sense, nor does it represent an alternative view on life. Rather, its ‘mystery acts to contest the subject’s appropriation of the world’ (Lingis in Levinas 1981: xxiii). The Other interrupts and disturbs the apparent cohesion of my lived experience. For Levinas, the only possible way that the self can be ‘uprooted from its immersion in the sensuous’ (Levinas 1969: 159) is through a ‘relation with something it does not live from’ (Levinas 1969: 170-71). This is the mystery of the Other. Sensibility, in Levinas’s account is always ‘exposedness to the Other’ (Levinas 1981: 75). It requires ‘putting oneself in the place of another not to appropriate the other into the same’, but to ‘take care of the other’s needs . . . misfortunes and faults . . . as a giving . . . Only a subject that eats can be for-the-Other, or can signify. Signification has meaning only among beings
of flesh and blood’ (Levinas 1981: 74). It is these human characteristics of wounding, enjoyment, outrage and giving that, for Levinas manifest the significance of people, and therefore, it is these characteristics that provide the basis for an ethical relation.

*Subjectivity: A Passive Activity*

Fundamental to Levinas’s project is the claim that the sensible subject is the locus for ethical encounters. The openness of the subject, its ‘sincerity’ dwells in the capacity to be uncovered without any defence by the approach of the Other (Levinas 1987a: 146). Openness requires, according to Levinas, a particular passivity that provides the structure for the relation between the self and the Other. While this relation is inherently passive, the passivity that underlies it issues from the subject because this is the only force available for a response to the radicalness of the Other. Levinas describes this as ‘passivity more passive than all passivity, more passive than matter’ (Levinas 1987a: 147). This does not mean that the subject is inactive, or necessarily malleable. Rather, it means that the subject is continually caught off guard, or interrupted, by that which overflows its own capacities. (Though this capacity is covered over by declarations and knowing.) Levinas states that ‘every being in its “natural pride” would be ashamed to admit, “to be beaten”, “to receive blows”’ (Levinas 1987a: 146).

A subject is held in this relationship with the Other through this inherent passivity. The basis of this relationship comes from outside the subject, from the
movement of the Other. This relationship with the Other cannot be exhausted by causality (Levinas 1987a: 146) because the appeal does not originate from any act of the subject’s subjectivity. Lingis explains this in the following manner.

The relationship with the Other in his [sic] alterity consists in being appealed to and contested by the Other. The movement comes from without; alterity is not posited by any act of my subjectivity, the imperative word that comes to bind me does not originate in a synthesis effected by my subjectivity according to its own a prioris (Lingis, quoted in Levinas 1981: xvii).

The effects of this for the subject are significant. First, the subject is always held in this bond because it is only though the encounter with the Other that the self is constituted (Levinas 1981: 76). Second, the passivity of the subject in relation to the appeal of the Other instils a form of substitution which requires ‘being-for-another’ or a ‘putting myself in the place of another’ (Levinas 1981: 72). Finally, the subject is, in some sense, taken to be ‘without identity’ because it is founded in the infinity of the Other and the passivity of the self.

In relation to the first effect, the subject is bound to the Other due to the capacity of the Other to be master or teacher. Levinas maintains that the Other gives to the subject more than he/she already knows. The subject learns that since the ‘Other comes to me from without by exceeding my capacities’ (Lingis, in Levinas 1981: xvii), it introduces ‘into me what was not in me’ (Levinas 1969: 203). This gives the subject the very concept of excess. Levinas concludes that it is through the relation with the Other that the subject takes on the idea of infinity. ‘To receive from the Other beyond the capacity of the I, which means exactly: to have the idea of infinity. But this also means to be taught’ (Levinas 1969: 51).
Further to this, through teaching the very idea of excess, the Other also commands the subject to recognise that the Other has a right to be. This, for Levinas, is expressed in the command ‘thou shalt not kill’ (Levinas 1969: 199).

The second significant effect of the movement of alterity is that the subject responds to the command of the Other. In that the subject must acknowledge the Other’s right to be, it can only do so from the position of giving. This position of giving, for Levinas, is the ‘one for the Other’, the placing of myself in the position of another, in which I am ‘held hostage for the Other’ (Levinas 1981: 117). This requires that the subject takes on the weight of the universe, and is accountable for all that is good and all that is bad, painful and wretched. For it is only through this condition that there is ‘pity, compassion and pardon in the world even the little there is’ (Levinas 1981: 117). For Levinas, this is the only position from which the self can possibly give what is meaningful for the Other. Levinas argues that,

It is a passivity more passive still than any passivity that is antithetical to an act, a nudity more naked that all “academic” nudity, exposed to the point of outpouring, effusion and prayer. It is a passivity that is not reducible to exposure to another’s gaze. It is a vulnerability and a paining exhausting themselves like a haemorrhage, denuding the aspect that its nudity takes on, exposing its very exposedness . . .

(Levinas 1981: 72).

_A Passive Productivity_

For Levinas, this passivity is not only an interruption to the subject, for it is also has a productive character. This productive character is felt in the subject’s
response to exposure to the Other. The subject cannot ignore this ‘calling into question’. This is due to the continual recurrence of losing oneself and finding oneself. For, to ignore this ‘being in question’ would mean relinquishing my subjectivity (Levinas 1981: 112). ‘I’ am responsible for the Other, therefore, because my existence as a singular subject is bound up with my exposure to the Other. In other words, for Levinas, subjectivity always includes a moral sense of identity.

The productive element of passivity is also paradoxical. For, while the subject is passive to the call of the Other, the subject is also responsible for the Other. The first point that must be made concerning Levinas’s treatment of responsibility is that it does not relate to any kind of authority on the part of the subject. My responsibility, for Levinas, means that I am obligated, but this obligation comes from without; it is ‘as though an order slipped into my consciousness like a thief, smuggled itself in, like an effect of one of Plato’s wandering causes’ (Levinas 1981: 13). This responsibility does not originate in me, but calls me to respond (Levinas 1981: 113). This response is transferred in the subject, whereby ‘it is no longer a call from the Other it is now a responsibility for the Other’ (Levinas 1981: 110). This is why Levinas characterises ethical subjectivity as ‘the Other in the same’ (Levinas 1981: 111, emphasis in original). For Levinas, responsibility is the condition from which the subjectivity of the subject arises. It is the site where the self congregates. Responsibility, therefore, has the status of being prior to existence or always already there, ‘it is inescapable and traumatic’ (Levinas 1981: 111).

---

22 It is important to note at this point that Levinas’s treatment of subjectivity undergoes a transformation from his earlier works to his later works. For a discussion of the inconsistency in Levinas’s work on subjectivity see Moran (2000).
In Levinas’s view, subjectivity carries with it a sense of intense drama and turbulence. The drama is played out through the self’s constant recurrence to itself in an attempt to fulfil my responsibility for the Other. For Levinas, there is a sense of persecution in this continual movement between self, the call of the Other, and responsibility for the Other. He describes it as a pattern of substitution whereby the Other is always already within the self without the subject having made the conscious choice to invite the Other in (Critchley 1992: 152). Persecution is not something that is added to subjectivity, ‘it is the very moment of recurrence’ (Levinas 1981: 111). It is integral to the position of ‘I’, as it is the only position from which the self is thrown into question, and hence, the site where all ‘egoism is born’ (Levinas 1981: 111).

Another characteristic of responsibility, according to Levinas, is that responsibilities continually increase. As the subject takes up the position of ‘I’, it is continually haunted by the very structure of subjectivity that preceded Being. Accordingly, I am always responsible for the actions and deeds of the Other, but I am also responsible for what this Other does to me. I must always be answerable for the position in which I find myself, and more. I am also responsible for what occurred before my existence and what exceeds my will or intentions (Lingis in Levinas 1981: xiv). For Levinas, true responsibility exceeds the limits of my life. It moves beyond my own death because the command to be responsible exists prior to my Being (Levinas 1981: 122). I am persecuted because this responsibility is limitless and constant. This persecution is integral to Being because without it there can be neither exposure nor any recognition of the
Other’s power over me. The turbulent character of this responsibility means that I am forced to act without any prior commitment from the Other.

The responsible subject, for Levinas, is obsessed with responsibilities. This obsession originates in the approach of the Other (Levinas 1981: 12). Responsibility illuminates the infinity of the Other. This infinity cannot be grasped, however, and the subject can only acknowledge that the bond with the Other is infinite. The subject’s obsession with responsibility for the Other ensures two significant and simultaneous effects. First, the more I respond to the trauma of persecution the greater my responsibilities become. Levinas explains that ‘the more I return to myself, the more I divest myself . . . the more I discover myself to be responsible; the more just I am, the more guilty I am’ (Levinas 1981: 112). In Levinas’s view the subject can never be responsible enough.

The ego involved in responsibility is me and no one else, me with whom one would like to pair up a sister soul, from whom one would require substitution and sacrifice. But to say the Other has to sacrifice himself [sic] to the others would be to preach human sacrifice (Levinas 1981: 126).

For Levinas, this obsession with responsibility illustrates that it is only through bearing the fault of another that the uniqueness of the self is constituted (Levinas 1981: 112). To be responsible for the Other requires that I am responsible for the Other in his/her alterity, as this is where the command is made. This means that I am not only responsible for the command of the Other I am also responsible for the way in which the Other approaches me. Furthermore, as responsibility incorporates a pattern of substitution I can also be called upon to
replace the Other, to answer for the deeds and faults of the Other. For Levinas, the word ‘I’ means ‘here I am, answering for everything and everyone’ (Levinas 1981: 114 emphasis in original). To be truly responsible, therefore, requires that I am also responsible for the actions of another.

Some controversial implications ensue from the heaviness of the responsibility that Levinas’s subject bears. Primarily, the persecuted subject is held responsible for the persecutor (Levinas 1981: 111). The consequences of this are significant. Levinas argues that

Every accusation and persecution, as all interpersonal praise, recompense and punishment presuppose the subjectivity of the ego, substitution, the possibility of putting oneself in the place of the Other, which refers to the transference from the “by the Other” into a “for the Other” and in persecution from the outrage inflicted by the other to the expiation for his [sic] fault by me.

(Levinas 1981: 117-8).

This implies that, for Levinas, I must make amends for the crimes of my own persecutor, or that the victim of torture is to blame for the torturer’s actions. While it may be read this way, the important point, for Levinas, is that it means that being ethical is always a personal affair (Levinas 1985: 42). It is not universal nor can it be translated into a moral code. In Levinas’s account, what is truly significant in this one-sided relationship is that it is only through the acceptance of the weight of responsibility for the Other that the self forms its own goodness. This goodness is not the effect of a moral choice, nor does it reflect an ideal or abstract conception of the good. Rather, goodness is what is invested in me that enables me to give to the Other. This goodness is what enables me to remain in a sense of wonder in relation to the Other.
Conclusion

This section has drawn out the main characteristics of Levinas’s view of the ethical subject. For him, the ethical subject is located as the site for my responsibility for the Other, *prior to questioning and knowing*. Taking up the position of ethical subjectivity means that the subject can no longer take itself as the self-positing origin of the world. While the subject is constituted through its position in pre-existing structures, there is, for Levinas, always the meeting with the Other. In this context, I can only understand myself through the meeting with the Other. The I is challenged by the Other, which interrupts and disrupts the independence and familiarity of the subject. This challenge to the self does not come from an equally positioned human being. Rather, it emanates from the Other, from that which exceeds the comprehension of the subject. The subject must respond to this call by welcoming the Other, and taking up responsibility for the Other, as it is only through this acceptance that makes possible the position of self.

Section Two: Ethical Intersubjectivity

Levinas’s view of the ethical relation begins with the subject’s recognition of the Other’s alterity, of the radical otherness of the Other. His view of the ethical relation does not reflect the Christian belief that I should love my neighbour as I do myself, nor does this relation follow the Kantian dictum that I should treat others with the respect I demand for myself. For Levinas, the
significance of the ethical relation is that it is founded on the irreducible
difference between self and Other. This irreducible difference is at the basis for all
human contact and, therefore, is integral to the intersubjective relation. In this
section I will draw out the structure of this ethical intersubjective relation, the
form of approach between self and Other, and the mode of contact between self
and Other. This is intended to illustrate the manner in which the intersubjective
relation contains the ethical relation.

*A Structural Asymmetry*

Levinas’s understanding of ethical intersubjectivity is based on the view
that, while self and Other meet, their irreducible differences ensure that one
cannot subsume the other. For Levinas, self and Other are not equal and it is this
inequality that provokes my obligation and responsibility. Levinas argues that ‘the
intersubjective relation is a non-symmetrical relation. In this sense, I am
responsible for the Other without waiting for his [sic] reciprocity, were I to die for
it. It is his affair’ (Levinas 1985: 98)

The asymmetrical structure of the ethical encounter is an effect of the
self’s inherent passivity, openness and vulnerability to the Other. It is only I who
am responsible, as the Other does not share my sense of obligation and
responsibility (Levinas 1969: 216). Levinas insists on the asymmetry of this
relation: for to do otherwise would suggest that I could speak for the Other, that
the Other could be reduced to the same. Levinas’s understanding of this relation as unequal is not a suggestion that some people are superior to others. Inequality, for Levinas, is aligned with infinity. For Levinas, inequality and asymmetry only apply to the encounter between self and Other. They do not translate beyond this meeting. The asymmetrical structure of the encounter is invisible to those external to the relationship. The “height” from which the Other approaches ‘does not appear to the third party who would count us’ (Levinas 1969: 251). The intersubjective relation is always asymmetrical, and therefore, it is this structure that provides the basis for the social relation.

A Formal Approach

The form of the asymmetrical relation between self and Other is conditioned by what Levinas terms proximity. Proximity is integral to Levinas’s view of the ethical relation. For it provides the specific circumstances for self and Other to make contact without circumscription thereby allowing a relationship with alterity. Proximity, for Levinas, is always an approach, or the approach of one to the Other. It is the movement in which I hear the demand of the Other. From proximity I feel the imperative force of the Other’s call (Levinas 1981: 88). This leads to my making contact, but this contact is always ‘an exposure of being’ (Levinas 1981: 80). The fact that I am exposed and vulnerable means that I am responsive.

23 It is important to stress that Levinas does not see the inequality and asymmetry of this relation in terms of submission. Levinas does not consider that the self submits to the greater power of the Other. There is only interruption and learning. For Levinas, the encounter between self and Other is based on dignity, in that it is through dignity that recognition has validity (Levinas 1987a: 43).
Proximity functions in the realm of intuition. It cannot be reduced to an idea because, rather than filling out meaning, it interrupts meaning. It provides sensibility with its immediacy because it always overflows the idea. Proximity can be grasped through Levinas’s discussion of the relation of *eros*, the lover-beloved relation and his analysis of our relationship with death. In the context of the relation of *eros*, Levinas is not suggesting that an ethical relation only arise between lovers, nor for that matter, is he suggesting that our relation to the alterity of death is a form of ethical proximity to another person. Instead, his discussion in these contexts provides a means for indicating the intensity of an intersubjective relation between people (an intensity which, will be discussed later, is covered over).

In the lover and beloved relation, the couple no longer want to be separate beings but desire unification into one being. Levinas presents this as a type of hunger that thrusts itself toward the other, always increasing and never being satisfied (Levinas 1987: 79). The erotic relationship reveals, according to Levinas, the basic relationship between subject and Other. It ‘serves as a prototype of the encounter with the radical alterity of the other person’ (Cohen, in Levinas 1987b: 10). This erotic encounter reveals an otherness that can never be converted into sameness. Levinas describes this relationship as ‘a relationship with what slips away. The relationship does not *ipsa facto* neutralise alterity but preserves it’ (Levinas 1987b: 86, emphasis in original). Levinas’s point is that people in an erotic relationship relate not only to one another but also to what is Other.
The erotic relationship makes apparent that there is always plurality within existence, and that there is always a mystery that cannot be grasped by the self. Levinas uses sexual difference as an example of this plurality.\textsuperscript{24} For Levinas, sexual difference indicates that social reality is always multiple, in that the relationship between male and female is one of pure difference. Moreover, a relation between a man and a woman is always a relation across a distance. This abyss cannot be bridged, as, according to Levinas, the characteristics of femininity and masculinity are irreducibly different. It is important to note that Levinas is not attempting to distinguish characteristics that are male and female, he is concerned more with the alterity of such terms. For Levinas, femininity is the ‘very quality of difference’, (Levinas 1987b: 36) because ‘hiding is the way of the feminine’ (Levinas 1987b: 88). This suggests that Levinas treats the feminine as Other. However, he also wonders ‘in what sense can this also be said of masculinity or of virility, that is, of the differences between the sexes in general?’ (Levinas 1987b: 36).\textsuperscript{25} For Levinas, every person is Other and the characteristics of femininity or masculinity are aspects of otherness.

As suggested by the complexity associated with the approach between the parties in the erotic relation, proximity does not simply mean a form of relationship between two simultaneous terms (Levinas 1981: 85). It is not a simple back and forth between the self and the Other. It also induces an incessant restlessness in the subject (Levinas 1981: 82), in that I am constantly attempting

\textsuperscript{24} Jacques Derrida (1991:40) argues that Levinas subordinates sexual difference to the difference between people in general. While Levinas did not discuss the ethical relationship between self and Other in terms of sexual difference, what is paramount, for Levinas, is that every other is irreducibly other and not just the opposite sex.

\textsuperscript{25} Several commentators have suggested that Levinas’s view of the feminine and sexual difference is a continuation of traditional patriarchal thought. Significantly, in this area are Irigaray (1986, 1991) and Chanter (1995).
to fulfil my infinite responsibility for the Other as well as moving towards the position of subject. This is always a troubling affair, for Levinas. It is troubling because there is no fusion, only pure contact. This means there is ‘neither an investment in the Other which would annul his [sic] alterity, nor a suppression of myself in the Other’ (Levinas 1981: 86). Levinas describes this restless relationship as one wherein the subject is both more than and less than a term (Levinas 1981: 82). It exceeds the term subject because the constancy of its infinite responsibility for the Other places the subject outside any form of ontological knowing. Its very identity is always caught up with the Other. The identity of the subject is, therefore, always structured intersubjectively. Proximity illustrates that the subject is simultaneously surplus and lack (Levinas 1981: 82), and hence, the position of subject is never stable.

Levinas’s view of proximity as a mode of our ethical relationship with the Other can further be explained by his analysis of death. For Levinas, death is not something that can be seen, known or understood. Death is an event that one cannot assume as part of an intentional or existential project (Levinas 1987b: 62). It is, instead, a relation with something that is completely other. For the approach of death demonstrates, in Levinas’s view, that there is something that escapes the comprehension of Being (Levinas 1987b: 63). It emphaisises the possibility of an encounter with something outside oneself, with an essence that is other, which marks the ‘end of the subject’s matery of itself’ (Levinas 1987b: 59). Levinas’s discussion of our relationship with death provides a further opportunity to grasp the multiple ways in which we encounter different modes of ethical proximity with otherness.
Levinas depicts the specific mode of contact between self and Other as the ‘face to face’ relation. It is a relation in which subjects face one another, but do not focus on their similarities and, instead, accentuate their dissimilarities. The concept of ‘face to face’ is central to Levinas’s attempt to describe the relation between self and Other without implying that one is either with the Other or opposed to the Other. Rather, the ‘face to face’ signifies that the Other is simply there, in a position that is irreducible to myself (Davis 1996: 46). The ‘face to face’ relation is a disturbance of the complacency of the subject. For Levinas, it is the instance of another person looking at me, speaking to, or with me that causes the extraordinary event that disrupts the world that is common to me. The face to face relation exceeds both the categories of being and nothingness. It signifies that which overflows the image of the face. However, it also signifies that there is this overflow, this excess, and that there is always more than what can be made present.

The human face is crucial for Levinas’s understanding of ethical intersubjectivity because it provides integral aspects to the encounter between self and Other. First, for Levinas, the face is the route through which alterity presents itself. ‘The face is present in its refusal to be contained. In this sense it cannot be comprehended, that is, encompassed. It is neither seen nor touched’ (Levinas 1969: 194). The face is not to be confused with something that can be thematised or appropriated. It cannot be reduced to a form of perception. Levinas’s
suggestion is that the face is not experienced in an intentional act of consciousness. The face is always beyond intentionality because what is in the face cannot be reduced to perception. For Levinas, the face lies outside and beyond experience. Levinas explains:

The way in which the Other presents himself [sic], exceeding the idea of the Other in me, we here name face. This mode does not consist in figuring as a theme under my gaze, in spreading itself forth as a set of qualities forming an image. The face of the Other at each moment destroys and overflows the plastic image it leave me, the idea existing to my own measure and to the measure of its ideatem – the adequate idea

(Levinas 1969: 50, emphasis in original).

For Levinas, the face is always an interruption or disturbance that arises between the subject’s world and that which exceeds it. It is in this manner that the Levinasian concept of the face does not necessarily represent the part of the body commonly called ‘the face’. Rather, for Levinas, the face represents the surplus that cannot be enclosed. In his view ‘the face by definition is always on the move, it divests itself of form, breaks through its own plastic image’ (Levinas 1987b: 351-2). It cannot be grasped and given a specific meaning. The face is not an object of experience, in the sense that experience is relative and egoist (Levinas 1969: 193). Instead, it is the very mode of contact in which the Other presents him or herself to me. It is what calls me into question and gives meaning to my life. ‘In the face the being par excellence presents itself. And the whole body - a hand or a curve of the shoulder - can express as the face’ (Levinas 1969: 262). By understanding the face in this manner Levinas seeks to emphasise the unknowable quality of another human being and, further, to illustrate the surprise that results from such a mysterious quality.
The face, in Levinas’s view, provides the ground for ethical intersubjectivity. By situating the point of contact between self and Other in the elusiveness of the face Levinas illustrates that the ethical relation occurs between real embodied people. Without such a possibility the Other would remain abstract and inaccessible and Levinas’s ethical relation would not be applicable to human existence. This grounding, though, is not a negation or a step back from the face as being beyond perception. It is more an acknowledgement that the relationship with the Other is not produced outside of the world (Levinas 1969: 173). The face does not exist in a vacuum in which no others exist. As Lingis explains, ‘the Other does indeed appear to my perception in the form of a face, but this does not have the form of a contemplative perception, but that of practical dealings, within a world of equipment, or furnishings’ (Lingis, in Levinas 1987a: xxix).

*Creative Contact*

Levinas does not consider this face to face relation to be an empirical event. Rather, it is an aspect of the pre-originary26 wherein the immediacy of contact between self and Other is not governed by ontological knowing. For Levinas, this relation is governed by sensibility and affectivity but in a way that differs from sensibility in relation to other objects (Levinas 1969: 192). ‘The Other always remains infinitely foreign; his [sic] face . . . which appeals to me breaks with the world that can be common to us’ (Levinas 1969: 194). In other

---

26 The pre-originary is the site of signification. ‘It signifies in the realm of the anarchic’ (Levinas 1981: 187). It does not refer to pre-ontological state, and it is not a different kind of Being. Rather, it presupposes Being, it therefore acts as an interruption. As Levinas explains, ‘the pre-originary is always après coup’ (Levinas 1969: 54), or in other words, it occurs in a posterior sense. It, therefore, escapes the essence of origin and identity (Levinas 1985:10).
words, Levinas is addressing what can be considered to be first nature of human
being, the non-intentional being that is based in pure passivity. The face to face
relation is the ground of responsibility because it is based an affinity with the
Other, a resonance between myself and the Other which simultaneously affects
me and commands me to respond.

The face to face relation, as the ground of responsibility, has both
descriptive and normative characteristics but is not reducible to either (Peperzak
1995: 62). It is descriptive in the sense that it describes the way in which humans
live in a world in which difference can be maintained. For Levinas, it is only
through the confrontation of the face to face relation that people develop a sense
of interiority that, in turn, constitutes the articulation of the position of self. The
face to face relation reveals that this rupture is the very condition of subjectivity,
and of the ego (Levinas 1981: 48). This form of contact interrupts the ambiguity
of the self as freedom, in that it exposes that freedom is always conditioned by a
confrontation with the Other. In other words, the face to face relation is a
descriptive analysis of how people live the rupture between self and Other. This
also indicates that Being in the world always carries with the conditions of
possibility for the ethical relation.

The face to face also describes the manner in which the Other can be
interpreted without this requiring an attempt to grasp at the Other’s essence.
Levinas emphasises that face to face contact is a mode of signification, a
signification that reveals infinity. This relation does not function in the realm of
concepts. It is prior to knowing and resembles an overflowing of the intentions
(Levinas 1969: 207). Face to face contact provides a means to signify the Other, not as an object of perception but as the one who speaks to me, or the one who addresses me, or the one who is my interlocutor.

The word that bears on the Other as a theme seems to contain the Other. But already it is said to the Other who, as interlocutor, has quit the theme that encompassed him [sic], and upsurges inevitably behind the said. Words are said, be it only by the silence kept, whose weight acknowledges this evasion of the Other


There are several significant effects that come from taking the face to face to be the ground for human ethical interaction. First, the face to face encounter is more than just a dialectical confrontation between two exteriorities. According to Levinas, the face to face founds language (Levinas 1969: 207). This takes language to be based on giving, as I offer the Other something which I have previously enjoyed alone. This giving involves proclaiming something as something (Levinas 1987a: 111). In so doing a modification occurs with respect to my enjoyment and possession of things, as the perspective of the Other is always included (Levinas 1969: 209). In other words, it is through the face to face that I identify myself and through which things gain an intersubjective meaning. It is this that introduces commonality and universality with all others (Levinas 1969: 173).

Conclusion

In this section I have drawn out the structure of Levinas’s ethical relation, the form of approach and the mode of contact between self and Other. Levinas’s
ethical relation is structured asymmetrically, in that the Other is not equal to the self. This inequality institutes a form of non-reciprocal responsibility of the self for the Other. The form of approach enables contact between self and Other without merger and self and Other remain irreducible. The mode of contact is the face to face relation. This provides the ground for an ethical relation, in that it opens the self to the broader community. These characteristics humanise the ethical relation by stressing human qualities such as responsibility, dignity, learning and giving. These qualities are, according to Levinas, all effects of the face to face relation. Crucial to Levinas’s ethical relation is that it attaches significance to people rather than to rules that govern behaviour.

This part has provided an account of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation. I have drawn out the characteristics of Levinas’s view of ethical subjectivity, and outlined his concept of ethical intersubjectivity. These two sections have highlighted that, in Levinas’s view, the ethical relation always exists between people. Thus, Levinas’s ethical relation stresses the significance of people rather than the institution of rules and a search for universal frameworks. These characteristics indicate that, for Levinas, Being always carries with it the conditions of possibility for the ethical relation.

PART THREE: THE ETHICAL COMMUNAL DIMENSION

Introduction
In this part I discuss Levinas’s views on the communal ethical dimension. The ethical relation is inherent to the social realm because, for Levinas, the ethical relation always involves an obligation of the self to the Other and gives direction to all thought and language. For Levinas, the ethical relation is not constituted in a void. It is always in the ‘full light of the public order’ (Levinas 1969: 212). The ethical communal dimension is the manner in which the ethical relation is played out in the social world. Three issues will be discussed in order to make sense of Levinas’s understanding of the ethical communal dimension. First I will discuss the manner in which ethical intersubjectivity opens up to the communal dimension. Then I will discuss the means through which the ethical relation is played out through speech and response acts. Finally, I point to the characteristics that, for Levinas, situate the ethical relation in the social world. To do this will involve outlining Levinas’s view of the third party and illustrating the normative effects of the ethical relation in the realm of the social.

*Ethical Sparks in the Social Realm*

Proximity is the first effect of the ethical intersubjective relation that suggests that, for Levinas, the ethical relation moves into the social realm. While proximity is the form of approach of the one for the Other, it also contains the motivation to move towards cognition. Proximity ignites the spark that comes from separating the touched and the touching, or self and Other. For Levinas, this spark always induces questioning, knowledge and, hence, the acknowledgement of many others. As I have previously discussed, the intersubjective relation is not a private or intimate affair between two apparent lovers. The ethical relation,
according to Levinas, is ‘not like Buber’s I-Thou relation, it is not self-sufficient and forgetful of the universe’ (Levinas 1969: 213). Proximity, as the conduit between the self, the Other and the community as a whole, provides the means for social interaction, co-existence and justice.

Another significant effect of ethical Intersubjectivity derives from the face to face relation. For Levinas, the address of the Other simultaneously reveals the presence of many others and thereby provokes broader perspectives that provide for the foundation of society. The face to face makes possible the pluralism of society. As Levinas explains, it is a ‘relation which no concept could cover without the thinker who thinks the concept finding himself [sic] before a new interlocutor’ (Levinas 1969: 291). The face to face is not a ‘private or clandestine affair’ (Levinas 1969: 212). Rather, it opens me to the ‘whole of humanity in the eyes that look at me’ (Levinas 1969: 213). My responsibility for the Other extends to all others, but not in the form of a responsibility for a common essence or general class of human being. The extension of responsibility is always the primordial approach of the Other in the face. It induces a form of ‘monothesim’ (Levinas 1969: 214) which acknowledges the asymmetrical structure of the face to face and the original responsibility for the Other.

At this point the issue of normative responsibility becomes significant. For if everyone is infinitely responsible for everyone the question arises as to how Levinas’s ethical intersubjective relation allows for a multitude of ‘I’s’. Levinas’s response is that equality and reciprocity are always founded on inequality and non-reciprocity. Levinas explains that ‘the equality of all is borne by my
inequality, the surplus of my duties over my rights’ (Levinas 1981: 159). The movement that governs the identity of the ‘I’ requires that I am always to be more responsible, that I can never be responsible enough. The effect of this sense of equality is that each person is unique and irreplaceable. While face to face contact institutes equality, it is always based on an original non-reciprocity. Denying this responsibility for the Other implies, according to Levinas, that exploitation and disrespect are possible (Levinas 1969: 298).

Ethical Means

The face to face relation, as the mode of contact between self and Other, provides the basis for the ethical relation. The means through which this relation is played out resides in speech and response acts between people. Language provides the means through which the creative contact of the face to face is signified. For Levinas, language entails a process in which the layers of communication imprint traces on one another in a movement that is indispensable to the ethical relation. Levinas is not attempting to replace the language of ontology with a form of ethical language, nor is he attempting to overcome language. Rather, his insistence on the movement between the differing layers of language disrupts meaning and ensures interruption to ontology or logocentric metaphysics, which is the condition necessary for exposure to an Other.

In the essay ‘Language and Proximity (Levinas 1987a: 109-126), Levinas presents his understanding of language as the means through which the ethical relation is played out. Language, for Levinas, is multi-layered. It involves ideas
and events that occur over time that together give meaning to human life (Levinas 1987a: 111). The layering of language is first seen in what Levinas terms the ideal. The ideal is that which is behind thought, more like a surrounding of thought, like an aura, ‘the aura of ideality’ (Levinas 1987a: 115). This aspect of language is essential both to thought and identification. The next layer that Levinas identifies in language is thought. This is the first movement in identification. Thought is conscious and is generally what lies behind speech. This is where understanding, alleging and thematisation occur (Levinas 1987a: 110). Thought is the area that is discernable in experience. It also encompasses signification and the appearance of phenomena. It also provides the ground for reality. Finally, in Levinas’s view, thought generally follows the structure of speech (Levinas 1987a: 111-112).

The next layer of language, for Levinas, takes in the movement from identification to the act of communication. Levinas distinguishes between two aspects to communication. The first is speaking. This is, very simply the transmission of the message (Levinas 1987a: 115). It is the narrative part of language, or the verbal sign, which enables the circulation of messages in speech. Levinas suggests that this aspect of language can be understood in terms of the distinction between the sense of something that is felt and a sense of feeling. The second aspect of communication is contact. This can be understood as the feeling part of language. In Levinas’s account, it is connected to a singularity that slips outside the theme, and involves the identification or the meaning of speech. Contact is unrepresentable. It unfolds in the approach of the one to another. It is not formed in the knowledge of the interlocutors but in their proximity (Levinas
1987a: 125). This aspect of language is, according to Levinas, the original language because it provides the foundation for the spoken word. For Levinas, this layer of language requires the subject to be open to beings as well as Being, for these are required for contact to occur. For Levinas, this is the ethical moment. The point of exposure and vulnerability and, moreover, it is constant.

Levinas builds on his analysis of the ethical in language in *Otherwise than Being, or Beyond Essence* (1981). The first aspect of communication, the transmission of messages, he terms the Said. The second aspect, the part that is un-representable, he refers to as the Saying or to Say. The Said comprises the themes, ideas or observations that people intentionally communicate through discourse. The Said is the home of ontology as the identifications and presentations on which ontology depends occur there (Levinas 1981: 74). The Saying is more elusive. The Saying holds open the gaps and fissures that slip through the dimension of language that relies on ontological assumptions and knowledge. The Saying acts as a utopia (Levinas 1981: 77). It is a space for the approach of the Other, a space where that which escapes Being may reside.

These two aspects of language, while significantly different, cannot be viewed in isolation. The Said and the Saying constantly intermingle because, according to Levinas, the Saying can only ever leave a trace in the Said. It can never be fully revealed in the Said as it is not a theme. The Saying generates quite different meanings and has quite a different purpose from the Said. Its purpose is fundamentally communication ‘but as a condition for all communication, as exposure’ (Levinas 1981: 81-2). The Saying is never fully present in the Said but
it is only through the Said that one can have access to it (Levinas 1981: 64-5). It is always anterior to the Said. The Saying is at the very core of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation because exposure to the Other is only ever effected in the Saying.

**Language as Ethical**

Language, for Levinas is always enigmatic (Levinas 1981: 156, 1987a: 66). This enigmatic character provides for the conditions of possibility for exposure to the ethical relation. These conditions arise due to the instability of language. Language is unstable in the sense that it conveys meaning through a field of questions and answers. Meaning is never a simple, univocal thing, as meanings change and disseminate across contexts (Levinas 1987a: 119). Language is always open to that which exceeds it. As Levinas explains, ‘the enigmatic quality of language is not just a simple ambiguity between two significations that have equal chances’ (Levinas 1987a: 66). Rather, enigma arises because language has the capacity to exceed itself and because this excessive aspect of language is always inconspicuous. Therefore, language leaves an enigmatic trace that invades every theme and context in conversation.

Levinas emphasises this enigmatic character of language in order to disrupt the language of ontology. Levinas’s intention is to use the language of ontology against itself, to displace and dislocate meaning. His tactic is

27 Critchley argues that Levinas’s style of writing is a ‘performative enactment of ethical writing, that oscillates between the differing registers of language, that ensure the interruption of ontology’ (Critchley 1992:8). Levinas’s redoubling of terms, or disturbing linguistic surfaces by repeating
repetition. The constant repetition of words and phrases interrupts the meaning these words have in the register of the Said, thereby denying any sense of closure. Levinas’s point here is that there can never be any simple overcoming of ontological language. At most, there can only be a loss for authority to words. The failure of language in this momentary interruption of the logos is, for Levinas, the ethical relation in action.

In attempting to reveal the failure of language that points to the ethical relation Levinas undertakes a reduction from the ‘already said to the saying’ (Levinas 1981: 46, emphasis in original). The reduction from the Said to the Saying entails going back through the Said, through the time in which essences are manifested into entities, to show that this manifestation does not exhaust every possibility for communication. Levinas explains that ‘the manifestation of saying out of the said, in which it is thematised does not still dissimulate, does not irrevocably “falsify” the signifyingness proper to the said. The plot of the saying that is absorbed in the said is not exhausted in this manifestation’ (Levinas 1981: 46). The Saying is a necessary part of the Said. However, in that the Saying is not completely absorbed in the Said, a resonance arises that signifies in a way different from ontology (Levinas 1981: 46).

Levinas’s argument that the Saying signifies other than the Said is not intended to imply that the Said of ontological language requires changing. Thematisation and ontology are necessary because both give the world meaning and constitute a knowable reality in which humans live. Levinas argues that ‘to

phrases in different contexts, is a practice to allow language to say more than it can at any given time.
affirm being does not mean that language, an exterior denomination, remains foreign to the essence it names, and only lets this essence be seen it is necessary for its identity’ (Levinas 1981: 40). This is an integral part of language but, for Levinas, this is not the only part of language. For language to name something there must be an essence that precedes this naming. According to Levinas, this is the ‘amphibilogy of the Said’, or the movement in language that signifies that there is always more to language than can be made present at any given moment.

The Saying and the Said are not two isolated parts of speech. They occur simultaneously in an internal tension rather than a conflict (Davis 1996: 88). While these aspects of communication co-exist they are not equal to one another and they constantly intersect each other in the interstices of Being (Levinas 1969: 232), or the spaces caused by interruption from the Other. For Levinas, the Saying has priority because it is always the condition for the possibility of the Said. ‘For the saying in being said at every moment breaks the definition of what it says and breaks up the totality it includes. Even if it makes of this break-up this very theme . . . it interrupts its very totality by its very speaking’ (Levinas 1987a: 126). In other words, the Saying has priority over the Said because it acts in the form of a continual interruption. It is always and already a part of the said but it ‘remains unsaid’ (Levinas 1981: 7, emphasis in original).

The implications of Levinas’s understanding of language are that he takes language and communication to be in a constant movement that signifies the ethical relation in ontological language. For Levinas, the Saying is the condition
for all communication because it signifies exposure and the approach of the Other. It situates the subject in relation to the Other. The Saying is the voiceless call that is felt at the sensible and corporeal level. Its trace infiltrates every order, theme and context of discourse. For Levinas, ontological language is in a continual process of failure because of this trace of the Saying. Its failure is due to the capacity of the Saying to continually interrupt, or continually jam, the lines of connection such that there is access to ‘otherness’.

**The Social Relation: Subject, Other and the Third**

As I have previously pointed out, the ethical intersubjective relation, according to Levinas, is not like ‘an affair between two lovers in which the ethical relation becomes cooing and laughter’ (Levinas 1969: 213). For Levinas, the ethical relation is concerned with all of humanity. ‘Nothing is outside the control of the responsibility of the one for the Other’ (Levinas 1981: 159). The spark that ignites a questioning of the relation between self and Other resides in the conditions of proximity and the face to face opens up the self to a multitude of others. It is the third party, as an aspect of the face to face, however, that brings about the birth of consciousness (Levinas 1981: 157). The third party is also integral, therefore, to the relationship between the subject and the Other.

Levinas does not present the entry of the third party as an empirical event. It is located in the proximity of the face to face and, thus, marks the transition from the Saying to the Said. ‘The third introduces a contradiction into the saying whose signification before the other went in a one way direction’ (Levinas 1981:
157). It provokes the movement of reflection such that ‘I’, the subject, begin to question both my relationship with the Other, and with my world. The implication of Levinas’s view of the third party is that there is always a distance between self and Other. For Levinas, the third party does not appear chronologically. It is always already evident in the face to face encounter. This does not mean that the face precedes the being that subsequently concerns itself with justice and the social world. Rather, the epiphany of the face as face opens us to humanity (Levinas 1969: 213).

The third party, as an aspect of interruption, converts the original asymmetry of the face to face into symmetry (Levinas 1981: 150). For Levinas, the third party is an integral part of the face to face encounter because without it I would not develop a sense of commitment, responsibility, or obligation outside the encounter between myself and the Other. In other words, if the third party was not part of the face to face encounter, there would be no sense of the communal, nor would there be any impetus for the establishment of society, justice and politics. Levinas states that this network of relations provides the basis for society. ‘In the measure that the face of the Other relates us with the third party, the metaphysical relation of the I with the Other moves in the form of the We, aspires to a State, institutions, laws which are the source of universality’ (Levinas 1969: 300).

The third party introduces reciprocity into the network of relations in the form of a “call” for regulation and coordinating principles. In other words, the third party introduces questions of equality and justice into the ethical relation.
For Levinas, the ethical relation is the first site of justice. Justice, for him, is not an abstract or formal institution that regulates society. Nor is justice to be found in a social contract, or the application of pre-existing laws. Rather, justice, for Levinas, is always beyond Being. It provides the point at which the asymmetry of the face to face converts into symmetry. The third party creates the starting point for a just society. Justice, for Levinas, is not a return to the order of ontology. Rather, it is a form of knowing that is always and already informed and interrupted by the ethical responsibility of the face to face.

This means concretely or empirically that justice is not a legality regulating human masses, from which a technique of social equilibrium is drawn, harmonising antagonistic forces. That would be a justification of the State delivered over to its own necessities. Justice is impossible without the one that renders it finding himself [sic] in proximity. His function is not limited to the ‘function of judgement’, the subsuming of particular cases under a general rule. The judge is not outside the conflict but the law is in the midst of proximity (Levinas 1981: 159).

Several implications spring from Levinas’s understanding of the third party. First, that the third party is the dimension of the face to face encounter that is the channel for consciousness and rationality illustrates that there is always a simultaneity or doubling quality to all that can be known. For Levinas, this doubling effect is always already in discourse (Levinas 1969: 66). In other words, the social world is always simultaneous with the ethical, but the ethical cannot necessarily be recalled into known instants in the social world. Simon Critchley makes this point, ‘the community has a double structure; it is a commonality of equals which is at the same time based on the inegalitarian moment of the ethical relation’ (Critchley 1992: 227).
Another significant implication of Levinas’s view of the third is that the third part acts as a corrective to both the ethical relation and provides the conditions of possibility for correcting the socio-political realm. With respect to the correction of the ethical relation, Levinas states that ‘the relation with the third party is an incessant correction of the asymmetry of proximity’ (Levinas 1981: 158). This means that, although the third party is not of the realms of reason, it is the very reason why I pay attention to the demands of others (as it institutes recognition of others). If the third party was not a feature of the ethical encounter of the face to face, I would only be responsible for a specific singular Other and not all others. I could ignore the commitments, obligations and responsibilities that I owe to everyone else. In providing some correction to the socio-political realm the third party also symbolises the latent birth of the question. Questioning in the social order always carries a trace of the ethical that is the trace of the Saying, which, in turn, interrupts the social order and continually calls it into question. This indicates that these relations constantly cross paths and make interruption and disruption possible in the social world.

Conclusion

In this part I have discussed Levinas’s view of the communal ethical dimension. I have pointed to the manner in which the ethical relation opens us up to the broader community and how responsibility for the Other is transferred to all others. I have discussed Levinas’s view of the ethical means in language and indicated that language and communication contain the conditions of possibility for exposure to the ethical. I have also pointed out that language carries the trace
of the ethical into the communal dimension. Finally, I have presented Levinas’s view of the third party as an aspect of the ethical relation that propels this relation into the social realm. This aspect of Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation also attaches significance to people through an emphasis on questioning as integral to the ethical relation. This provides further illustrations of the fact that, for Levinas, the ethical relation involves a move away from the institution of rules, or the application of norms to induce ethical behaviour.

CONCLUSION

I have used this chapter to provide an account of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation. The purpose of the chapter has been to identify the main characteristics of this ethical relation. This has been through drawing out Levinas’s view of ethical subjectivity and ethical intersubjectivity. The chapter has also served two subsidiary aims. First, to demonstrate how phenomenology provides the means to inquire into human existence, and second, to present Levinas’s view of the ethical relation as a product of his engagement with phenomenological inquiry. To do this required a discussion of Husserl’s and Heidegger’s positions on Being that make sense of Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation as an aspect of Being. My attempt to situate Levinas within a phenomenological tradition has intended to highlight the fact that Being in the world, for Levinas, always carries the conditions of possibility for being ethical.

In identifying the main points of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation I have pointed to his view of ethical subjectivity, the ethical intersubjective relation
and the communal ethical dimension. With respect to ethical subjectivity, I have presented Levinas’s view of the subject as sensible, passive, productive and responsible. Levinas’s ethical subject is constituted, therefore, as open to the call of the Other. In explaining the ethical intersubjective relation I have discussed the approach of self and Other in the form of proximity, and the mode of contact between self and Other as residing in the face to face relation. These conditions for the ethical relation allow self and Other to be in contact without subsuming one in relation to the other. With respect to the ethical communal dimension, I have drawn out the ethical social dimension indicated through Levinas’s view of the distinction between the Saying and the Said. These were presented, or played out, in the communal dimension in speech and response acts between people. Finally, I have presented Levinas’s view of the third party as integral to the ethical relation, in that it opens the self to the communal dimension.

Drawing out the main characteristics of Levinas’s ethical relation led me to identify the manner in which this relation emphasises people instead of rules. The significance of this point is that emphasising people as the basis for an ethical relation opens up the possibility of moving ethics away from the search for universal frameworks or the institution of rules governed by norms of human behaviour. This chapter has highlighted, therefore, that Levinas’s view of the ethical relation attaches significance to people through emphasising being as the basis for the ethical relation. These qualities of human being, highlighted by Levinas’s view of the ethical relation are responsibility, vulnerability, giving, learning, dignity, joy, questioning and taking care of others. Finally, in this
chapter I have indicated that, for Levinas, these human qualities are an effect of
the ethical relation that resides in the simple facing of another human being.
CHAPTER THREE
SCHUTZ AND LEVINAS – ECHOES OF THE OTHER

INTRODUCTION

In the two preceding chapters I have outlined how, for Schutz, the everyday world is dynamic in structure and composition and how, for Levinas, the ethical relation is part of ‘human to human’ contact. I have provided, through a discussion of Schutz’s view of the everyday world, some sense of the dimensions, interrelations, intricacies and complexities that constitute the realm of the everyday. In relation to ethics, I have illustrated how, in Levinas’s understanding, the ethical relation is always situated between people, in that it emphasises a sense of personal responsibility with respect to my actions towards all others. The common point that can be drawn from these chapters is that both the everyday realm and the realm of the ethical always involve contact between people. For Schutz, meaning and intelligibility are always constituted through human contact and, for Levinas, it is in human contact that the ethical relation resides.

The purpose of this chapter is to develop insights, drawn from Levinas and Schutz, that relate to the significance of the Other. This will provide the opportunity to locate the Other in the structures and processes of the everyday world. As previously indicated, my primary reason for combining these two theorists work is to inquire into the ways in which the micro levels of human to human contact can help with our understanding of what it means to be ethical. Also as previously mentioned, I wish to avoid both the more abstractive
approaches to ethics and those approaches that present ethics as a procedural form of deduction. Rather, my aim is develop, through Levinas’s and Schutz’s work a sense of how ethics can be taken to be an integral aspect of everyday life.

This chapter has three specific aims. First, to outline my reasons for synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas. Second, to explain how I will bring together aspects of their work. Third, I introduce my synthesis of their respective ideas. I will present these aims over four parts. In the first part I will discuss why I have chosen to combine Schutz’s and Levinas’s ideas. In the second part I present my heuristic device for this combination. I have termed this device ‘Echoes of the Other’. I aim to use this device as a method that enables me to inquire into the ways in which the Other reverberates in the everyday world. This will allow me to delve into the diverse array of references to the Other in the everyday world. In the third part I show how these Echoes of the Other reflect Schutz’s and Levinas’s ideas concerning the Other in relation to the structures and process of the everyday world. In the final part, I show how the notion of Echoes of the Other also reflects Schutz’s and Levinas’s positions on the Other in regards to human relations.

PART ONE: THE EVERYDAY AND THE ETHICAL

Introduction

The everyday world, in Schutz’s view, is the taken for granted life world of people. It encompasses both my participation in a commonly held view of the
world and my capacity to reflect upon my own life. The everyday world is also based on a relationship between self and Other that provides the basis for a commonly shared world. The ethical relation, for Levinas, reflects my acknowledgement of the centrality of the Other in the constitution of my existence. This relation accentuates the fact that the world is always a shared world. It is shared between myself, a multitude of others and the mysterious ‘otherness’ that is the excess of my comprehension of another person. Both Levinas and Schutz, in varying degrees, emphasise the relation between self, Other and the social world. Both emphasise the significance of the social world for the constitution of intelligibility and both stress that sharing the social world has particular implications for any understanding of human existence.

In this part I will discuss my reasons for combining Levinas’s view of the ethical relation with Schutz’s understanding of the everyday world. I will suggest that, while their respective projects are different, “synthesising” their ideas will enable me to extract the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. After pointing to differences in their intellectual projects, I will discuss some similarities in their positions, specifically in relation to their ideas concerning consciousness, the role of the social world and the significance of language for human existence. Finally, I will discuss some criticisms that have been raised in relation to their respective projects that bear upon my attempt to develop an everyday ethics.
As I have indicated in Chapter One, Alfred Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world is concerned with inquiring into the ways in which the everyday world is rendered intelligible. His intention was to inquire into the way in which human existence constitutes a meaningful reality. To do so, he had to develop methods that were more useful for understanding the complex and intricate realm of interpretation in social life (Heritage 1984: 47). (In Schutz’s view, scientific methods of inquiry were better suited for an analysis of overt external features of the physical world). Schutz sought to examine the links between consciousness and sociality and the way in which these constitute an everyday world that combines forms of knowing but provides a contingent base that is always open to revision. Richard Cohen suggests that Schutz was one of the ‘pioneers championing the centrality of the social’ (Cohen 2001: 178). His phenomenological analysis of the conditions and characteristics of the everyday world emphasise ‘the importance of the collective’ (Cohen 2001:178) for an understanding of the constitution of meaning.

Levinas’s project began as a philosophical engagement with Husserl’s phenomenological analyses. To do so, he engaged with the works of Husserl and Heidegger, as well as taking up ideas from Bergson and Blondel. Levinas also engaged with the ideas of Freud, Kant, Descartes, Spinoza, Derrida and those expressed in many theological texts (especially by Jewish thinkers). While his philosophical inquiry began raising questions about meaning, subjectivity and Being, the pinnacle of his endeavour was to consider the question of ‘what is of
most importance’ (Cohen 2001: 4). For Levinas, philosophical endeavour does not address questions about why there is or what constitutes Being, subjectivity or meaning. Rather, for him, philosophy must address the justification of Being. As Levinas states, ‘the question of philosophy is not “Why being rather than nothing?” but “how being justifies itself”’ (Levinas 1989: 86). For Levinas, it is in this justification for one’s being that the ethical relation is to be found.

Schutz and Levinas have significantly different projects. The former inquiring into how human existence is meaningful and the latter attempting to pierce the restrictions of knowledge to consider the ways in which human existence is valid. That their projects are different does not mean that they are antithetical. Similarities can be noted in their insistence on the links between consciousness, the social world and intelligibility. Further to this, they both insist on the significance of language and forms of expression. Both express an interest in what it means to be human, and seek to understand how existing in the world reflects a multitude of interconnections between the structures that constitute the world and with the ways in which people come in contact.

Consciousness

28 From my previous discussion, it is clear that Levinas and Schutz have significantly different projects. While it would be an interesting exercise to explore these differences and similarities, it is not the purpose of my project. My project is principally concerned with drawing out the ways in which Levinas’s ethical demand of the Other can be understood as part of everyday life. My purpose is to develop these instances of this everyday ethical demand to inform a multitude of ways of living well towards others in our everyday life. However, I acknowledge that the primary difference between Levinas and Schutz is that Levinas draws out the ethical dimension of the Other’s appearance, whereas Schutz is interested in the ways in which the Other is known.
Both Schutz and Levinas insist that the intentional character of consciousness plays an integral role in the constitution of meaning. Both agree that the centrality of intentionality means that there can be no unmediated or isolated qualities, meanings or things in the world. Instead, it indicates that objects and matters gain meaning through the relationship between consciousness and the object or matter concerned. Schutz suggests that consciousness functions on several levels (Schutz 1967: 36); while, for Levinas, consciousness is always a part of the fullness of human existence. Consciousness of an object or matter, for both writers, is always more than simply an objectifying act that proclaims something as something. It incorporates aspects of time, meaning and action. This, in Levinas’s view, indicates that consciousness encounters the world as mystery, as a never completely known world (Levinas 1978: 133-4). Whereas for Schutz, it highlights that the world never simply just is. Rather, it is always a world of constant emerging possibilities due to the relations between consciousness, attention and sociality (Schutz 1967: 36).

The Social World

Levinas concurs with Schutz as to the significance of sociality for understanding the meaning of human existence. In Levinas’s view, the social realm provides the justification for human existence, in that it is only through the social that existing, or Being, is validated. In other words, the justification for human existence is constituted through the social realm. In Levinas’s view, the self is ‘without identity’ (Levinas 1981: 105) until it is ‘appealed to by the Other’ (Lingis, in Levinas 1981: xvii). This provides the opening for social interaction
For Levinas, it is through the appeal by the Other that institutes both the identity of the self and reveals the presence of many others. In Levinas’s words, ‘this makes possible the pluralism of society’ (Levinas 1969: 291). The social world, for Levinas, rests on a set of dynamics between self, Other and others which provides the basis for human existence.

The goal of Schutz’s analysis of the social world is to understand how people negotiate a common shared reality and, more importantly, how people develop common shared meanings. In Schutz’s view, the social world is ‘an interconnecting matrix of activities’ that enables individuals to live and act within a ‘shared common reality’ (Zaner, in Schutz 1970a: xii). Further, as a shared world, it has significant implications for the manner in which meaning is constituted. For Schutz, the social world is always an interpreted world that relies upon a process of typification that renders lived experiences meaningful. This process of typification requires forms of abstraction and generalisation (Schutz 1973: 5) and points to the restricted nature of all forms of knowing. The significance of Schutz’s analysis of the social world lies in his view that a sense of commonality is underlaid by the sedimentation of interpretative meaning that reveals its contingent base.

Language and Communication

Schutz and Levinas also emphasise the importance of language and communication in human existence. For Schutz, language and communication in
the everyday world determine our capacity to make ourselves understood. Language is always pretypified by the social world and it carries with it the signs and symbols that are relevant to a particular society (Schutz 1967: 120). Language and communication, according to Schutz, are ‘interpretive and expressive’ (Schutz 1967: 122). This means that there is a connection between how a sign is used and the meaning of that sign. Schutz also posits that language involves a sense of anticipation through the use of common typification processes (Schutz 1973: 323), expectation that something will be communicated (Schutz 1973: 322) and doubt, in that communication cannot ever be fully successful (Schutz 1973: 326). His analysis emphasises that there is always more to language and communication than the simple circulation of messages.

According to Levinas, language and communication are inherently social phenomenon. While he takes language and communication to render the world meaningful, Levinas believes that there is always a dimension that slips through this process. In his view, language is also multidimensional and, as previously explained, is structured around the ‘ideal, the movement of identification and communication’ (Levinas 1987a: 115). According to Levinas, language is inherently unstable and, as a result, provides the conditions of possibility for exposure to the Other. In Levinas’s view, language ‘is not a simple ambiguity between two significations that have equal chances’ (Levinas 1987a: 66). Rather, language involves ‘exposure . . . the risky uncovering of oneself, in sincerity, the breaking up of inwardness . . . exposure to traumas and vulnerability’ (Levinas 1981: 48). Using language involves more than just getting a message across. Its social character relies on the capacity of language to exceed itself. In other words,
for Levinas, there is always more to language than can be made present at any given moment.

The similarities between Levinas’s and Schutz’s positions on language can be seen in their mutual insistence on its social character. Further to this, both believe that there is always more to language than simply the circulation of messages and both see language as multidimensional. This multidimensional character of language suggests that language has the capacity to identify but also the possibility to be open to that part of language that resists identification. In Schutz’s analysis, this is felt in forms of doubt associated with communication and, for Levinas, this is suggested as forms of residue in communication. This discussion of similarities and parallels in their views of language and communication illustrate that both Levinas and Schutz believe that language and communication act to name something but that this naming is never complete.

*Levinas and the everyday world*

Several criticisms that are important to this thesis have been aimed at Levinas’s view of the ethical relation. These claims include that his understanding of ‘otherness’ is abstract and, therefore, his ethical relation is of no use when faced with conflicting moral claims (Moran 2001: 320). Another is that his view of ethics is not applicable to social or political action, (Salemohamed 1992). A similar criticism is that Levinas’s ethics is without rules and lacks rigour and clear objectives (Davis 1996 pp. 142-144). Many of these criticisms have been responded to from defenders of Levinas’s work by drawing our points of his
argument to rebut these criticisms. It is important to respond to these criticisms in the context of my project because I am attempting to combine ideas from Schutz and Levinas to develop an ethics that is not abstract, that is applicable to social and political action and that does provide a guide for ethical action.

The criticism that Levinas’s view of Otherness is abstract and, therefore, that the ethical relation is empty can be overcome by situating Levinas’s view of Otherness in relation to Schutz’s view of the everyday world. In this context, Schutz’s analysis of the structures, processes and systems that constitute the everyday world provide a way to locate Levinas’s understanding of Otherness in each of these different areas. This will enable the ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world, thereby pointing to the ways in which Otherness permeates all aspects of everyday life. In this way the claim that Levinas’s view of Otherness is empty and therefore of no use may be set aside in the context of this project.

Schutz’s emphasis on the importance of groups in the everyday world may also alleviate the potential problem that Levinas’s view of Otherness is abstract and, therefore, useless. As previously explained, Schutz’s analysis of groups demonstrates how the transcendent character of the Other is covered over (Schutz 1970: 341). This filtering of the Other into the margins of existence enables me to know another person. That human groups do not annihilate the excess of the Other but enable me to render aspects of daily life intelligible does not deny the unique experience of each individual. Thus, while Levinas’s view of ‘otherness’

---

may be hard to grasp, it is located in the concrete mortality of another person and thus played out in everyday group dynamics. Combining Levinas’s understanding of the ethical Other with Schutz’s view of group dynamics makes it possible to concretise the ethical in everyday forms of action and modes of engagement that are part of group dynamics.

Schutz’s work may also help to negate the criticism that Levinas’s ethical relation does not provide any clear rules or guides for ethical action. While, for Levinas, ethics is ‘always a personal affair’ (Levinas 1985: 42), Schutz’s view of the modes of typicality that render human experience meaningful indicate the ways in which objectives for ethical action can emerge. In that typification is fundamental to human experience it guides the manner in which people, on an individual level, respond to the ethical relation. This can be evidenced in simple responses such as ‘after you’, ‘bless you’, offering assistance to someone in need, donating time, goods, or money to people in crisis, and a simple greeting, such as, ‘good morning’ or ‘good evening’. These responses are “typical” within the fields of experience in which people live. Moreover, such responses acknowledge the concrete mortality of another person and, therefore, they suggest simple forms in which the significance of the Other can be grasped in the everyday world. Further, as typical responses these do not constitute universal rules, but act as guides for ethical action in the everyday world.

*Schutz and the Ethical*
Two main criticisms have been levelled at Schutz’s account of the everyday world. First, that he does not consider the connection between human interaction, complicity and morality (Gubrium & Holstein 1997, pp. 110-112) and, second, that Schutz’s understanding of the process of typification assumes a co-operative background to the social order (Heritage 1984, pp. 72-74). In relation to the first criticism, Schutz’s analysis is viewed as epistemologically sound but morally empty (Gubrium & Holstein 1997: 110). The second criticism is that Schutz assumes that the process of typicality secures compliance with the prescriptions of the common sense world (Heritage 1984: 72). While some responses to these criticisms have been made, I seek to avoid any potential problems by using Levinas’s understanding of the ethical Other alongside Schutz’s view of the everyday world. Responding to these criticisms is important for my project because I seek an ethics that is integral to everyday life and further, because the form of ethics I seek does not seek to secure acquiescence as a form of ethical action.

The argument that Schutz’s analysis of common sense judgements are not invested with any form of moral force can be countered by emphasising the force of the Other in his analysis of intersubjectivity. While Schutz’s analysis points to the significance of the Other and he acknowledges that the Other is that mysterious quality that is more than another person, he does not extend this to provide for moral force. His recognition that there is always more to another person than can be grasped and that this constitutes the means for people to act in the world, however, demonstrates his awareness of the force of the Other.

Levinas’s analysis of the effects of the force of the Other can add to Schutz’s analysis of the intersubjective relation, therefore, and provide an account of how common sense judgements are invested with moral force.

The criticism that Schutz assumes a world of co-operation may derive from Schutz’s preoccupation with explaining how the social world has points of commonality. Such criticisms may fail to recognise Schutz’s insistence that the everyday world is always an emerging world, and thus, open to conflicting viewpoints. These criticisms may also neglect the significance of Schutz’s understanding of the structures of relevance that act to continually shore up the appearance of a unified, coherent whole world. However, even if these criticisms are valid they can be overcome by situating Schutz’s view of the process of typification within Levinas’s understanding of the third party. For Levinas, the third party institutes questioning within the social world. In everyday life questioning encourages discussion and debate, contestation and struggle and, as such, can be understood to be typical aspects of the everyday world. Levinas’s analysis of the third party, therefore, adds a way in which conflict could be played out to Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world.

Conclusion

In this part of the chapter I have presented my reasons for a synthesis of Levinas’s sense of the ethical relation with Schutz’s understanding of the everyday world. I have suggested that, while their projects differ, there are several similarities in their positions. I have pointed to similarities in their
respective positions on the role of consciousness, the fundamental importance of sociality and the functions of language and communication in human existence. Finally, I have raised some frequent criticisms in relation to both Levinas and Schutz that are important for a project like mine and attempted to indicate how situating each writer in respect to the other can both provide alternative responses to these criticisms and facilitate my project.

PART TWO: ECHOES OF THE OTHER

Introduction

This next part outlines my heuristic device Echoes of the Other as a method for synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas. The purpose of this device is to provide a way in which to locate the Other in horizons of the everyday world. In keeping with my aim of developing an ethics that takes up the responsibility for the Other on an everyday level, it is important to identify ways in which the Other permeates the everyday world. In this part, I will present my reasons for developing this heuristic device and then I will outline how I will use these Echoes of the Other to locate the Other in the everyday world, as this will allow the ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world.

Heuristic Echoes

I have chosen to develop this heuristic device because it is attentive to the resonances of the Other without requiring definition of the Other. My choice in
using the term “echoes” reflects the positions that the Other is beyond definition and that echoes also defy a clear or sharp outline. In my view, echoes resonate. In so doing, echoes position me in relation to others and echoes also allow me to know that there is something “other” than me. While the notion of “echoes” suggests a sound to my ears that appears to arrive in a secondary sense, that is, as having bounced off something, without these echoes I lose my sense of being in the world. Echoes ensure an awareness of others and they also ensure awareness that there is always something more than myself. In my view, “echoes” are important for the ways in which I engage with others and with the world around me because they reverberate or reflect the presence of another. In that echoes resonate and reflect, they have an echolalic or repetitive character that further locates my presence in the world.

My aim is to use this understanding of echoes in order to focus my attention on this “otherness” that provides me with my sense of being in the world. “Echoes of the Other” will allow me to be attentive to the reverberations of the Other in order to take into account the diverse references to the Other in the everyday world. I will use these Echoes of the Other as a heuristic device to inquire into the different resonances, reverberations and resoundings which suggest the manner in which the Other can be located in the everyday world.

Another reason I have for developing this heuristic device is that it will enable me to “flesh out” intricate details of the relation between self and Other.

---

31 This is not meant to imply that being in the world is only available to those people who hear echoes. In my view, echoes reverberate through bodies, resound in memories and all forms of communication. Echoes do not only reside in spoken words but also in sign language, body language and in silence.
As I have previously discussed, this relation is the site of Levinas’s ethical relation and, therefore, is very important for my project. Using these “Echoes of the Other” to inquire into a multitude of resonances of the Other in the everyday will further enable me to point to the ways in which such resonances can be seen or felt in the self.

A further reason I have for developing an heuristic device oriented to the presence of “echoes” is that it emphasises the significance of communication. Echoes are the means through which something is heard, felt and communicated. As I have previously indicated, communication is significant for both Levinas and Schutz and “echoes” can be understood to emanate from all communication. In adopting the term “echoes”, however, I do not mean to imply that communication is confined to spoken words. It also includes bodily gestures and silences that act as forms of communication. Using an extended concept of “echoes” allows me to incorporate a multitude of ways in which the Other can be understood as an integral part of everyday life.

My development of this heuristic device “Echoes of the Other” also draws from Schutz’s view of the significance of the intersubjective relation in everyday life. For Schutz, the everyday world is structured around the dynamics between the known and the unknown, or, in other words around a ‘transcendent immanency’ (Schutz 1973: 26-8). Schutz’s work can be seen as an exploration of this relationship. For the purposes of my project, however, my heuristic device will provide the means to explore the ways in which Schutz’s analyses “echo” the ethical demand in the everyday world.
A final reason I have for developing these “echoes” that resonate and reveal with diverse references to the Other is that, as a device, it links Levinas’s view of the trace of the Other with everyday life. For Levinas the trace of the Other always remains outside signification (Levinas 1981: 168). However, for him, it resides in the sincerity of the face. My intention, in developing this heuristic device, is to explore the way in which the trace of the Other resonates and echoes in everyday life.

*Echoes of the Other: A Heuristic Inquiry*

My purpose in developing the heuristic device “Echoes of the Other” is to allow Levinas’s micro-descriptions of the significance of the Other to manifest in Schutz’s descriptions of the everyday world. This will show plainly the conditions that surround the ethical relation in the everyday world and thus, make it possible to distil the conditions for and features of an ethics of the everyday world. I will develop this heuristic in two ways. First, I will simply place the insights and ideas of Levinas and Schutz together. Second, I will be attentive to their analyses of the Other. I will focus in particular, on the ideas and insights they develop concerning the way in which the Other exists at the boundaries of human existence. These descriptions will provide the basis for an understanding of how the Other inhabits the horizons of the everyday world. In other words, these descriptions “echo” the ways in which the Other dwells in the everyday and therefore will provide the basis for an ethics that takes up our responsibility for the Other.
Using my heuristic device Echoes of the Other will produce three specific effects. First, it will highlight how the ethical relation is located in the everyday world. Second, it will allow me to expose the conditions that surround the ethical relation and, as a result, will point to areas that enlarge and diminish the ethical relation. The third effect of using this heuristic device is one of highlighting the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.

My intention in developing these Echoes of the Other, is to act as a guide, or synthesis of Levinas’s sense of the ethical with Schutz’s understanding of the everyday world. This will “flesh out” the manner in which the Other inhabits and affects the boundaries of human experience. This “fleshing out” will involve delving into the manner in which the Other can be understood to manifest at the horizons, boundaries and outer regions of the everyday world. My intention is to investigate how the Other can be experienced within the dynamics of the everyday world. Using these Echoes of the Other allows me to highlight the background effects and implications of an encounter with the Other. These Echoes of the Other are not attempts to create a list of the characteristics of the Other. Rather, my intention is to indicate the multiple ways in which the Other could be understood in the everyday world.

Using this heuristic will enable a demonstration of the way that the ethical relation permeates all levels of human existence. This will demonstrate that, despite the fact that it can be covered over, an everyday ethics is a constant and intense part of everyday life. Highlighting areas of constraint and expansion of the ethical relation, however, takes seriously the possibility that being ethical, or
living well towards others, can involve conflict, struggle and confrontation, both personally and at a communal level. Finally, extracting the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics will demonstrate that taking up responsibility for the Other results in concretising ethics in everyday actions, practices and modes of engagement.

Conclusion

In this part I have presented my approach to a synthesis of the works of Levinas and Schutz around my heuristic device Echoes of the Other. I have discussed my reasons for this combination and my purpose in developing this device. I have indicated that these “echoes” will make possible a combination of aspects of Levinas’s and Schutz’s theories, thus enabling Levinas’s descriptions of the Other to manifest in the structures, processes and relations of the everyday world. These “echoes” are not to be understood as definitions of the Other. Instead, their use is intended to highlight the multiple ways in which the Other reverberates and, as such, can be incorporated into everyday life. Using this heuristic device will produce particular effects that expose the conditions that surround the everyday ethical relation and thereby identify the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.

PART THREE: ECHOES OF THE OTHER – SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Introduction
I begin this part by developing Echoes of the Other through bringing together Schutz’s and Levinas’s ideas with respect to the structures and processes of the everyday world. Echoes of the Other will be presented as a synthesis of their respective ideas on the social structures of time, space, knowledge and language. I will present this over four sections. I will begin each section by discussing their views on these social structures. Next, I will draw out these reverberations and resonances that indicate how the Other dwells in the horizons of human existence. In these four sections I will develop illustrations of the ways in which the Other is an integral aspect of everyday life.

Section one: Echoes of the Other and Time

Schutz and Everyday Time

For Schutz, time is a particular social structure that renders the everyday world meaningful. As previously discussed, he suggests that time replicates the sedimentary character of consciousness, or in other words, is dimensional. Time falls into two rhythms, the inner *duree* and world time, which simultaneously render human experience meaningful (Schutz 1967: 45-6). Inner time is the continual moment by moment flux of now. World time is the interruption of the instance of now. It is an interruption to the constancy of the now that enables time to be broken up into past, present and future. For Schutz, distinguishing between these dimensions of time highlights that time is open to the past and future, in that the world is experienced as having existed prior to our existence and continuing to do so after our death (Schutz 1970a: 136).
Schutz also suggests that time is constituted through the interplay between structures of relevance (Schutz 1970a: 15). The dimensions of inner duree and world time intersect with the biological time of bodies (Schutz 1970a: 181), thereby highlighting the diversity of the temporal. In Schutz’s view, while time is dimensional, there is ‘no one to one correspondence of simultaneity between the concurrent moments of events in each of them’ (Schutz 1970a: 181). In other words, there is no point at which moments in particular dimensions of time are in harmony. Indeed, the existence of these different moments in time suggests that there is a slippage, or gap, between the dimensions of time. For Schutz, this is symbolised in the phenomenon of waiting (Schutz 1970a: 181), or being in ‘readiness yet in suspension’ (Schutz 1970a : 181).

Finally, in Schutz’s view, these gaps in time are imposed through systems of relevance, and thereby, form an integral part of the dynamic of the everyday world (Schutz 1970a: 44). As Schutz explains, ‘waiting is the expression for a system of relevances imposed upon us’ (Schutz 1970a: 182 emphasis in original). The differentiated nature of time appears as a natural occurrence due to the interrelated dynamics of systems of relevance. For example, ‘I have to plant the seeds before they will grow, I have to depart from here before I can arrive there’ (Schutz 1970a : 182). The significance of Schutz’s analysis of these temporal structures lies in his views that time is multi-dimensional and that these dimensions are not in harmony. The disharmonious character of time is covered over by relevance systems, thereby rendering time chronological and a ‘taken for granted’ aspect of everyday life.
Levinas also considers time to be dimensional. For him, this refers to both the dimensions of past, present and future and to the interruption to the constancy of ‘now’. Levinas does not consider the passing of each new moment to be time, however. Rather, for him, each moment is purely the present. Levinas argues that ‘the definitiveness, which comes to pass in the present, is not then, initially connected with time: it is an intrinsic mark of the present’ (Levinas 1978: 79). For Levinas, interruptions can only derive from the relation between the self and the Other. This is because, ‘the distinction between the eternally repeated instant requires the interval of nothingness that only occurs between the self and other persons’ (Smith, quoted in Manning, 1983: 69).

For Levinas, time is also open. It is characterised by forms of interruption (Levinas 1969: 283), or what he refers to as the ‘diachronic nature of time (Levinas 1987b: 103). This means that while time is open to the past and the future these are not in any way modifications of the present. Time, for Levinas, is characterised as ‘irretrievable loss of time’ (Lingis, quoted in Levinas 1987a: xxvii). In other words, the constancy of the now is continually interrupted or pierced by the excess that is outside the dimensions of “now”. Time, therefore, is structured by alterity, or otherness of the Other, that is felt in the excess of these multiple dimensions of time (Cohen 2001:186).
The effect, for Levinas, of the differentiated nature of time is that time always carries resonances of its diachronic nature. While, on the one hand, there is the ‘time of consciousness that is the resonance and understanding of time’ (Levinas 1981: 37), on the other hand, there is time as the trace that pierces the constancy of ‘now’. Levinas explains that ‘trace that is not like any other sign . . . a real trace disturbs the order of the world . . . a trace is the insertion of space in time, the point at which the world inclines toward a past and a time’ (Levinas 1987a: 104-5). In Levinas’s view, the irretrievable loss of time, or interruption to the now, enables the addition of something new to being (Levinas 1969: 283). It adds the continual recommencement of time, or in Levinas’s words, ‘the production of infinity’ (Levinas 1969: 234). For this reason, the structure and nature of time can be taken to indicate that time is an effect of the relation with the Other.

*On the horizons of time*

Levinas’s and Schutz’s views regarding time provide several instances that expose the ways in which the Other resides in the regions of the everyday world. A combination of these respective ideas results in a conception of time as a relationship that revolves around moments, interruption, gaps, rupture, excess and infinity. This, in my view, illustrates that the nature of time requires a relationship with the Other. These resonances of the Other include reference to the Other as forms of interruption, the Other as enabling the addition of something new, and the Other as a constant force through the dimensions of time. These resonances can be added to Echoes of the Other.
The first feature of Echoes of the Other involves reference to the Other as multiple forms of interruption. Both Levinas and Schutz insist that a force is required to institute the break between the flow of each moment (Levinas 1969: 39, Schutz: 1967: 45). For Levinas, this is constituted through the alterity of another person, which, in turn, opens one up to the infinity of time. For Schutz, this force arises from outside the self. It is ‘experienced as a transcendence of my finitude’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 49). The view that the Other transcends my finitude means that the Other resides in the horizons of human existence. First and foremost, my relationship with the Other produces the background effects that enables me to open up to the essence of time. Forms of interruption resonate one way in which the Other resides in my everyday world.

Another way in which the Other “echoes” through the everyday world are those ways in which the Other enables the addition of something new. Combining Schutz’s analysis of the gaps in time that constitute ‘being in readiness yet in suspension’ (Schutz 1970a: 181) with Levinas insistence that these gaps enable the infinite recommencement of time allows for renewal, or in other words, the addition of something new. The Other is a source of these gaps in time that allow for the emergence of the new. This combination further illustrates that the Other occupies the boundaries of human existence through revealing the potential difference between each moment.

Echoes of the Other also include reference to the Other as a constancy over time. Levinas’s and Schutz’s positions regarding the dimensions of time
suggest that the Other is a constancy that intersects with each dimension. As Levinas explains, the opening up of time ‘reveals a past that is different from the self’ (Levinas 1981: 38) and ‘establishes a relationship with the absolute future, or infinite time’ (Levinas 1969:284). While Schutz suggests that time constitutes a connection to the ‘chain of generations that precedes the reality of my everyday life’ (Schutz 1973: 329) and opens up a future that is the ‘transcendent infinity of the social world’ (Schutz 1973: 330). Combining these views indicates that the Other links the past, present and future. These linkages establish, however, that these dimensions are not carbon copies and that each allows for potentially different positions. Thus, the Other can be seen to reside in the background effects that make possible both the linkages between and the differences reflected in the dimensions of time.

**Section two: Echoes of the Other and Space**

*Space, Self, Other*

Spatial structures in the everyday world interact with the temporal dimension and that intersection allows subjects to situate themselves in relation to the external world. The structures of space are significant in the context of the everyday world because it is through space that people connect. As I have previously indicated, spatial structures emphasise the significance of human bodies. Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world illustrates that spatial structures are fundamental to everyday life. The significance of the spatial, in this context, is that it highlights the physicality of bodies and the ways in which bodies
experience the physical world. The experience of space is always, in Schutz’s view, ‘lived through the intermediary of the body . . . it is experienced as the open field of my possible locomotions’ (Schutz 1970a: 174). This means that, due to the physical characteristics of bodies, each body is always positioned in space. Schutz explains this as the difference between ‘here, over and against an over there’ (Schutz 1970a: 175). It is the uniqueness of the physicality of these positions that provides the centre for an individual’s system of orientation. In Schutz’s view, this is the structure that enables bodies to come into contact and to share space.

For Schutz, spatial dimensions also provide the connection between the psyche and the physical. These dimensions constitute fields of experience that both situate and express the relation between self and others. This is expressed through the spatial arrangement of the life world into different fields of familiarity or strangeness (Schutz 1973:134). Spatial dimensions enable movements and expressions of bodies to be ‘interpreted as signs and symbols of events in the Other’s consciousness’ (Schutz 1973: 148). For Schutz, it is through space that others are grasped as conscious living bodies. Bodily presence and movements are perceived through space, such that the behaviour and actions of others can be perceived as typical and as arising out of a typical situation (Schutz 1971: 13).

Spatial dimensions are also essential to what Schutz terms ‘Other orientation’ (Schutz 1967: 163). This orientation requires the immediacy of sharing space together with some degree of intimacy that enables another’s movements and actions to be grasped. Space provides for the subjective
experiences of the Other through facial expression, gestures and sharing of common interests and common systems of relevance (Schutz 1971: 109). According to Schutz, this community of shared space is played out in particular ‘degrees of intimacy and remoteness’ (Schutz 1973: 353), and through the dimensions of distance and proximity (Schutz 1973: 148). The experience of ‘living through space’ takes into account the manner in which individual’s share space with intimate friends and anonymous others.32

Levinas, Space and Bodies

Levinas’s view of space also highlights the significance of bodies. For Levinas, space is something that is both shared and lived through. Space is more than a ‘geometrical and physical impassiveness . . . that receives a cultural layer’ (Levinas 1981: 81). Instead, the ‘impassiveness of space refers to the absolute coexistence . . . of all points, being together at all points without any privilege’ (Levinas 1981: 81). Space, therefore, is more than simply the sharing of locations in a cultural context. Instead, it includes references to the manner in which bodies come together through their animation and signification. In Levinas’s view, the way in which bodies come together through space is the origin of humanity (Levinas 1981: 81).

The fact that Levinas considers space to be more than a geometrical plane leads him to treat it as one of the indeterminate forces that animate the human body (Levinas 1981: 70). The body is animated through its immersion in the

32 Steven Vaitakus (1999: 126-7) argues that Schutz takes the dimensions of proximity and remoteness to be important aspects of the everyday world, though he does not provide an analysis of these conditions.
sensuous elements of human life. This enables me to be open to the Other. For Levinas, ‘animation can be understood as an exposure to the Other’ (Levinas 1981: 71). In other words, space constitutes the site of an encounter with the Other because it animates the body so that the self and the Other connect. This connection occurs because space is more than simply a physical medium of the world. Lingis, in the ‘Introduction’ to Levinas’s *Collected Papers*, makes the point that

Spatiality is not laid out in being, nor being in spatiality. In the night, where the contours and gradated tones of things and of spaces between things fade out we are left not adrift, but in a plenitude, a spatiality without planes nor separations... without ends or beginnings... like a field or flow of forces which vigilance cannot objectify... it finds itself held

(Lingis, in Levinas 1987a: xxvii).

As this quotation indicates, spatial dimensions allow for contact. In Levinas’s view, this is immediate and without any distinct points or demarcations.

Levinas’s concept of proximity extends the way in which space is lived through, as it entails approach, contact and the suppression of distance. According to Levinas, ‘proximity suppresses the distance of consciousness of...’ (Levinas 1981: 89). In other words, proximity does not mean being close to another person; nor does it refer to a sense of reciprocity between close, or intimate partners. Levinas states, ‘it cannot be characterised as a handshake, nor a caress, struggle or a collaboration’ (Levinas 1981: 83). Instead, ‘proximity is a movement, a restlessness, a null site’ (Levinas 1981: 82) that enables ‘a relationship without any mediation, principle, or ideality’ (Levinas 1981: 100). Proximity is the
movement of the subject towards the Other, but is a movement that does not contain any form of intentional knowing.

As proximity enables a non-intentional form of movement of the subject towards the Other it cannot be understood to refer to something that can be grasped or has a particular form or shape (Levinas 1981: 101). Proximity always refers to immediacy, or in Levinas’s words, ‘the immediacy of the Other, more immediate still than immediate identity in its quietude as a nature – the immediacy of proximity’ (Levinas 1981: 84, emphasis in original). The Other is always encountered, therefore, through the spatial dimension as ‘immediacy’. The spatial dimension is significant, in Levinas’s view, because it is through space that the subject is spontaneously “burst open” by the impact of the immediacy of the Other (Levinas 1981: 84).

*The Spatial Other*

The spatial dimension, as it emerges in the work of Levinas and Schutz, indicates further resonances that manifest themselves in *Echoes of the Other*. Insights drawn from Levinas’s and Schutz’s works suggest that the experience of space involves more than simple physical awareness. Instead, spatial experience refers to a relationship that involves bodies, the immediacy of contact, forms of animation, connections between the physical and the psychical and the sharing of space with other bodies. This illustrates that space is always more than an expression of physicality. Spatial experience involves a relation with the Other and points to alternative ways in which the Other occupies the horizons of human
existence. These insights allow for additions to Echoes of the Other. These include the Other resonating through forms of animation, reverberating in the immediacy of contact and resounding through drawing people together.

References to the Other as a form of immediacy can be added to the notion of Echoes of the Other. This reflects a combination of Schutz’s view that bodies ‘live through space’ (Schutz 1970a: 174) and Levinas’s understanding of the Other as a ‘sense of immediacy’ (Levinas 1981: 84). Synthesising these ideas suggests that bodies experience space in ways that do not, in the first instance, rely on cognitive forms of knowing. The Other is experienced through space as a sensation, or an opening up of the self to multiple possibilities that are experienced through the spatial structures. The Other resides in the background effects of spatial experience by enabling contact without rendering this contact knowable.

The Other also reverberates through the everyday world in the forms in which the body is animated. Combining Schutz’s view of the ‘Other orientation’ and Levinas’s understanding of ‘animation as a form of exposure to the Other’ reveals that the Other makes possible connections between people. This combination highlights that the lived nature of the human body requires more than simply being physically aware. It requires a connection with a force that brings bodies together through facial gestures and expression that are felt in the immediacy of contact but without any cognitive form. This connection exposes that the Other infiltrates the dimensions of space in the form of orientations that makes possible contact between bodies. This synthesis of Levinas’s and Schutz’s
insights further illustrates the ways in which sharing space always involves an encounter with the Other.

Echoes of the Other also include reference to the Other as a force that orients. This reverberation is derived through a synthesis of Schutz’s view that space constitutes bodies as ‘psychophysical beings’ and Levinas’s understanding of the animating forces associated with bodies. Combining these ideas suggests that a force is required to orient both the movements of bodies and the interpretation of those movements. While, in Schutz’s view, interpretation is always an effect of the typification process and the systems of relevance, he does consider that these processes are open to the pre-predicative level of human experience. In other words, these processes are open to “echoes” of the Other. Synthesising these respective ideas again reveals the ways in which the Other resides in the background effects of the everyday world.

Section Three: Echoes of the Other and Knowledge

Everyday Knowledge

In Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world the acquisition of knowledge is part of the taken for granted reality of daily life. As previously discussed, Schutz understands knowledge in the everyday world to consist of the stock of knowledge. This refers to knowledge in hand, knowledge on hand and knowledge at hand. The ‘in hand’ level of knowledge contains the fundamental elements that condition the possibility of all human experience (Rodgers 1983: 55). These
necessary elements refer to the unchangeable spatial, temporal and social features that are permanently present in the lived experiences of daily life. Schutz argues that such forms of knowledge include reference to the human body and the way in which it is positioned in space, the knowledge that the outer world exists and the knowledge that other people exist (Schutz 1970a: 143). This form of knowledge is only known in the present. It transcends the diversity of situations that make up everyday experience. Knowledge is ‘in hand’, for Schutz, because ‘no state of mind could be imagined in which these experiences were not present – although only in the margin, as integral elements’ (Schutz 1970a: 143).

The main significance of knowledge ‘at hand’ is that it contains the specific intentions that constitute our current experiences (Rodgers 1983: 54). This concerns the process of typification that is relevant to each situation in which we find ourselves. ‘At hand’ knowledge is immediate, in that it pertains to the current situation (Schutz 1970a: 144). In other words, knowledge ‘at hand’ concerns the means required to bring about certain ends in everyday life (Schutz 1970a: 137). Knowledge ‘at hand’ also refers to the building up of routine or habitual knowledge that form part of our taken for granted responses to common situations. In Schutz’s view, this automated and standardised aspect of knowledge ‘at hand’ can transform, over time, into knowledge ‘in hand’, in that the specific thematic field is no longer experienced. Instead, these habitual forms of knowledge ‘seem to be objects that pertain to the life world, as such, within which they have their well defined place and function’ (Schutz 1970a: 144).
According to Schutz, knowledge is derived from the social world. As Schutz explains, each person draws from a social stock of knowledge that contains ‘immediate experiences as well as experiences drawn from fellow-men [sic]’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 7). This ties our building up of knowledge to a particular world-view in which we exist at any given moment. Knowledge is fragmentary and inconsistent due to its socially derived nature (Schutz 1970a: 75). Schutz explains that ‘knowledge means not only explicit, clarified well formulated insights but also all forms of opinion and acceptance relating to a state of affairs as taken for granted’ (Schutz 1970a: 76). Knowledge is built on the various experiences and interests constituted through the processes of typification and then standardised in an attempt to render the everyday world intelligible.

The manner in which knowledge is acquired reveals that the everyday world is always opaque (Schutz 1970a: 149). In other words, the everyday life world cannot be fully known. While certain aspects of everyday life and its associated processes can be rendered intelligible, Schutz explains that ‘large dimensions of our life world are unknown to us. This is nothing else but another expression for the experience of transcendent character that is immanent to our lives’ (Schutz 1970a: 149). This illustrates that the everyday world is rendered intelligible through the sedimentation of knowledge and typification, but underlying this process is always a reference to the unknown. As Schutz explains, the structure of knowledge in the everyday world indicates that ‘there will always be, by necessity, regions of the unknown’ (Schutz 1970a: 152).

*Levinas and Knowledge*
Levinas suggests that knowledge pertains to human experience because it renders concrete the given world we inhabit (Levinas 1989: 76). Knowledge, in Levinas’s view, is the relation between perceiving and perceived, in that a concept, object or matter is comprehended and, as such, understood (Levinas 1989: 64). The relationship between comprehension and understanding, for Levinas, involves a form of seizure, or grasping, whereby something is seized and made into our own (Levinas 1989: 76). Levinas explains that ‘the known is understood and so appropriated by knowledge, and as it were freed of its otherness’ (Levinas 1989: 76, emphasis in original). In other words, for something to be known requires taking up the matter or object in order to grasp its characteristic properties. Knowledge, in Levinas’s view, refers to the ways in which concepts and matters are ‘filled out’ and, thereby rendered knowable.

Knowledge, according to Levinas, is also dimensional. For perception and understanding to occur the object of concern must be re-presented through thought, or as Levinas explains, ‘knowledge is representation, a return to presence’ (Levinas 1989: 77). This re-presentation of things and concepts, however, also involves a lapse between the presence of the object and the subject concerned (Levinas 1989: 79). This lapse enables the activity of thought to grasp or appropriate the entity and refer it back to the structures of reasoning, thus marking off certain aspects of the subject concerned. Knowledge contains the dimension of the known together with the act of knowing; also integral to knowledge is the splitting off of the mode of appearing. As Levinas explains, ‘operations of knowledge re-establish rationality behind the diachrony of
becoming in which presence occurs or is foreseen’ (Levinas 1989: 78, emphasis in original). In short, the structures of knowledge seek constantly fundamental elements to build up knowledge in order to render something knowable. This re-establishment of rationality, in Levinas’s view, necessarily covers the aspect of knowledge that is marked off and left to the margins of existence.

Levinas also views knowledge as derived from the social world. For Levinas, the spark that ignites the questioning that constitutes the acquisition of knowledge is an effect of the encounter between selves and others. As Levinas explains, the ‘birth of the question’ comes ‘from the responsibility for the Other’ (Levinas 1981: 157). Knowledge is not just a capacity of the mind it involves a form of directionality (Manning 1993: 185). Levinas does not discount the manner in which knowledge is acquired, nor does he challenge the importance of knowledge. Rather, he suggests that underlying the acquisition of knowledge is always an orientation that directs. It is a force of all-pervasive interestedness that enables people to be open.

For Levinas, the tension between the push to know and the passive state that is fundamental to the self creates openness to something greater that cannot be comprehended. Levinas asks ‘whether, beyond knowledge and its hold on being, a more urgent form does not emerge, that of wisdom’ (Levinas 1989: 78). For Levinas, wisdom arises with the birth of the question in the context of questioning and responding. Levinas states, ‘to be open to question, but also to questioning, is to have to respond’ (Levinas 1989: 82). In short, Levinas’s
analysis of knowledge indicates that underlying any form of knowledge is openness to something that cannot be comprehended.

Levinas’s analysis of knowledge also raises important points about the limits of knowledge. Levinas argues that knowledge involves ambiguity, in that there is always more than one possible way to know something (Levinas 1981: 49). Levinas’s concern is with the dimensions of knowledge that are left to the margins of existence. Richard Cohen argues that Levinas’s project is an attempt to show that knowledge, on its own, cannot determine what is valuable because it ‘remains indifferent to the very humanity of the human’ (Cohen 2001: 4). For Levinas, embedded within the push for rationality is a repetition of the push to know. For him, this has the capacity to push humanity to the sidelines.

**Knowledge and the Other**

Knowledge, understood from the perspectives of Schutz and Levinas, involves a relationship between people and not just a relationship to objects, matters or concerns. Both Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas suggest that the acquisition of knowledge is always an open ended process. They also indicate that all forms of knowledge necessarily mark off other ways of knowing, which illustrates the limited nature of knowledge. Synthesising their positions suggests that knowledge involves a relationship between people and between people and objects, matters, concerns and that a part of knowledge is “marked off” in the sidelines of human existence. The “echoes” of the Other that reverberate through the everyday world include, in this context, the Other resonating in the openness.
of knowledge, in interruptions and disturbances to knowledge through questions and in an orientation that begets a pervasive form of interestedness. These resonances of the Other add to my understanding of Echoes of the Other.

The first feature that can be added to Echoes of the Other relates to the openness of knowledge. Both Levinas and Schutz acknowledge that forms of knowing revolve around the distinction between the known and the unknown. Levinas, in particular, argues that the push to know poses a problem because ‘forms of common knowledge proceed toward a unity’ (Levinas 1969: 302). The appearance of knowledge as a unity, or coherent whole, necessarily marks off aspects of the subject that is known. The Other can be understood as residing in the transcendent features of knowledge, of the features that are excluded. This is not to imply that these aspects of knowledge represent better forms of knowing. Rather, it is simply to indicate that the push to know, which reflects a drive to manifest coherency, covers over what has been excluded from the development of knowledge.

The Other also reverberates in the everyday in the spark that institutes pervasive forms of interest. This is derived from Schutz’s and Levinas’s positions on the inevitable exclusions that underpin knowledge. For Schutz, these marked off aspects exert no force, however, systems of relevance “spark off” continual questioning and forms of interest. For Levinas, the spark that produces a need to question is an effect of the relation with the Other. The Other, therefore, resides in an orientation that seeks to temper the known with the unknown.
Another resonance that can be added to Echoes of the Other relates to the significance of the interruptions and disturbances that arise from questioning forms of knowledge. Schutz’s analysis of the structures of knowledge illustrates that questioning is a typical response in relation to subjects of interest. Levinas takes questioning to reflect a connection with the Other. For him, questioning is openness to the excess of knowledge that cannot be comprehended. Questioning and responding indicate a form of openness to something outside what is already known. Synthesising these views suggests that the Other resides in these aspects of the everyday world.

Section Four: Language and Communication

This section brings together Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas on the roles of language and communication. I have previously presented Schutz as understanding language as the typifying medium that provides a ‘treasure house of ready made pre-constituted types and characteristics all socially derived and carrying along an open horizon of unexplored content’ (Schutz 1973: 285). For Levinas, language is enigmatic (Levinas 1981: 156, 1987a: 66) and entails a form of movement that suggests openness to the Other. In this section I will situate Levinas’s micro-descriptions of the Other in the structures of language in the everyday world. This will require a brief restatement of Levinas’s analysis of language, as it is in this analysis that he makes clear how the Other resides in this realm. I will then move to Schutz’s analysis of communication in the everyday world. Finally, I will synthesise these views in order to locate the Other in the everyday structures of language and communication.
The Other in the Movement in Language

In Chapter Two I outlined Levinas’s analysis of the two interrelated aspects of language and communication. For Levinas, the Saying and the Said are the movement in language that suggest the Other. The Saying, is the part of communication that slips through the dimension of ontological knowing. It is the residue of language that escapes comprehension. It is the condition of all communication and manifests exposure to the Other. The Said is a statement or proposition. It is the space in which entities and their meanings combine such that entities are given meaning. It is the space in which truth and falsity can be ascertained and it is the necessary condition for all discourse. These two aspects of language and communication continually intersect in a form of ‘internal tension’ (Davis 1996: 88), which suggests that the totality of language is never fully complete.

In Levinas’s analysis, the Other inhabits language and communication. The interpretative capacity of language arises because language always carries the trace of the Other. This capacity implies a connection with an excess, or essence, that is outside the ontological Said (Levinas 1981: 170). For Levinas, this signifies that language always contains an interlocutor. In the context of language, the Other does not act as a decoding entity that unravels, or hears, what is truly being said. Instead, the Other signifies exposure and an uncovering of the subject. For Levinas, the interlocutory interruption institutes communication, he sees ‘communication as exposure . . . it is the risky uncovering of oneself, in sincerity,
the breaking up of inwardness and the abandon of all shelter, exposure to trauma, vulnerability’ (Levinas 1981: 48).

Levinas presents the movement between the different registers of language as an expression of the way in which the Other occupies this realm of human existence. As previously discussed, Levinas undertakes a reduction from the Said to the Saying. His analysis illustrates that these two dimensions of language occur in different time registers. The Saying functions in the register of ‘diachrony, or the piercing of time that cannot be caught up with’ (Levinas 1981: 89). ‘The Said is synchronised into a time that is recallable and becomes a theme’ (Levinas 1981: 37). As Critchley puts it, ‘synchrony reduces time to space. It is a conception of time that lets the past be recalled and the future predicted. And diachrony, refers to the coming apart of time, the inability to recall the succession of instants within memory or to predict the instants to come’ (Critchley 1992: 165). The Saying, therefore, is never revealed as a presence. It functions as a trace. Levinas explains that the Saying ‘is a presence of that which has never been there’ (Levinas 1987a: 104). In the structures of language, the Other is indicated through the possibility of continual interruption of the thematic push of the ontological Said.

Levinas’s analysis of language also indicates that the Saying precedes signification in the Said. It provides the conditions of exposure (Levinas 1981: 48). As Levinas explains, ‘to say is to approach the neighbour “dealing him [sic] signifyingness”. The Saying, according to Levinas, ‘acts as a witness’ (Levinas 1981: 150). It witnesses the expression of the Other and a calling to the subject. The Saying provides the means through which the subject is exposed to the Other.
Saying is this passivity and this dedication to the Other, this sincerity. Not the communication of a said, which would immediately cover over and extinguish or absorb the said, but saying holding open its openness without excuses, evasion or alibis, delivering itself without saying anything said . . . Saying is thus to make signs of this very signifyingness of the exposure; it is to expose the exposure instead of remaining in it as an act of exposing

(Levinas 1981: 143).

According to Levinas, exposure to the Other in the realms of the Saying furnishes the means for the subject and the Other to meet without merger. The Saying, split off from rational time, signifies exposure without the possibility of defence. Levinas elaborates on this point.

On the hither side of the ambiguity of being and entities prior to the said, saying uncovers the one that speaks, not as an abject disclosed by theory, but in the sense that one discloses oneself by neglecting one’s defences, leaving a shelter, exposing oneself to outrage, to insults and wounding. But saying is a denuding of denuding, a giving a sign of its very signifyingness, an expression of exposure . . .

(Levinas 1981: 49).

The Saying symbolises exposure or vulnerability. It holds the residue of the unsaid Said (Levinas 1981: 154). This aspect of the Saying provides the link between the registers of the Said and the Saying, as it continues the movement of language. Levinas’s method shows how language is in a continual movement between these registers of discourse, and further, how this movement highlights the ways in which the Other is an integral aspect of language, expression and communication.

The Everyday World of Language and Communication
Schutz’s analysis of language and communication in the everyday world also points to a relation between self and Other. I will focus on three elements of Schutz’s understanding of communication in the everyday world to indicate the manner in which the Other resides in the everyday world. These three elements refer to the non-conceptual aspects of language, a ‘tuning in process’ (Schutz 1971: 161), which involves the dimensions of time and the active process of communication in the outer world.

The first element of Schutz’s analysis of communication that points the significance of the Other is his assertion of the necessity of a non-conceptual component for communication. While communication is an occurrence in the outer world, it derives from some non-conceptual components (Schutz 1971: 162). For Schutz, the non-conceptual components occur in inner time, however, they do not equate with measurable outer time (Schutz 1971: 171). Conceptual meanings present types, but what remains unthematised is the layering of events that occur in inner time, which is a time different from the conceptual (Schutz 1971:173). In Schutz’s view, the non-conceptual dimension of communication in the everyday world links the ongoing flux of experiences between partners such that there is a ‘simultaneity of streams of consciousness that surpasses the conceptual realm’ (Schutz 1971: 173).

Schutz’s analysis of communication points to a dimension of language that precedes signification. For communication to occur between partners, fluxes of experience connect without any push toward the conceptual. According to Schutz, this is due to the polythetic structure of fluxes of experience (Schutz 1971:177). In
other words, polythetic layering does not rely on the conceptual. Instead, it functions in the constancy of the now, where each phase is not grasped at the moment of occurrence. These non-conceptual layers of experience parallel those conditions that enable the exposure to the Other.

For Schutz, this distinction between the conceptual and the non-conceptual can be identified in making music. Schutz distinguishes between the conceptual scheme of the piece of music and an individual’s immersion within the music. In Schutz’s view, the conceptual meaning of a piece of music characterises the music as being of a certain type. However, the non-conceptual aspect involves the on-going flux of an immersion in playing or listening to a piece of music (Schutz 1971:173). In other words, both the playing and the listening presuppose a relationship with another, together with a relationship with what surpasses the realms of the conceptual. Making music is an example of communication that highlights that a connection that does not require any formal concepts lies at the basis of communication.

Schutz’s analysis of communication also emphasises a particular ‘tuning in’ process that enables partners to establish a sense of ‘we’. Schutz explains that ‘all possible communication presupposes a mutual tuning-in relationship between the communicator and the addressee of the communication’ (Schutz 1971: 177). This process functions ‘by living through a vivid present together’ (Schutz 1971: 177). Communication relies on mutuality, but this does not occur in the realms of the conceptual. Mutuality enables connection without insisting on any form of
knowing. Instead, it functions as a simple being open to and an awareness of another presence.

Schutz’s view that all forms of communication necessarily presuppose a mutual “tuning in” highlights the way in which the Other resides in the structures of language in everyday forms of communication. For Schutz, this mutual “tuning in” has simultaneous effects in the outer world. Schutz explains that mutuality, which functions in the non-conceptual realm, also ‘warrants the simultaneity of flux of . . . experiences in inner time with occurrences in the outer world’ (Schutz 1971: 178). On the one hand, is the non-conceptual coming together of partners in communication and, on the other hand, is the unification and synchronisation of these events in the outer world. Communication in different time registers, therefore, carries these non-conceptual forms of contact.

*Everyday Language, Communication and the Other*

Levinas’s and Schutz’s positions on language and communication suggest some further reverberations of the Other that I can add to my heuristic device Echoes of the Other. Synthesising these views presents language and communication both as a relationship that involves people and as open processes. Both Levinas’s and Schutz’s analyses point to the significance of the Other in the realms of language and communication. Combining their positions highlights that the Other resounds in the instability of language and the Other also reverberates in forms of contact and exposure.
The Other resonates in an instability of language that adds to these Echoes of the Other. The idea of the instability of language is derived from synthesising Schutz’s view of the non-conceptual dimensions of communication with Levinas’s view of the Saying part of language. When placed together, these views indicate that there is an aspect of language and communication that exceeds comprehension. Locating the Other as the residue of language and comprehension reveals the ways in which these everyday structures provide the conditions of possibility for language to say more than can be said at any given moment.

Another addition that can be made to Echoes of the Other is with respect to the Other reverberating in language as a means for contact and exposure. This “echo” is a derivation of Schutz’s analysis of ‘tuning in’ and Levinas’s view that ‘exposure’ signifies a relation with the Other. In the everyday world, these dynamics allow selves and others to meet. The structure of ‘tuning in’ also enables the conditions necessary for exposure to the Other. While these conditions are enacted in the non-conceptual realm, in that there is simple awareness or resonance, they provide the conditions of possibility for connections between people in everyday life. The Other can be understood, therefore, to occupy these non-conceptual realms of communication. While the presence of the Other is not conceptually grasped, the “echo” of the Other is indicated in the form of interruptions or disruptions to the perceived stability of language.
Conclusion

In this part of the chapter I have developed Echoes of the Other through synthesising the ideas developed by Schutz and Levinas. I have focused my attention on the structures and processes of the everyday world in order to illustrate the diverse manners in which the Other reverberates in the everyday world. I have pointed to the Other resonating in the structures of time, space, knowledge, and in the structures of language and communication. In relation to time, the Other “echoes” in forms of interruption, and through the addition of something new. In the area of space, the Other “echoes” in orientations that animates bodies, and through immediate forms of contact. I have also highlighted that the Other reverberates in the structures of knowledge. These “echoes” derive from the open nature of knowledge and that orientation that sparks interests. In the processes of language and communication, the Other “echoes” in forms of contact and exposure and in the excess of language and communication. These Echoes of the Other that reverberate in the everyday world indicate the ways in which the Other takes multiple guises and incorporates multiple background effects that comprise the everyday world.

PART FOUR: THE OTHER IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction

In this part, I shift focus from the broad aspects of the structures and processes of the everyday world to human interaction in its many forms. In this
part of the chapter I will focus on resonances of the Other in the context of human relations in the everyday world. In order to further develop the notion of Echoes of the Other I focus briefly on the intersubjective relation, pay attention to relations between self and others and, finally, explore the relationship between the self and group dynamics.

**Section One: Intersubjectivity and Echoes of the Other**

As previously discussed, for Levinas, the intersubjective relation is the site in which the ethical relation resides. Therefore, in this section I will only briefly discuss different resonances of Other as, for Levinas, this connection is always ethical. The intricacies of the ethical nature of this relation will be drawn out in the next chapter when I attempt to locate the ethical relation in the everyday world. The intersubjective relation provides the basis for all human interaction and contact for both Levinas and Schutz. Both also view the basis of this relation as a non-cognitive awareness of the pure presence of another human being. For Schutz, this explains how a world of individuals constitutes commonality and, for Levinas, it grounds the identity of the self and commonality with all others. Both Levinas and Schutz also insist that the primary dynamic of the intersubjective relation is the face to face encounter and that the effects of this meeting are interwoven through the structures and processes of human existence. The primary difference between Levinas’s and Schutz’s analysis of the face to face dynamic is that, for Levinas, this meeting is always based within the ethical relation, whereas for Schutz, this relation constitutes the social basis of human interaction.
As previously discussed, Levinas considers the face to face relation to be the basis for human contact. In his view, the face to face is the channel through which the Other is encountered. The face to face is temporal in character, in that it acts to disturb and interrupt the complacency of the self. According to Levinas, the significance of the face to face is always ‘revelation and epiphany’ (Levinas 1969: 197). He explains, that the face to face ‘puts me into question, empties me of myself . . . the I loses its sovereign coincidence with myself’ (Levinas 1987b: 350-1). Levinas describes this revelation as a form of excess because the face of another gives to me more than I had before.

The conditions of excess or infinity, as effects of the face to face encounter, add to an exploration of the relationship between the self and the Other in the everyday realm. In particular, Levinas situates the face to face encounter as a dynamic relation that always involves the conditions of overflow, excess and infinity. He explains that the interruption to the self, provoked by the encounter with the Other, imbues the self with the idea of excess, the idea of infinity. In Levinas’s view, ‘to receive from the Other, beyond the capacity of the I, … means exactly to have the idea of infinity’ (Levinas 1969: 51). For Levinas, there is always an unknowable or mysterious quality, symbolised in the concrete mortality of another person that resides within the dynamics of the face to face encounter.
Schutz and Intersubjectivity

In Schutz’s view, the face to face encounter provides the basis for human interaction because it emerges at the intersection between connecting streams of consciousness. For him, the face to face intersects the inner duration, or the ‘now’. This means that the Other is always symbolically grasped. In other words, the Other is grasped through the symbols that represent the encounter. For example, I do not directly experience the relationship of friendship in its essence. Instead, I experience the relationship through symbols or images that express the mysterious character of the face to face (Schutz 1971: 317). According to Schutz, the face to face encounter transcends both time and place (Schutz 1971: 356).

Schutz also argues that the face to face dynamic constitutes the origins of awareness of otherness. For Schutz, the dynamics of the face to face relation illustrate that I can never be in a face to face relation with myself (Schutz 1967: 169). In other words, I require another flesh and blood person to face me in order to become aware of both my sense of self and my sense that my world is always shared. I require an internal openness to this otherness in order to experience the world outside myself. In Schutz’s view, this capacity to experience the world outside myself illustrates that I am open to meet the unique qualities and character of another person. For him, this capacity provides the basis for all forms of interaction between people in the social world.
A Relation with the Other

The preceding brief discussion of Schutz’s and Levinas’s positions on the character and implications of the face to face dynamic allow me to add to my notion of Echoes of the Other. The face to face encounter is, for both Levinas and Schutz, a relationship with the Other. The phrases that describe the face to face relation, therefore, resonate in Echoes of the Other. These refer to the Other ‘as a form of immediacy’ indicated as a form of interruption to the self and the Other as the ‘origin of awareness’, in that one is open to the unique qualities of another person.

The first Echo of the Other that reverberates in the everyday world relates to the Other as immediate sensation within the self. For Levinas, this refers to the suppression of distance between self and Other and, for Schutz, it refers to the mutual ‘tuning in’ within the non-conceptual realm. This highlights that, for both, the self has a capacity for an immediacy of sensation and that the immediacy of the Other is not brought to consciousness. Instead, the immediate sensation of the Other within the self provides the beginnings of genuine contact between people because it is based on sharing and not on knowing.

Another Echo of the Other can be found in the origins of awareness. Both Schutz and Levinas insist that connection with the Other, through the face to face relation, establishes a form of ‘we. This, however, does not refer to an enclosed relationship between two people. Rather, for both, this relation opens up the diversity of the social world enabling the conditions of possibility for a
multiplicity of others and selves to exist. The origins of awareness, through contact with the Other, illustrate that the self is open and that the Other is an integral aspect of relations between people.

Section Two: Selves and Others

In this section, I will focus on human relations in order highlight different the ways in which the Other is reflected in the everyday world. In the previous section I focused briefly on the conditions that indicate the Other in the face to face encounter. In this section, I will take into account how the everyday world is a mixture of many selves and many others. This requires a synthesis of Schutz’s and Levinas’s views on selves and others, with particular attention being paid to the manner in which the Other is located in these dynamics in the everyday world.

Others and Selves in the Everyday World

Alfred Schutz’s analysis of the relations between selves and others in the everyday world provides an understanding of how selves render intelligible a multitude of others in everyday life. In Schutz’s view, ‘all experience of social reality is founded on the assumption of the existence of other beings like me’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 63). As previously discussed, this world of others is stratified into the worlds of contemporaries, predecessors and successors. These others are constituted as either “like me” or “unlike me” through, what Schutz refers to as, the ‘they orientation’. As Schutz explains, ‘I experience others in various perspectives and my relation to them is arranged according to various
levels of proximity, depth, and anonymity in lived experience’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 61). My positioning in relation to others provides the manner in which I live my life with people, but the experience I have of another is always constituted from within my own stream of consciousness.

For Schutz, the move from the immediate experience of a face to face encounter to a more meditated experience of others involves an increasing amount of anonymity and reflects a greater influence on the structures and processes of the social world (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 73). The manner in which I experience others is governed by what I hold as typical. I do not, therefore, immediately experience the conscious life of another. Instead, I explicate the acts of another through the systems and layers of knowledge that I hold as typical for such social action. My experience of others is always mediated by social habits.

Schutz’s analysis of the everyday systems of relevance also illustrates how others are maintained as ‘like me’ or ‘not like me’. While these systems of relevance explain how themes and issues are rendered relevant to my life, they also provide a means to explore the ways in which relations between people are maintained in the everyday world. The relevance systems explain how the self moves through imposed horizons, such as space and biology, which cannot be changed, to the motivational systems of relevance, which are open to change. These relevance systems can provide a way to further explore relations between people in the everyday world.
Schutz’s analysis of the imposed systems of relevance illustrates the ways in which people are constituted as ‘people like me’. People experience these imposed practicalities as a fundamental aspect of human existence. The imposed relevance systems generate a form of sharing that marks people, in all their varying differences, as similar. People are born into a pre-given world; people share the experience of living upon the earth; people share some form of communication; and people, in varying degrees, experience life as embodied. These fundamental imposed systems of relevance constitute people as ‘like me’ through my sharing in the imposed practicalities of human existence.

Another way in which human relations develop can be seen in Schutz’s understanding of the basic imposed systems of relevance. As previously discussed, these systems of relevance give meaning to human existence, in that they provide the foundation for the natural attitude in everyday life. Schutz explains that these basic systems of relevance ‘are common to all social worlds because they are rooted in the human condition’ (Schutz 1971: 229). They refer to sex and age groups, divisions of labour, kinship organizations and positions of superiority (Schutz 1973: 330). These basic imposed systems of relevance establish how others are positioned in relation to me. They still provide a sense of sharing these imposed systems, as others are experienced as ‘like me’. (For example, ‘a woman like me’, ‘a member of my family’, ‘a person my age’, are examples of how these basic imposed systems of relevance situate myself in relation to others.) However, greater emphasis is given to the differences between people. The implication of these systems of relevance is that, while people are positioned as ‘like me’, they are also situated as ‘not like me’.
The next feature of the ways in which others are understood as either ‘like me’ or ‘not like me’ in the everyday world can be found in Schutz’s views on thematic relevance systems. As previously discussed, thematic relevance refers to the relevance something acquires by becoming questionable. In other words, it concerns the manner in which this thing is raised over and against a field of unquestioned familiarity (Schutz 1970a: 26). People who are unfamiliar or unknown are rendered questionable in relation to people who are familiar. The effect of the thematic system of relevance is that it emphasises differences between people. These differences can be taken up through the various forms of knowledge available in systems of relevance.

Schutz’s analysis of these interpretational systems of relevance also adds to an exploration of how others are experienced in everyday life. Again, as previously explained, interpretational systems of relevance refer to the manner in which any new theme relates to previous experiences and is incorporated into prior forms of knowledge. Others are rendered intelligible by situating their unfamiliarity in relation to past experiences of the self. This system pushes me to find some common ground between those people who are familiar and those people who are not. This is not to imply that others are known “once and for all” in relation to past forms of knowledge. Instead, these interpretational systems of relevance link into the multi-layered elements of knowledge. Others are known, therefore, in a provisional manner that is deemed appropriate for a certain point in time.
These interpretational systems of relevance also refer to the specific situational context in which others are encountered. Schutz argues that interpretation is always conditioned by the situation in which interpreting occurs (Schutz 1970a: 36). Understanding others involves knowing “how” and “where” another is situated in relation to the self. This also situates people as either “like me” or “not like me”. These interpretational systems of relevance, therefore, intersect with a multitude of forms of knowledge. Schutz’s analysis highlights that interpreting others always involves some intrinsic character that is specific to the self.

Another way in which others are understood is developed in Schutz’s view of the motivational relevance systems. According to Schutz, the two forms of motivational relevance, the ‘in order to motive’ and the ‘because motive’, inform relations between selves and others. The ‘in order to motive’ refers to planned or future actions. This motivation system provides the spark to engage with others. The “because motive” provokes reflection on past events. It provokes reflection on the way in which others have been interpreted and the manner in which I have engaged with others. These aspects of the motivational systems of relevance provide an impetus for the self to engage with and understand another person.

A final point that can be made in relation to how others are experienced and understood through the systems of relevance relates to the intrinsic character of these systems. As Schutz explains, these systems include an intrinsic element that refers to a building up knowledge. This institutes a reference system that is intrinsic to the actual knowledge gained. The intrinsic character of each encounter
with others adds to how I understand another. The intrinsic character of each theme depends upon the situational context in which I am engaged (Schutz 1970a: 44). Therefore, the way in which I know someone can be markedly different from the way another person may know that person. In Schutz’s view, it is the intrinsic character of each act or theme that constitutes the manner in which the self voluntarily develops ‘actual interests’ or focuses attention in the context of others.

**Levinas on Selves and Others**

In Levinas’s view, selves are determined, to some extent, by the structures into which they are inserted. These may be linguistic, biological, ontological or of some other form and are largely outside the control of the self. Further to this, for Levinas, the self cannot be the self-positing origin of the world because to take the position of self requires a relationship with the Other. As Levinas explains, the self is ‘without identity because the one self has not issued from its own initiative’ (Levinas 1981: 105). For Levinas, selves are always obligated to others for the constitution of identity and this induces a form of responsibility for the Other. In Levinas’s words, the self is understood as ‘the Other in the same’ (Levinas 1981: 111, emphasis in original).

While Levinas posits that the self is always in a relation with the Other this relation is ‘not self sufficient and forgetful of the universe’ (Levinas 1969: 213). Instead, this relation provides the means for social interaction and co-existence. In other words, selves are constituted through their relation to both the Other and to others in the social world. In Levinas’s view, the relationship
between the selves and others arises simultaneously within the face to face encounter. As previously discussed, Levinas considers the third party to be integral to the encounter between self and Other because it provides the impetus for others to appear. The relationship expressed in self/Other/third is not removed from the social world. It is neither more original, nor more authentic and it does not derive one from an other. Instead, for Levinas, this tripartite relation arises together in a proliferation of others, of which I am also one.

This three way encounter between self/Other/third provides, in Levinas’s view, the institution of a community of equals. He characterises this relations as a ‘co-presence on an equal footing as before a court of justice’ (Levinas 1981: 157). The third party acts as a form of interruption to the solemnity of the self-Other dynamic, opening the self up to the competing demands of a multitude of others. The one way direction of the relationship with the Other, must also support the force and influence of competing demands in the social world. The third party introduces reciprocity in the relation. This enables the self to take an interest in all others, which requires order, comparison, deliberation and impartiality (Levinas 1981: 157-8). In Levinas’s view, this is the first site of justice.

Expression is another way in which selves and others meet in the social world. For Levinas, expression has two significant features that enable contact between selves and others. First, expression combines the ways in which facial features and speech always act to disrupt totalising views of the self (Levinas 1987a: 20). In other words, expression, understood as a continual bodily
movement, always exceeds the momentary grasping one has of another person. Expression makes possible exchanges between people.

The second way in which expression makes possible connections between people derives from the connection between communication and expression. Expression entails a three way dynamic between the one expressing, the one to whom the expression is addressed and the idea that is being communicated.

Expression renders present what is communicated and the one who is communicating; they both are in expression. But that does not mean that expression provides us with knowledge about the Other. The expression does not speak about someone, is not information about a coexistence, does not invoke an attitude in addition to knowledge; expression invites one to speak to someone (Levinas 1987a: 21).

Levinas’s point is that expression carries with it the original command of the Other. This command resides in simple invitations from the self.

_Selves, Others and The Other_

The positions of Levinas and Schutz in this area raise further resonances that I can include as Echoes of the Other. Synthesising their views demonstrates that the social realm comprises complex relations that enable selves to develop identities and to comprehend others. Both Levinas and Schutz also insist that these processes involve a connection with the Other. Combining their positions on selves and others suggests that the Other resonates in the force that motivates looking beyond the self, the Other reverberates in a holding open of ways of knowing others and in types of expression.
That the Other resonates in the motivation to look beyond the self is derived from combining Schutz’s view of the motivational system of relevance with Levinas’s view of the third party. For Schutz, a spark is required to motivate the self to engage with others, and for Levinas, the third party constitutes the spark to look beyond the face to face relation. For both, a force, or spark is required to motivate me to move beyond the confines of face to face encounters to engage with others. Combining these views demonstrates that this force must come from outside oneself. The Other, therefore resonates in the force that orients me to look beyond myself.

Echoes of the Other also includes reverberations found in the holding open of ways of knowing others. I have derived this “echo” through synthesising Schutz’s view of the thematic relevance systems with Levinas’s concept of the third party. Schutz’s analysis points to the ways in which these systems enable the distinction between people as being “like me” and “not like me”, while Levinas’s view of the third party demonstrates how I can take an interest in many others. Combining these views indicates that others are always known on a provisional basis. The Other reverberates, therefore, in this temporary status and, as such, makes possible the conditions necessary to hold open ways of knowing others.

The Other also reverberates in the everyday world through types of expression. This “echo” is derived through synthesising Levinas’s view that expression invites one to speak and Schutz’s understanding of the role of interpretational relevance systems. Expression is one particular way that people connect in the everyday world. For Schutz, expression, viewed through the lens of
the interpretational systems of relevance, provides the push to find common
ground and, for Levinas, expression is always invitational and carries the trace of
the Other. Combining these positions suggests that expression and interpretation
enable forms of response. In other words, implicit in expression is an invitation to
others to respond.

Section Three: Echoes of the Other and Group Dynamics

This section presents further additions to Echoes of the Other through an
exploration of the relationship between the self, the Other and group dynamics in
the everyday world. This will involve combining Schutz’s analysis of group
structures in the everyday world with Levinas’s view of the communal dimension.
More specifically, I will situate Schutz’s analysis of the intersubjective structure
of groups in relation to Levinas’s insistence on the significance of plurality and
multiplicity as integral to the communal dimension. These two positions will
further reveal ways in which the Other reverberates in the background effects of
the everyday world.

Schutz and the Everyday World of Groups

In his analysis of the everyday world, Schutz points to the multi-layered
structure of the intersubjective relation. For him, the first layer is most commonly
experienced through the face to face relation, then contemporaries, with
successors and predecessors following. While the first layer of the intersubjective
relation refers to the face to face encounter, the second layer is played out through
group membership (Schutz 1971: 229). Schutz’s analysis highlights the ways in which the transcendent character of the Other is covered over. His analysis suggests that other people are rendered intelligible through modes of typicality, systems of relevance and various elements of knowledge that constitute the everyday world.

As previously discussed, for Schutz, groups equalise and standardise behaviour and, thus, render the everyday world of human relations intelligible. Schutz argues that filtering the Other into the margins of experience through group dynamics does not erase the unique experience of each individual. Instead, groups enable my coming to terms with aspects of life that transcend my experience. Group dynamics, therefore, provide ways to explore the manner in which human interactions always carry a trace of the Other and therein indicate that the Other is part of everyday experience.

Schutz identifies how groups function as “in groups” (or we) and “out groups” (or they). The “in group” has particular domains of relevance that produce particular ways of life as self evidently correct or right (Schutz 1971: 245), while the “out group” may not hold the same established ways of living as self evidently correct or right. In other words, one group may have one particular understanding of what is right and good, what is sacred and taboo, while another group has a completely different view. This can often lead to judgements of moral inferiority (Schutz 1971: 245). Schutz’s analysis highlights that groups often act from a position of “we” or “us” in relation to groups of “they” or “them”. If no
common ground can be established that will allow for the translation of the truths of each group, then judgements of the “them” as morally inferior are likely.

Schutz’s analysis of groups also provides a way to understand how the ordered everyday world encompasses a variety of heterogenous elements. The break down into groups of “we” and “they” makes possible the attachment of values to groups. This attachment of values will vary from group to group. Schutz argues that ‘that which is comparable in terms of the system of one domain is not comparable in terms of other systems and for this reason the application of yardsticks not pertaining to the same domain of relevances leads to axiological (moral) inconsistencies’ (Schutz 1971: 240). In other words, what is significant for one group does not necessarily translate into significance for another group. The “truths” and “values” of each group cannot be judged, therefore, in relation to one another (despite what members of these groups believe). Schutz’s analysis demonstrates that the significance of groups lies in the diversity of their modes of typification and relevance systems and thus their values and ways of life.

*The Communal Dimension*

Levinas also examines the communal dimension. His concern is with the ways in which this dimension covers over the unique character of each individual. In other words, his concern is with the denial of the significance of the Other, which, in turn, enables the denial of my responsibility for the Other. According to Levinas, the insistence on questioning and learning is integral to the communal
dimension. For him, these characteristics provide an endless horizon that makes possible interruptions to all forms of totalisation.

Levinas argues that the modern community has a tendency to make all people anonymous (Levinas 1989: 212). Anonymity leads to a faceless populace that is open to manipulation and as a result the denial of the significance of the Other. Levinas explains that

the problem of community is without doubt topical . . . due to the unease felt . . . within a society whose boundaries have become, in a sense, planetary; a society in which due to the ease of modern communications and transport, and the world wide scale of its industrial economy, each person feel simultaneously that he [sic] is related to humanity as a whole, and equally that he is alone and lost (Levinas 1989: 212).

In Levinas’s view, the effect of modern society is catastrophic, in that the self is blind to the face of the Other. People ‘find themselves side by side rather than face to face’ (Levinas 1989: 212). This anaesthetises us to the expression of the Other, thus enabling the denial of our responsibility for the Other.

Levinas argues that the possibility to interrupt the push towards anonymity is always available within the communal dimension. He claims that there is always a trace of the margins in ‘humility, responsibility and sacrifice’ (Levinas 1969: 64) that suggests a connection with the Other. According to Levinas, these responses encourage plurality and multiplicity within a community. Whenever we respond out of responsibility for others, acting with humility toward or sacrificing for others irrespective whether they belong to “we” or “they”, then we act from
the dynamics of the ethical relation. These characteristics make possible interruptions to the standardisation inherent in group dynamics.

Levinas also points to the importance of inquiry and teaching in the communal dimension. In Levinas’s view, the fact that selves are open to the call of the Other ‘institutes inquiry and teaching’ (Levinas 1969: 203). Inquiry opens us up to the communal dimension and teaching is generated through exposure to numerous others. Learning through others in the communal dimension involves allowing others to teach us different ways of responding, different ways of knowing and different ways of giving. For Levinas, the communal dimension has the capacity to render people anonymous but also makes possible multiple forms of human engagement.

_The Other and Group Dynamics_

Schutz’s and Levinas’s ideas illustrate the ways in which the Other is reflected in the everyday world. A combination of these ideas indicates that the Other resides in the background of group dynamics and the community at large. These ideas demonstrate that, while groups standardise human characteristics, an “echo” of the Other resonates in the capacity of group dynamics to make possible learning through others.

This resonance of the Other that arises from the way in which groups make possible learning through others creates a combination of Schutz’s and Levinas’s ideas. It combines Schutz’s view that groups constitute a diversity of values and
ways of life and Levinas’s insistence on the importance of plurality and multiplicity. For both, the communal world entails multiple groups and multiple ways of engaging with groups. While the dynamics of everyday structures constitute the conditions that can close down interactions between groups, the everyday world also contains the capacity to generate connections between groups. Further, Schutz’s and Levinas’s ideas illustrate that an orientation or force enables the connections that make possible conditions that are conducive to encourage learning through others. A synthesis of these ideas allows the Other to resonate in the conditions that enable learning through others.

Echoes of the Other also includes the Other’s resonance in forms of inquiry. Again, this reflects a synthesis of Schutz’s view of the diverse nature of groups and Levinas’s understanding of the Other as symbolised in forms of inquiry. The Other, which resides in the multiplicity of diverse groups within the everyday world, enables interactions between groups. Locating the Other in these conditions takes seriously the fact that everyday life can involve antagonisms and conflicts between groups. Through opening up forms of inquiry, however, new ways of acting, thinking and behaving, both towards and within groups, can be incorporated into everyday life.

**Conclusion**

In this part I have added to the idea of Echoes of the Other through an exploration of Schutz’s and Levinas’s ideas on human relations. I have synthesised their ideas in order to “flesh out” the ways in which the Other
reverberates through and, therefore, can be located in the everyday world. I have discussed their positions on the intersubjective relation, their views on selves and others in the social world, and group dynamics in the communal dimension. I have used this inquiry to make additions to Echoes of the Other. I have identified that the Other resonates as an immediacy of contact and in the origins of awareness. I have also suggested that the Other reverberates in a force that motivates looking beyond the self, holding open ways of knowing others and in types of expression. Finally, I have presented the Other as resonating in the capacity to learn through others in the everyday world. These Echoes of the Other illustrate the diverse references to the Other in the everyday world.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have drawn from insights developed by Levinas and Schutz to find traces of the Other in the everyday world. I have developed these insights in order to extend my heuristic device “Echoes of the Other”. I have done this in four parts. First, I provided my reasons for this synthesis. Second, I introduced my heuristic device Echoes of the Other and indicated how it enabled an inquiry into the manner in which the Other reverberates in the everyday world. Then I demonstrated how Echoes of the Other reflects Schutz’s and Levinas’s ideas concerning the structures and processes of the everyday world. Finally, I used Echoes of the Other to draw out Schutz’s and Levinas’s positions on the Other in human relations.
In this chapter I have used my heuristic device of Echoes of the Other to locate the Other in the everyday world. In the next chapter I will extend my discussion of these Echoes of the Other in order to allow the ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world. The next chapter connects this discussion of Echoes of the Other to the ethical relation in the everyday world. This will allow me to point to the conditions that surround the ethical relation and to identify areas that constrain and expand the effects of the ethical relation. The next chapter links into this discussion in that I will use it to extract the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.
CHAPTER FOUR
LIVING WELL TOWARDS OTHERS

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I developed my heuristic device Echoes of the Other to show the diverse ways in which the Other reverberates in the everyday world. I used this device as a method that allowed me to inquire the manner in which the Other “echoes” in the everyday world. My purpose was to present the Other as manifesting in the structures and processes of the everyday world. This chapter extends this discussion in that I will focus on the effects derived from my heuristic device. I aim to use the diverse references to the Other that I have discussed in order to allow Levinas’s view of the ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world. This will enable the extraction of the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.

I will identify the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics by employing resonances of the Other discussed in Chapter Three. As I have previously stated, Echoes of the Other represent a synthesis of Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas that allows the Other to manifest in the everyday world. This chapter takes up this enhancement of the Other by locating the micro-characteristics of Levinas’s ethical relation in the everyday world. Allowing the ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world will demonstrate that this relation permeates all levels of human existence. Further, presenting the ethical relation as always “there” in the everyday world will expose ways to diminish
and enlarge the effects of the ethical relation. Finally, allowing the ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world will indicate the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.

This chapter has three parts. In the first part, I will employ the resonances and reverberations of the Other, derived through Echoes of the Other, to situate Levinas’s view of the ethical relation in the everyday world. This will highlight the conditions that are required for the ethical relation. In the second part, I will discuss the conditions in the everyday world that affect the ethical relation. My aim is to identify factors that constrain and expand the effects of the ethical relation in the everyday world. In the third part, I will extract from these areas of constraint and expansion the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I will present this in three sections. First, I will identify the conditions that make possible this approach to ethics. Second, I will point to the features that comprise this form of ethics. Finally, I will demonstrate how these features represent a taking up of responsibility for the Other in the everyday world.

PART ONE: EVERYDAY ETHICAL CONDITIONS

Introduction

In this part I will employ the Echoes the Other to elaborate Levinas’s view of the ethical relation in the everyday world. The issues that bear upon this attempt to develop an everyday ethics require locating Levinas’s ethical relation in the everyday context. This will expose the conditions that surround the ethical relation in the everyday world. I will move through each resonance and
reverberation of the Other that constitute my heuristic device Echoes of the Other, in order to draw out minute details of the ethical relation. This will highlight the ways in which the ethical relation permeates all levels of human existence.

_The Other, Time and the Ethical Relation_

Echoes of the Other point to the manner in which the Other resonates in the structures of time. I have demonstrated through the insights and perceptions of Levinas and Schutz that the Other reverberates in the form of interruptions, in the addition of something new and as a constancy through the dimensions of time. While the Other “echoes” in these multiple ways, the ethical content of this relation draws on those conditions that permeate all levels of human existence. The ethical relation is not simply a relation with an ungraspable force that is played out over time. For Levinas, the ethical relation is a relation that is an integral aspect of human existence.

The ethical relation resides in the temporal structures of the everyday world due to the force of the Other. One manifestation of this is that the Other reverberates in forms of interruption. This constitutes one of the conditions that surrounds Levinas’s ethical relation, in that it allows the self to be called into question (Levinas 1969: 195). For Levinas, the self, or “I”, must be interrupted in the dimension of “now” and this interruption must emanate from outside myself. The self, for Levinas, is called by the Other and must respond to this call. For him, calling and responding constitutes the ethical relation.
A calling into question of the Same – which cannot occur within the egoistic spontaneity of the Same is brought about by the Other. We name this calling into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the Other, ethics. The strangeness of the Other, his [sic] irreducibility to the I, to my thought and my possessions is precisely accomplished as a calling into question of my spontaneity, as ethics

(Levinas 1969: 33).

I have also shown that the Other reverberates as a constancy over time. The ethical relation can be located in the everyday structures of time because of this reverberation. While the Other constitutes the conditions for the potential difference between each moment, due to its constancy, the ethical relation also opens me to the nature of time. In Levinas’s view, the ethical relation reveals that time is always more than simply the present. He argues that the present does not enable any movement on the part of the self apart from the repetition of each moment. Levinas suggests that ‘the self is a winter landscape where frozen beings are captive of themselves’ (Levinas 1978: 78). In other words, while the Other provides the conditions that allow for a distinction between each moment, it is the ethical relation that opens me up to a past and to a possible future that are not modifications of the present. For Levinas, ‘time is not the achievement of an isolated and lone subject’ (Levinas 1987a: 88). Rather, it is an accomplishment of the ethical relation.

I have also suggested that the Other resonates in the addition of something new. This resonance enables the ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world, in that it makes possible the addition of something different to the self. For Levinas, the ethical relation adds the weight of responsibility for the Other (Levinas 1981: 110). The Other constitutes the capacity for something new to be added and the ethical relation extends this into the realms of responsibility. As I
have previously discussed, responsibility, for Levinas, is an effect of the call from
the Other. It does not originate from within the self, ‘it dominates me, it calls me
to order, it calls me to respond’ (Levinas 1981: 110). For Levinas, responsibility
for the Other precedes any form of responsibility for the self and, as such,
emphasises the ethical character of the relation between the self and the Other.

These reverberations of the Other, or Echoes of the Other, illustrate the
conditions that surround the ethical relation. First and foremost, the ethical
relation opens the self to the beginnings of time. It is a relation that provokes the
constitution of identity within the self by calling the self into question. It is also a
relation that instils responsibility for the Other and a relation that is constant over
the dimensions of time. The ethical character of this relation does not refer,
therefore, to a form of deduction or weighing up of consequences. Rather, it refers
to my relation to the compelling force that resides in the Other. For Levinas, the
ethical relation is, ‘fundamental, original and essential’ (Levinas 1969: 29). It is
fundamental because it precedes the constitution of the thinking and acting
subject. It is original, in that this encounter institutes that separateness of the self.
It is essential because it is the basis upon which selves are located in the everyday
world as neither alone nor as part of a totality wherein all people are essentially
the same.

*The Other, Space and the Ethical Relation*

The Other also reverberates in the structures of space as it resounds in the
accentuation of bodies, the immediacy of contact and through drawing people
together. These reverberations of the Other constitute the conditions that surround the ethical relation in the everyday world. These conditions illustrate that the ethical relation is played out through rendering bodies distinct and unique and also in the capacity for distinct bodies to come in contact while maintaining their unique character.

The Other reverberating in the immediacy of contact illustrates one way in which the ethical relation manifests in the everyday structures of space. For Levinas, the immediacy of contact exposes that self and Other meet through the suppression of distance (Levinas 1981: 89). Levinas explains that ‘there is nothing closer than the closeness between self and Other’ (Levinas 1981: 82). This relation does not bestow meaning on the encounter. Rather, this relation is a ‘relationship with a singularity without the mediation of any principle and ideality’ (Levinas 1981: 100). The ethical relation, residing in the structures of space, enables connections between bodies based on immediacy and thereby exposes the unequivocal difference between bodies.

The Other also “echoes” in drawing people together though the immediacy of contact. The Other’s capacity for immediacy surrounds the ethical relation, in that immediacy allows the self to respond to the call of the Other. The self cannot ignore the call of the Other. Levinas explains that the suppression of distance ‘forms difference to be the non-indifference of the self to the Other’ (Levinas 1981:89). In other words, the compelling force of the Other requires a response from the self. The ethical relation, for Levinas, is ‘not a collaboration’ (Levinas 1981: 83), it is not based on an agreement between bodies to come in contact.
Rather, the ethical relation, in the everyday world is always the movement of the selves towards others without any reciprocal demand.

Another reverberation of the Other in the everyday world can be seen in the Other’s resonance through the animation of bodies. This resounding opens the self to the social world. The ethical relation resides in this push to act in the world. It resides in the impetus to move beyond the self/Other dynamic. The ethical relation is not purely a relation between self and the Other. Instead, the ethical relation permeates throughout the social world. It provides the means for social interaction and co-existence. The conditions that surround the ethical relation, those of interruption and immediacy, ensure that this relation is always one of movement beyond self and Other. Levinas explains that,

If proximity ordered me alone there would not have been any problem . . . A question would not have been born, nor consciousness, nor self consciousness. The responsibility for the Other is an immediacy antecedent to questions, it is proximity. It is troubled and becomes a problem when a third party enters


Knowledge, the Other and the Ethical Relation

The discussion of Echoes of the Other in the preceding chapter also exposed the ways in which the Other resonates in the structures of knowledge. Insights from Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas suggest that the Other “echoes” in the openness of knowledge, in pervasive forms of interest and in interruptions and disturbances of the push of knowledge. These reverberations of the Other
illustrate further conditions of the ethical relation. These conditions indicate that
the ethical relation is located in the everyday world as a force that seeks to
balance the push of knowledge through interruptions and connections to people.

That the Other resonates in the openness of knowledge also means that the
ethical relation can be located in these everyday structures. The Other’s
reverberation in these open structures demonstrates that knowledge is always a
relation that revolves around the known and the unknown. These conditions
surround the ethical relation, in that they make possible continual interruption to
and disruption of the push for more and better knowledge. The ethical relation
does not eschew forms of knowledge. Rather, through the force of the Other, the
ethical relation takes up the significance of compassion, kindness and sincerity as
more urgent than any form of knowing (Levinas 1981: 164-5). The ethical
relation is located in the everyday world in attempts to seek a balance between the
push for knowledge and interruptions to the adventure of knowledge.

The Other also resounds in the everyday in the form of a spark that enables
extensive forms of interest. This makes possible those conditions that bring
people together. The Other, in these instances, surrounds the ethical relation by
making possible the connection with the dimensions of goodness (Levinas 1969:
305). For Levinas, goodness is not regulated by principles and ways of knowing.
He explains that ‘goodness does not radiate over the anonymity of a collectivity,
presenting itself panoramically, only to be absorbed by it’ (Levinas 1969: 305).
Instead, ‘goodness is always transcendence itself’ (Levinas 1969: 305). In other
words, within the structures of knowledge, the ethical relation resides in the
connections between knowledge, the dimensions of goodness (indicated in forms of interruption) and in the connection with people (felt in the insistence for more urgent forms of knowing).

_The Other, Language and the Ethical Relation_

There are these ways in which the Other resonates in the structures of language and communication. The Other reverberates as an excess or residue of language and communication. The Other resonates in language as contact and exposure. These resonances of the Other highlight the instability of language and expose the capacity of language to exceed what can be said at any one time. These “echoes”, which resonate in the everyday structures of language and communication, provide further illustrations of the ways in which the ethical relation is located in the everyday world.

The ethical relation resides in the everyday structures of language and communication because, according to Levinas, it is ‘pure communication’ (Levinas 1987a: 119). The Other, reverberating in the aspects of language and communication that escape comprehension makes possible this pure or ‘original language’ (Levinas 1969: 199). These conditions surround the ethical relation, thereby allowing selves and others to meet without merger through words. For Levinas, the original language, or the Saying, does not represent a verbal interaction with the Other. Rather, it is founded in a wordless approach to the Other.
Another way in which the ethical relation can be manifested in the everyday world derives from the resonance of the Other that arose out of the instability of language. While the Other resides in the non-conceptual aspects of language that escape comprehension, the “echo” of the Other is felt in the conceptual realm in the ambiguity of language. The ethical relation reflects this enigmatic structure of language. It takes up the capacity of language to say more than can be said at any moment and, as such, constitutes a network of communications that do not reduce units to a totality. For Levinas, the exorbitance of language allows for the possibility to enter into ‘relationships independently of every system of signs common to interlocutors. Like a battering ram, it has the power to break through the limits of culture, body and race’ (Levinas 1987a: 122). The ethical relation, played out through the means of language and communication, represents the possibility of overcoming barriers in everyday types of communication.

*Intersubjectivity and the Ethical Relation*

The view presented in Chapter Three that Echoes of the Other point to the Other in the intersubjective relation indicates that, for Levinas, intersubjectivity is the site of the ethical relation. As a result, its structure and effects expose the ways in which this relation is located in the everyday world. In developing my device, Echoes of the Other, I have indicated that the Other resonates in an immediacy of contact. This is felt in the face to face encounter and in the origins of awareness, which is felt in the irreducible difference between selves and others. These resonances of the Other make possible an ethical connection between
selves and others because they do not determine either selves or others. Rather, these conditions maintain their radical difference.

The ethical relation can be located in the everyday world due to the structure of the intersubjective encounter. I have shown, in developing the notion of Echoes of the Other, that the Other in the intersubjective relation resonates as an immediacy of contact. This resonance makes possible the calling into question of the self and thereby exposes that the self is always conditioned by what is exterior to it. Levinas explains that this calling into question reveals that the ‘truth of being is . . . always exteriority’ (Levinas 1969: 290). The Other, resonating in an immediacy of contact, therefore, exposes that the self is not the sole originator of being. In the everyday realms of intersubjectivity, the ethical relation resides in the revelation that the essence of being comes from outside the subject.

The Other’s resonance as immediacy and the subsequent revelation that being results from a connection with what is exterior to myself reveals that the Other is not my equal. The face to face encounter exposes that I am only I in relation to the Other. According to Levinas, the ethical relation carries with it a fundamental inequality at the face to face level. This encounter ‘commences in the inequality of terms, transcendent to one another, where alterity does not determine the other in a formal sense’ (Levinas 1969: 251). This non-symmetrical relation refers to the radical differences between the selves and others. In the everyday world, the asymmetry of this relation resides in maintaining this radical difference and, as such, each remains irreducible to the other.
The fact that the Other reverberates as an immediacy of contact in the face to face produces a particular effect that also locates the ethical relation in the everyday world. The asymmetrical structure of the encounter between selves and others institutes within the self an obligation to and responsibility for the Other. For Levinas, responsibility, as an effect of the asymmetrical structure of the face to face encounter, does not carry with it any form of reciprocity (Levinas 1985: 98). Instead, my responsibility means that I must respond to the call of the Other without any insistence that the others respond to me. In the everyday world, the ethical relation resides in my responsibility for the Other, as this ensures that I cannot speak for others or take the place of others.

The intersubjective relation, which is felt in the immediacy of the face to face encounter, exposes the ways in which the ethical relation can be located in the everyday world. This relation, felt as a revelation, highlights the fact that I require another for my identity. This demonstrates that intersubjectivity is always asymmetrical which enables both the self and the Other to remain unique and irreducible to each other. The ethical relation is located in the everyday world in the form of disclosure, in that the self is not the sole originator of being. The ethical relation also resides in the everyday world by way of maintaining the irreducible difference between self and Other. Further, this relation is located in the everyday world in my taking up responsibility for the Other in order to ensure that I do not speak for or take the place of other because this would violate the irreplaceable character of each individual.
In developing the heuristic device Echoes of the Other I highlighted the ways in which the Other resonates in human relations. I suggested that the Other reverberates through a force that motivates me to look beyond my self. I also suggested that the Other resonates in holding open ways of knowing others and that the Other reverberates in types of expression. These echoes of the Other highlight the ways in which the ethical relation dwells in the realms of human relations, in that these “echoes” make possible the conditions to allow me to recognise differences, to manifest respect in everyday forms of engagement and to engage in forms of expression that invite responses.

The reverberations of the Other indicated in the necessarily provisional ways in which I know others provides the conditions in which the ethical relation can be located in the everyday world. For Levinas, the ethical relation is always simultaneous with the social world, in that it is tied to the social world through the three way encounter between self/Other/third party. This dynamic enables the recognition of differences between people. Levinas explains that ‘the contemporaneous of the multiple is tied into the diachrony of the two’ (Levinas 1981: 159). In other words, recognising others in the social world is always tied to the ethical relation because it is this relation that ensures that others are recognised as different from me.

Recognising differences between people, as one way in which the ethical relation resides in the everyday world also derives from the motivation to look
beyond my self. The Other, which resonates in this motivation, enables a correction to the asymmetry of the face to face encounter. For Levinas, this correction ensures the recognition of a multitude of others. For him, the tripartite relation between the self/Other/ third party pushes the ethical content of the face to face encounter into the social world. Levinas argues that this is symbolised in the birth of the question (Levinas 1981: 157). In Levinas’s view, questioning always “echoes” the Other, in that questions act to disrupt and interrupt totalising thinking in relation to others. For him, questions acts to correct the ‘tyranny of the universal’ (Levinas 1969: 300) and, therefore, constitute the means to locate the ethical relation in the everyday world.

One effect of the Other’s resonance in the motivation to look beyond my self is that respect for others can be located in the everyday world. For Levinas, respect has a dual meaning. It entails respect for my self, in that I am an independent being, but it also involves respect for the Other, in that I am commanded by the Other (Levinas 1987a: 43). In other words, respect involves acknowledging that the command of the Other makes possible my being and it also involves respecting my self for responding to the call of the Other. In relations with others, respect is always an effect of the Other’s call. It is not something that can be demanded. Respect, rather, as an effect of the call of the Other, makes possible an acknowledgment of the radical differences between self and Other, and therefore, between myself and the multitude of others I encounter in everyday life.
My suggestion that the Other reverberates in types of expression also allows conditions for the ethical relation to be located in the everyday world. Expression resound in the force of the Other by way of inviting responses. All types of invitation “echo” the first words of the encounter between self and Other. These words come in the form of an appeal. Levinas argues that ‘the face summons me’ (Levinas 1983: 110), such that I can assume responsibility for the Other (Levinas 1983: 110). In the everyday world of human relations, expressions that invite and welcome “echo” this summons. In the everyday world, the ethical relation resides, therefore, in all forms of communication that invite a response.

*The communal ethical dimension*

Focusing on the communal dimension generates more ways in which the Other “echoes” in the everyday world. In this context, I have suggested that the Other reverberates in learning through others. This is an effect of encouraging the diversity of groups in the everyday world and through engaging in a variety of types of inquiry with others in the everyday world. These reverberations of the Other surround the ethical relation, thereby making possible the conditions to encourage self reflection and dialogues with others based in sincerity. These conditions highlight the ways in which the ethical relation resides in my everyday interactions with a multitude of others.

The Other, resonating in learning through others in the communal dimension, creates further conditions that locate the ethical relation in the everyday world. While the Other resonates as an immediacy of contact, and
through forms of interruption, the Other also allows me to learn through others. For Levinas, the Other ‘brings me more than I contain’ (Levinas 1969: 51) and thereby makes possible the conditions for me to be open to a multitude of others from whom I can learn. Teaching and learning are, in Levinas’s view, always an effect of the ethical relation.

The resonances of the Other in forms of inquiry add to the conditions for the ethical relation in the everyday world. For Levinas, the Other makes possible the conditions for inquiry. He also argues that the ethical relation ensures that inquiries are conditioned by the capacity to be sincere. In Levinas’s view, sincerity is concerned with the ways in which selves comes in contact with objects that have more than just a utilitarian quality to our lives. Sincerity is always inseparable from giving (Levinas 1981: 142). It adds something that previously did not exist. Sincerity has the capacity to expose my vulnerability. Levinas explains that ‘sincerity undoes the alienation which Saying undergoes in the Said, where under the cover of words . . . information is exchanged and responsibilities are fled’ (Levinas 1981:143). In other words, sincerity carries the means of an ethical Saying. It carries dimensions of the ethical relation in the possibility of engaging in forms of inquiry that do not silence, dominate or oppress others in the everyday world.

**Conclusion**

In this part of the chapter I have developed the heuristic “echoes” of the Other in order to locate Levinas’s view of the ethical relation in the everyday
world. I have demonstrated the ways in which these diverse references to the
Other make possible the conditions for ethical relation. My heuristic investigation
has highlighted how relation permeates all levels of human existence. I have
located the ethical relation in the structures of time, in that this relation calls the
self into question, in the potential difference between times and in taking up
responsibility for the Other. With respect to the spatial structures, I have located
the ethical relation in the ways in which bodies come into contact, which enables
meeting without merger. In the area of knowledge, I have exposed that the ethical
relation resides in the everyday world through our seeking a balance between the
impetus of knowledge, interruptions from the pull of goodness and connections
between people. I have also located the ethical relation in the capacity of language
to provide more than one way of saying something, as this means that barriers can
be overcome. In relation to intersubjectivity, I have highlighted the fact that the
ethical relation resides in the maintenance of the irreducible difference between
selves and others. I have also emphasised that the ethical relation derives from
interrupting totalising ways of knowing others and in types of expression that
invite and welcome others. Finally, in the communal dimension, I have exposed
the ways in which the ethical relation resides in learning through others and
engagements with others with sincerity.

PART TWO: AREAS OF CONSTRAINT AND EXPANSION

Introduction
In this part of the chapter I will discuss conditions in the everyday world that both affect and are affected by the ethical relation. My intention is to emphasise that simply pointing to the ways in which the ethical relation resides in the everyday world does not automatically render the everyday world ethical. Further, my intention is to highlight how this relation, which penetrates all levels of human existence, does not necessarily come to the fore. Clearly people do not always act in ethical ways and Levinas acknowledges that modern society enables a covering over of our responsibly for the Other. This part serves two purposes. First, to point to the conditions in the everyday world that constrain the effects of the ethical relation, and second, to highlight conditions that can amplify these effects. I will use this part to show the manner in which the ethical relation is part of everyday life and how conditions within the everyday world can affect the ethical quality of this relation.

**Section One: constraining the ethical**

My purpose in this section is to illustrate that the ethical relation, while always already there, can be covered over such that its effects are denied in the everyday world. As I have previously shown through insights drawn from Alfred Schutz, the everyday world is dynamic in structure. On the one hand, the everyday world is constituted as taken for granted or “real”, and on the other hand, the everyday world is also underpinned by dynamics that transcend any form of knowing. This section will draw on Alfred Schutz’s insights concerning the everyday world in order to identify those conditions in the everyday world that diminish the effects of the ethical relation in everyday life.
Structures of Constraint

The first way in which the effects of the ethical relation can be constrained in the everyday world can be found in the structures of time. Schutz’s analysis of time illustrates that, while time is open, the structure of world time suppresses the dimensional aspects of time (Schutz & Luckman 1973: 45). This allows time to appear as linea wherein the present appears to be an outcome of the past and the past holds the possibility for the future (Schutz 1970a: 88). Schutz’s analysis also illustrates that relevance systems act to shore up the expectation that time moves in this particular manner. His analysis highlights the ways in which time in the everyday world is rendered typical and the passing of time is understood as familiar and knowable. Time is experienced, therefore, as a commonly shared phenomenon (Schutz 1973: 8).

Schutz’s analysis of time points to the conditions that make possible the experience of time as typical and familiar. Theses conditions can act to diminish the effects of the ethical relation. Rendering time as typical and familiar limits the conditions that emphasise the difference between each moment. Time appears as a repetition of moments that restrict the possibility for new beginnings. Limiting the potentiality of each moment can also cover over the significance of the Other. This can inhibit taking up responsibility for the Other. When understood as typical and familiar, time can constrain the conditions that surround the ethical relation and thus reduce the effects of the push towards being ethical.
The next way in which the effects of the ethical relation can be reduced derives from the process of typicality. Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world identifies that the process of typicality is an integral aspect of everyday life (Schutz 1973: 59). Typicality functions to render everyday experiences intelligible and meaningful. For Schutz, typicality refers to the way in which experiences are perceptually transferred to something that is already known. Typification, in relation to encounters between people, ‘consists in passing by what makes the individual unique and irreplaceable’ (Schutz 1971: 234) in order for another person to be known. In so doing, others are rendered intelligible by a form of equalisation and standardisation.

Typicality emerges from the confines of cognition. This process covers over the symbolic grasping of others in the everyday world. It covers over the immediacy of contact between selves and others, and it covers over the orientation that pushes bodies to act in the world. Screening these connections limits the conditions that allow me to engage with the unique and distinct quality of others. Typification has the capacity to constitute others as instances of the “same” through the effects of standardisation. This also reduces the effects of the ethical relation in the everyday world.

Another way in which the effects of the ethical relation are limited derives from the structures of knowledge. Schutz’s analysis of the structures of knowledge in the everyday world illustrates how knowledge is acquired through routine and habitual forms of behaviour. These routine elements of knowledge allow the everyday world to be taken for granted. In short, habitual knowledge
involves standardising ways of knowing so that we can respond automatically to situations in the everyday world. This provides ‘a system of know-hows directly tied to a specific relative-natural world’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 103). Routine knowledge provides the means for determining positions, concerns and relations with others (Schutz 1970a: 80). These stocks of knowledge provide the fundamental elements and habitual ways of knowing that enable us to encounter and comprehend the everyday world.

These routine ways of acquiring knowledge in the everyday world provide a framework for comprehending the everyday world. However, emphasising habitual and automatic forms of response mark off the “humanness” involved in types of knowledge. These restrictions confine the way in which our connections with others are incorporated into what we know. The ethical relation, with its emphasis on connections with people and the dimensions of goodness, can be covered over. The significance of these standard and habitual elements of knowledge is that they limit the conditions that make possible these connections. Reducing this connection further limits the capacity for interruptions to the push for more knowledge. The dynamics within the structures of knowledge affect the conditions that surround the ethical relation, thus diminishing its capacity to seek balance in the everyday structures of knowledge.

Everyday processes of language and communication also limit the effects of the ethical relation. Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world suggests that language is central to intelligibility, in that people require language to understand each other. Everyday language is a ready made system (Schutz 1973: 14) that articulates the
‘sedimentation of typical experiential schemata which are typically relevant in a society’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 234). Language follows preconstituted expectations that are typical of any given time. Language has the capacity to render anonymous the ways in which we come to know ourselves our environment and others. The anonymity of linguistic structures also enables objectification through categorization. Schutz’s analysis illustrates that this objectification process enables the first hint of “us” over and against “them” (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 282-3).

Language’s capacity to objectify elements of communication also makes possible a covering over of the instability of language. This constrains the capacity of language to say more than can be said at any one time. Language appears as ordered and typical and this reduces the effects of its enigmatic quality. Everyday structures of language and communication can reduce the effects of the ethical relation by limiting the influence of the non-conceptual aspects of language. Restricting the influence of these non-conceptual aspects of language closes language to forms of responding that invite and welcome.

*Constraining Relations*

The processes that surround human relations also affect the ethical relation in the everyday world. Schutz’s analysis of the everyday structures and systems of relevance illustrates the ways in which others are known through distinct categories as either “like me”, and knowable or familiar, or “not like me” and unknowable and unfamiliar. His analysis illustrates that these systems constitute the everyday world as definite, knowable and determinable, which enables people
to move through their daily lives. While these systems can support both the determinable aspects of everyday life and the spontaneous (Schutz 1970a: 41), they also have the capacity to mark off other ways of knowing because one system usually comes to the fore (Schutz 1970a: 101). Others are often known through prescribed categories that are an accepted and taken for granted part of everyday reality. Engaging with others through prescribed categories affects our capacity to hold open the ways in which others are known, and once again, reduces the effects of the ethical relation in the everyday world.

Schutz’s analysis of group dynamics in the everyday world also highlights factors that limit the effects of the ethical relation. Schutz’s analysis points to the manner in which groups are positioned against each other. In Schutz’s view, these dynamics mark off the unique aspects of each individual (Schutz 1971: 237). The effect, according to Schutz, is that groups are situated as “in groups” and “out groups” which makes possible the attachment of judgements of worth, superiority and inferiority. Positioning groups in such a way allows for the objectification of members of groups, which closes off possibilities for communication and interaction. The everyday world of groups, which as Schutz points out, is the most common way in which people render the actions and behaviour of others intelligible (Schutz 1971: 229), provides an illustration of the conditions that can constrain the effects of the ethical relation in the everyday world.
Conclusion

In this section I have illustrated the ways in which the structures of the everyday world act to constrain the effects of the ethical relation. I have suggested that the ethical can be constrained because time is experienced as typical and familiar. This reduces an emphasis on the potential difference between moments and that limits the possibility for new beginnings. I have also suggested that the process of typicality can cover the unique and irreplaceable quality of each person. This restricts the effects of the connection between selves and others. I have also suggested that the structures of knowledge can also limit the ethical relation through systematic, routine forms of knowledge. These restrict the effects that derive from the dimensions of goodness and connections with people. I have also discussed the capacity of language to objectify through ready made and anonymous structures that reduce the effects of the ethical relation. I have also raised ways in which the systems of relevance can diminish the effects of the ethical relation in the area of human relations through categories, such as those “like me” and those “not like me”. These, in turn, enable the application of moral judgements to different groups, which further limits the effects of the ethical relation.

Section Two: expanding the ethical relation

Everyday Structures of Expansion
The discussion of my Echoes of the Other presented in Chapter Three also indicates the ways in which the Other provides the conditions for ethical relation in the everyday world. Highlighting these conditions has exposed the multiple ways in which the ethical relation resides in the everyday world. These conditions also point to those dynamics within the everyday world that amplify the effects of the ethical relation. In this section I will again draw on insights from Schutz to discuss the expansion of the ethical relation.

While it illustrates that time is experienced as typical and familiar, Schutz’s analysis also highlights its transcendent character. Schutz’s argument that world time suppresses these transcendent features, however, exposes that time is not simply an artefact. For Schutz, the transcendent character of time ensures that there is always ‘a turning towards time’ (Schutz & Luckmann 1973: 45) that ‘opens the self up to others in time’ (Schutz 1973: 330). In other words, time does not simply constitute the continual repetition of each moment. It also enables connection between people. These transcendent features of time make possible renewal of selves. Time, while experienced as typical and familiar, is also experienced as more than the continual repetition of each moment. These conditions can amplify the effects of the ethical relation by enabling new beginnings and new possibilities for change in everyday life.

Another way in which the effects of the ethical relation can be enlarged derives from the structures of space. Schutz’s analysis of the everyday world illustrates that space is not an isolated or objective circumstance. Rather, space is always something that is lived through (Schutz 1970a: 174). This understanding
of space accentuates the situated nature of bodies. On the one hand, the structures of space render the orientation and actions of bodies as “typical”. On the other hand, these structures also make possible the conditions that highlight the situated nature of all bodies. While actions may be “typical”, emphasising the situated nature of bodies exposes the unique and distinct character of each body. These conditions can enlarge the effects of the ethical relation by allowing the inclusion of all bodies in everyday life.

The effects of the ethical relation can also be expanded through the structures of knowledge. The ethical relation, in these structures, seeks to balance the push of knowledge with questions regarding what is good and to connect these with the community at large. In short, the ethical relation accentuates the humanness of knowledge. Closing down this connection results from the structures of knowledge that standardise ways of knowing. However, because these structures are open the conditions for interruptions and disturbances are also evident. These conditions indicate that knowledge on its own, or knowledge without interruptions through questions and inquiry, is never enough. This makes it possible to enlarge the effects of the ethical relation because it highlights the links between knowledge and people in the everyday world.

The instability of language and communication also enables the effects of the ethical relation to increase in the everyday world. Both Levinas and Schutz suggest that language and communication move through different registers. Their work also illustrates the fact that these processes are open to the Other. This movement carries the trace of the Other into the realms of communication in the
everyday world. Everyday language and communication makes possible the conditions for the ethical relation in dialogues that invite, respond to and welcome others. These enable the effects of the ethical relation to increase through the emergence of inclusive aspects of language that open up dialogue in order for a multiplicity of voices to be heard.

*Expanding Relationships*

I have shown in developing my device Echoes of the Other that the ethical relation resides in the everyday world in relations between people. I have also shown how the dynamics that surround these relations can constrain the effects of the ethical relation. The conditions that surround human relation, however, also allow the ethical relation to expand in the everyday world. These conditions are evidenced in Schutz’s analysis of systems of relevance. A discussion of this analysis will further illustrate the ways in which that the ethical relation can permeate the everyday world.

Schutz explains that systems of relevance are not isolated or singular forms that can explain social interaction. These systems are open and interrelated and provide one explanation for how we experience ourself and others. The systems of relevance includes the topical relevance, which privileges unfamiliar topics over familiar topics, interpretive relevance, which reflects our attempts to grasp the meaning of topics, and motivational relevance, which encourages the inclusion of new and more themes. According to Schutz, these systems of relevance maintain the status of the everyday world.
Systems of relevance function in the everyday world to render topics familiar, to enable interpretation and to motivate the addition of new topics. These conditions surround the way in which differences between people are approached. While these systems have the capacity to mark off ways of knowing others their interaction also allow us to keep our categories open while still rendering others knowable. This illustrates that the prescribed categories that are taken for granted aspects of everyday life are not closed systems that cannot be altered. Rather, these systems of relevance make possible continual revision of and addition to categories in the everyday world. In short, the ethical relation can be expanded by the continual recognition of differences between people in the everyday world.

Systems of relevance also surround types of expressions that invite and welcome others. These conditions can further demonstrate the ways in which the ethical relation can be enlarged. ‘Systems of relevance highlight how particular values can arise’ (Schutz 1970a: 95). As a system, they provide an explanation as to how some types of expression attain greater value than others. Expressions such as a smile, a handshake, and a “hello” act to invite or welcome others. In the context of being ethical, these expressions suggest greater significance than those expressions that deny or ignore others. However, these invitational forms of expression do not insist on a reciprocal response. Viewing these everyday instances as an effect of the ethical relation illustrates the ways in which the effects of the ethical relation can be amplified in the everyday world.
Group dynamics also affect the ethical relation. Schutz’s analysis illustrates that groups are often situated as “in groups” and “out groups” and that these distinctions allow judgements to be made about group members. However, his analysis also exposes the fact that the self is always positioned at the intersection of numerous groups (Schutz 1971: 152). Engaging with different groups of others can amplify the effects of the ethical relation. The ability to interact with many groups of people encourages discussion and dialogue. These conditions can increase the effects of the ethical relation, in that they stimulate the inclusion of multiple voices and ideas and, in doing so, can add to the ways in which humanity is achieved.

Another way in which group dynamics can enhance the effects of the ethical relation relates to forms of response. In Schutz’s view, groups cannot be judged in relation to each other (Schutz 1971: 240). Rather, each group’s specificity must be taken into account. While the structure of groups can filter the alterity of the Other into the margins of everyday life, the way in which groups are responded to carries the effects of the ethical relation. Responding to groups through dialogue, discussion and debate, therefore, makes possible conditions, which amplify the effects of the ethical relation. These characteristics encourage new ways of engaging with and learning through others.

**Conclusion**

In this section I have demonstrated the ways in which the ethical relation can expand in the everyday world. I have discussed the conditions in the everyday
world that enable the effects of the ethical relation to increase throughout everyday forms of experience. I have illustrated the ways in which these effects can expand through the structures of time in the possibility for new beginnings. In the area of space, the effects of the ethical relation can increase through the encouragement of inclusive forms of interaction. The structures of knowledge can also allow expansion through the intersection between knowledge, the dimensions of goodness and connections to people. Language structures can also enhance the effects of the ethical relation through dialogues that invite and welcome. The conditions that surround human relations can hold open ways of knowing others; while in the area of group dynamics, an emphasis on discussion also increases the effects of the ethical relation in the everyday world.

Conclusion

In this part I have discussed the ways in which the ethical relation both affects and is affected by the conditions of the everyday world. I have pointed to conditions that constrain the effects of the ethical relation. This has illustrated that, while the ethical relation is an integral aspect of human existence, its effects can be diminished due to conditions that may exist within the everyday world. In the second section I have highlighted conditions that can increase the effects of the ethical relation. Together, these two sections illustrate that the everyday world enables both expansion and constraint of the effects of the ethical relation.
PART THREE: LIVING WELL TOWARDS OTHERS

In this last part of the chapter I will draw out the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. As I have previously stated, the type of ethics I am concerned with involves ways of living well towards others that do not institute universal frameworks or rules of conduct. Rather, I seek a type of ethics that takes up responsibility of the Other in everyday forms of action and engagement. This part will extract these conditions, or prerequisites, and features from my synthesis of Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas. I will present this discussion in three sections. First, I will point to the conditions that enable this approach to ethics. These conditions will illustrate that an everyday ethics permeates all areas of our life. In the second section I will extract the features of this everyday ethics. This will not be an attempt to set up principles in a systematic manner. Rather, my aim is to illustrate many ways in which living well towards others can inform an everyday type of ethics. I will discuss how these features take up responsibility for the Other in the third section. My aim, in this part, is to highlight how this form of everyday ethics concretises ethics in everyday forms of action, engagement and practice.

Section One: ethical conditions

The conditions that make possible an everyday ethics are drawn from my discussion of the ethical relation in the everyday world. Locating the ethical relation in the everyday world and pointing to the ways in which this relation both
affects and is affected by the everyday world illustrates how this relation permeates all levels of human existence. The ways in which the effects of this relation are constrained and enlarged highlight the conditions that make possible an ethics that can be practiced in the everyday world. Four conditions can be identified as prerequisites for an everyday ethics.

The first condition that makes possible an everyday ethics relates to the possibility for change. This condition is derived from synthesising the way in which the ethical relation is located in the structures of time, the communal dimension and the ways in which it affects the everyday world. Focusing on these three areas highlights that the effects of this relation make possible the conditions for renewal, the conditions that enable the differentiation between times and the conditions that allow for learning through others. Each of these conditions emphasises the possibility for change. This is integral for an everyday ethics, in that it constitutes the conditions for new possibilities. Learning through others makes possible new ways of acting and engaging in the world. The distinction between times provides the capacity for different ways of interacting. This distinction also enables learning from past errors. Emphasising renewal also makes possible a capacity for new beginnings. These three conditions demonstrate ways in which the capacity for change is integral for living well towards others and, therefore, provides a condition for my approach to ethics.

Another way in which a capacity for change constitutes a condition for an everyday ethics reflects the manner in which these conditions can be diminished in the everyday world. The fact that the conditions for renewal and the potential
difference between times can be constrained by the experience of time as typical and familiar limits the capacity for change and the development of new possibilities. Experiencing time as typical and familiar precludes the possibility to alter events. It also allows events, concerns and matters to flow in a continual repetition that restricts the conditions that make possible interruptions and new beginnings. Further, the conditions that close down learning through others also expose the significance of the capacity for change. Engaging with others through an objectifying lens constrains our ability to learn new ways of acting, new ways of doing and new ways of being in the world with others. The existence of constraints demonstrates the importance of the capacity for change as a condition for the development of an everyday ethics.

The next condition for an everyday ethics derives from the significance of the situated nature of bodies. This condition is derived from combining the ways in which the ethical relation resides in the structures of space with its location in the area of human relations. Synthesising these areas highlights the conditions that surround the ways in which bodies are interpreted and engaged with and the ways in which differences between bodies are respected. Further, drawing these conditions together also points to areas that constrain these conditions. This exposition enables forms and strategies of interruption to be developed that mean that the unique specificity of bodies can be acknowledged. These conditions highlight the importance of the situated nature of all bodies.

Combining an understanding of the situated nature of bodies with an appreciation of the manner in which bodies are interpreted makes possible
conditions that interrupt objectifying and totalising ways of interpreting others. Emphasising the situated nature of bodies also makes possible conditions for respecting the concrete needs of others. Linking respect to the situated nature of bodies allows concerns regarding each body to be taken into account. This enables bodies to be known through their specificity without reducing bodies to an effect of my self. Engaging with each body through his or her specificity is, therefore, an important aspect of living well towards others.

My contention that the situated nature of bodies is a condition for an everyday form of ethics can also be demonstrated by the way that this can constrain the effects of the ethical relation. That bodies are engaged with and interpreted through prescribed categories, such as “like me” and “not like me” and processes that renders actions “typical” constrains the relevance of the specificity of each body. Interpreting and engaging with bodies through prescribed categories diminishes their concrete needs. Instead, these prescribed categories place an emphasis on me, which further reduces my respect for the differences between bodies. Finally, engaging with bodies as “typical” standardises bodies. It reduces bodies to numerical attributes and forms of generality. These instances of the reduction of the specificity of bodies through prescribed categories expose the effects of limiting the significance of the situated natures of bodies. These illustrations further point to the ways in which the situated nature of bodies suggests a condition for an everyday ethics.

Another condition for an everyday ethics that can be extracted from a synthesis of Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas relates to the links between people and
knowledge. This condition is also derived by combining the ways in which the ethical relation resides in the structures of knowledge with an understanding of the communal dimension. Drawing these areas together emphasises the openness of knowledge while also pointing to conditions that allow a balance between the push for knowledge and connections to people. Synthesising these conditions demonstrates two factors. First, that the push for knowledge must be tempered by interruptions and questions regarding the use, value and worth of any form of knowledge. The second factor relates to the way in which people are known. Synthesising the push to render others intelligible and the openness of knowledge allows for a holding open of the way in which others are known in the everyday world.

The connection between people and knowledge as a condition for an everyday ethics also points to the effects of constraining this condition. The development of knowledge in everyday life is a continual process that builds on existing knowledge and develops these ways of knowing. The push for more and better knowledge is an important part of modern society. Also important, however, is the capacity for reflection, interruption and debate regarding knowledge. Without instances of questioning, the link between knowledge and humanity can be severed. The push to “know” becomes the guiding force and the connection to people is covered over. Further, the acquisition of knowledge also involves habitual and standardising practices that again limit connections with people. These practices reinforce prescriptive ways of knowing others and further diminish the conditions that make possible new ways of knowing and engaging
with others. These constraints expose the effects of reducing the capacity for new linkages to develop between people and knowledge.

The fourth condition for an everyday ethics relates to the importance of dialogue and discussion. This condition is derived by combining the ways in which the ethical relation resides in the structures of language with the significance of expression in human relations. This condition also highlights the importance of communication for an everyday ethics. Focusing on these effects of the ethical relation emphasises that language is always unstable, in that it has the capacity for saying things in more than one way. Further, language and expression in human relations open up forms of communication that invite response. These effects make possible conditions for engaging in dialogue and discussion through invitational propositions that reflect openness to others. Understanding dialogues and discussions as forms of invitation enables the conditions of possibility for previously silenced voices to be heard. This demonstrates the way in which dialogues and discussions constitute a condition for an everyday ethics.

The effects of limiting the conditions that invite response also illustrate the way in which dialogues and discussions constitute a condition for an everyday ethics. While language is inherently unstable, it is taken up through preconstituted and ready made systems. These systems make possible certain expectations that are prescribed in the use of language. Language appears as an ordered, rule governed instrument that enables the transmission of messages. These characteristics of language constrain the effects of its instability. They limit the capacity to invite by relying on typical and standardising elements that insist on
thematic language. Dialogues and discussions can follow pre-existing guidelines that restrict our ability to invite responses from others. This limits invitations by imposing standardising practices. This further illustrates the importance of dialogues that open up discussion through expressions that invite and welcome.

**Conclusion**

In this section I have pointed to the conditions that make possible an everyday form of ethics. I have extracted these conditions by synthesising insights from Levinas’s and Schutz’s works. I have suggested that these conditions point to the ways in which an everyday ethics can be derived by locating the ethical relation in the everyday world. I have raised four conditions that provide for an everyday ethics. These are those conditions that produce the possibility for change, allow recognition of the importance of the situated nature of bodies, enables an awareness of the link between knowledge and people and register the importance of discussion and dialogue. In the next section I will extract from these conditions the features that comprise the everyday form of ethics I seek.

**Section Two: Ethical Features**

The features of this everyday ethics are derived from the conditions that I developed through synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas. These features are not intended as principles that operate in a systematic manner. Rather, I develop these features in order to point to multiple ways in which living well towards
others informs an everyday type of ethics. I will present these features in two groups. The first group are ethical orientations that represent ways of accentuating connections between people. The second group encompasses ethical practices. This refers to processes, actions and activities that can be undertaken in everyday life. These two groups will provide the features that comprise my approach to an everyday ethics.

Ethics as Orientation

The first feature of an everyday ethics is an orientation that looks outwards. This feature is derived from the conditions that make changes possible. This orientation enables new possibilities through developing ways of looking beyond myself. An orientation that faces towards others, or moves beyond the familiar and the typical, uses the conditions available in everyday life to generate new possibilities for being toward others. An orientation of looking outwards enables new ways of living well towards others that are not modifications of past encounters. As a feature of an everyday ethics, it challenges the assumption that people are the same. It makes possible, therefore, new ways of living well towards others on an everyday level.

The next feature of an everyday ethics is an orientation that faces inwards. As a feature of this everyday ethics, looking within of self reflection, also derives from those conditions that make changes possible. These conditions emphasise the significance of interruptions to my self. Self reflection is an effect of these interruptions. Questioning my self and my assumptions and reactions to others
makes possible changes to the ways in which I respond to others. Further, self reflection also emphasises the personal nature of this form of ethics. Treating looking within as a feature of an everyday ethics highlights the importance of individual responses to ethical challenges. This also illustrates the way in which this approach to ethics is not concerned with developing universal frameworks for guiding human conduct.

These two features demonstrate that an everyday ethics involves a constant process in which I develop ways to look out beyond my self, to engage with others and to learn through others. I also constantly look within, reflecting on my self, question my self and question my responses to others. These orientations indicate that an everyday ethics is a constant and intense process that involves diligence and exertion. This is not to suggest that this approach to ethics is unattainable. Rather, they indicate that an everyday ethics always involves effort. These two features demonstrate that living well towards others requires engaging with others. However, the terms of engagement require continual interruption and questioning. It is the continual nature of the process that ensures that the ways in which others are known to me remain open.

Another feature that allows connection to others involves developing forms of inclusion. This feature is derived from the situated nature of bodies. Focusing on the physicality of bodies, their needs and concerns and the situations in which bodies reside emphasises each body’s specificity. Being attentive to the specificity of bodies makes possible strategies that can generate forms of inclusion. Orientations that emphasise inclusion require taking into account the
unique and irreplaceable character of each body. This demonstrates that living well towards others includes acknowledging the differences between bodies. Further, it includes respecting the difference between bodies. These features allow me to generate inclusive forms of action that acknowledge the existence of a multitude of different bodies.

The next feature that orients ethical connections with people relates to developing forms of communication. This feature is derived from the conditions of the ethical relation that emphasise dialogue and discussion. The conditions that make possible this feature of an everyday ethics involve communicating through expressions that invite and welcome. This feature orients us to connect to others through unconditional expressions that entreat others to respond without any insistence or demand that they do so. Connecting with others through this orientation creates the possibility for previously silenced voices to speak. This feature demonstrates that living well towards others involves being open to others and inviting their responses and welcoming their views without an expectation that they reciprocate.

A further feature of an everyday ethics that involves connections with people is that of humanising knowledge. This feature is derived from the everyday conditions that promote balance between the push for knowledge and connections to people. As a feature of this everyday ethics, humanising knowledge involves interrupting the development of knowledge with questions and debate. Encouraging questions and debate in the construction of knowledge still allows knowledge to develop. However, it ensures that the development of
knowledge is transparent. Humanising knowledge, as a feature of everyday ethics, demonstrates that living well towards others involves questioning both how things are known and how what is known can enhance the lives of others.

Ethics as Practice

The first practice that is a feature of the everyday ethics can be derived from a consideration of the conditions that make for new possibilities. The development of new possibilities involves the practice of learning. Further, learning is also an effect of looking beyond my self and reflecting on my self. Learning, as a practice of everyday ethics, carries an openness to engage with people, matters and concerns. Learning also encourages questioning. This highlights that it is through learning that the capacity to hold open ways in which people, objects and issues are known is developed. Learning, as a practice, is an everyday activity that connects people. It is a constant process that penetrates all levels of my everyday life. It therefore enables changes. Learning as an everyday practice illustrates the ways in which it can increase forms of living well towards others and, as such, it constitutes a feature of an everyday ethics.

Another feature of an everyday ethics is to the practice of being vulnerable. As an everyday form of practice, vulnerability involves being open to others. This practice is not a form of passive submission whereby I am constantly giving. Rather, vulnerability, as an everyday practice, refers to a willingness to learn through others and admit past errors and bad judgements. Taking up the practice of vulnerability further encourages learning and reinforces self reflection.
As a practice, it enables connections with others through exposing my self. It highlights the imperfections of being human and emphasises sensitivity towards others. Once again, a practice of vulnerability enables new possibilities to develop and it makes possible new ways of living well towards others. Practicing vulnerability also constitutes a feature of an everyday ethics.

Non-reciprocation is another feature of this approach to ethics. Actions, behaviours and practices that invoke living well towards others do not insist on any form of reciprocity. This feature emphasises that all forms of living well towards others are always acts of unconditional giving. As an everyday practice, non-reciprocity places the emphasis on the ways in which I engage with others. Emphasising non-reciprocation acknowledges two considerations. First, acting ethically towards others does not involve an agreement between people to act in particular ways. Rather, acting ethically is always concerned with my actions, thoughts and interactions. Second, acting ethically towards others does not involve making demands of others. Instead, acting ethically is always an effect of my taking up responsibility for the Other and allowing this to permeate through my actions, thoughts and interactions.

Another feature of an everyday ethics is the importance of debates and questioning. As with orientations that encourage connections with people through humanising knowledge, questioning and debating also informs ways of living well towards others. As an everyday practice, questioning and debating make possible the conditions that produce interruption to totalising ways of knowing others. Further, as an everyday practice, these features also acknowledge that
struggle and confrontation are part of everyday life. As a feature of everyday ethics, debates and questioning take seriously the notion that everyday life involves areas of conflict and contestation. Rather than allowing these to manifest through closing off discussion, debate and questioning, as a form of everyday practice, can generate resolution.

Responding to others is another feature of this everyday ethics. This feature is derived from the importance of the situated nature of bodies and the need to respect differences between bodies. The practice of responding to others, again involves being open to others. This carries the dimensions of the ethical relation in the form of sincerity, compassion and kindness. Responding to others, as an everyday practice, is a form of unconditional giving that takes seriously the need to respect others. This practice places emphasis on the concrete needs, concerns and conditions in which others live such that their specificity is foregrounded. This ensures that my focus remains on the other person, or persons, and not on how these needs and concerns impact on my self. Responding to others, as a feature of this everyday ethics, makes possible ways of living well towards others in which others are the primary focus. This further illustrates the ways in which responding to others is a feature of this everyday ethics.

**Conclusion**

In this section I have extracted features of an everyday ethics. I have demonstrated the manner in which these features are derived from the conditions that surround the ethical relation in the everyday world. I have presented these
features in two groups in order to demonstrate that an everyday ethics involves many practices that accentuate connections between people. First, I presented the features of this everyday ethics in the form of particular orientations. This refers to ways of facing outwards and inwards, developing forms of inclusion, communicating through invitational propositions and humanising the construction of knowledge. Second, I focused on ethics as a form of everyday practice. In this section I pointed to ethics as emphasising learning, being open and vulnerable, responding to others and insisting on non-reciprocation. I have also demonstrated through these two groups how these features make possible ways of living well towards others that inform an everyday ethics.

Section Three: Everyday Forms of Responsibility for the Other

In this section I will discuss how these features allow us to take up responsibility for the Other on an everyday level. My aim is to highlight the ways in which this taking up of responsibility is part of everyday life. As with the features that comprise this everyday ethics I will discuss taking up responsibility for the Other through types of orientation and in forms of practice. I will use this section to demonstrate how this everyday ethics, informed through multiple ways of living well towards others can allow me to take up responsibility for the Other.

Responsible Orientations

The first way in which I take up my responsibility for the Other can be found in the importance of orientations that look out and look within. These
orientations demonstrate that this approach to ethics involves continual intense effort. The effort involved requires that I hold off knowing others through prescribed categories, or at least keep these categories open. These processes of engaging with others through open categories and reflecting on my response to others also involve an engagement for and on the behalf of the otherness of others. In other words, maintaining the openness of the ways in which people are known is a form of taking up responsibility for the Other. Engaging in this struggle allows for the continual becoming of others. It establishes the conditions that allow me to treat people differently or, in other words, it establishes the conditions that allow me to treat people as different from my self.

Taking up responsibility for the Other is also reflected in my developing forms of inclusion. Engaging with others through open categories makes possible my capacity to encounter different positions and points of view. It emphasises that there are always multiple ways in which I can engage with any subject, matter or concern. Taking up responsibility for the Other through inclusion refers to my developing consultative and co-operative approaches to others. These features ensure that I am not speaking for and on the behalf of others. Instead, it makes possible the conditions in which previously silenced voices speak. Taking up responsibility for the Other through inclusive orientations does not mean that decisions cannot be made. Rather, it illustrates that decisions require a consultative processes. Taking up responsibility for the Other is, therefore, part of everyday forms of consultation and co-operation.
Another way in which taking up responsibility for the Other is part of everyday life derives from those forms of communication that emphasise discussion and dialogue. Discussions that are open and invite response, again, make possible the conditions for alternative positions to be rendered apparent. In addition to enabling previously silenced voices to speak, engaging in dialogues that invite takes seriously the fact that discussion between dominant voices and previously unheard voices can generate conflict and contestation. Taking up responsibility for the Other through forms of communication refers to encouraging discussion in which I acknowledge that there are conflicting positions and points of view. This highlights that taking up responsibility for the Other on an everyday level involves an orientation that encourages discussion.

Taking up responsibility for the Other can also be found in the need to humanise knowledge. As a feature of everyday ethics, humanising knowledge refers to interrupting, through questioning and debating, the ways in which all forms of knowledge develop. Taking up responsibility for the Other resides in this process of interruption, in that it ensures recourse to the ways in which knowledge can enhance the lives of people is always embedded within the construction of knowledge. Taking up responsibility for the Other, on an everyday level, means humanising knowledge through continually questioning the way in which knowledge develops and affects the lives of people.

*Responsible Practices*
The practices of an everyday ethics include learning, being vulnerable, an emphasising non-reciprocation and responding to others. Through these practices I take up responsibility for the Other on an everyday level. The practice of learning requires my openness to engaging with others. Learning provides one way in which I take up responsibility for the Other, in that, as a continual practice it keeps lines of inquiry open. Taking up responsibility for the Other involves, therefore, the struggle to develop a multitude of ways in which I maintain open forms of inquiry.

Another way in which taking up responsibility for the Other functions on an everyday level is reflected in the practice of being vulnerable. As a practice, adopting a vulnerable position does not mean being submissive or passive. Rather, it means being open to others and developing my capacity to admit past errors and rash judgements. Taking up responsibility for the Other through the practice of vulnerability derives from developing my capacity to expose my errors and sensibilities. Being vulnerable takes up responsibility for the Other, in that it emphasises my role in errors, bad judgements and rash decisions. Vulnerability places the onus on my self without attempting to avoid responsibility by blaming circumstances, conditions or the actions of others. Adopting a practice of vulnerability is, therefore, an everyday way that takes up responsibility for the Other.

Non-reciprocation is also a feature of everyday ethics that indicates practices that reflect my taking up responsibility for the Other. Non-reciprocity emphasises that living well towards others does not involve an agreement
between people, nor does it involve placing demands on others. Rather, it treats my actions, thoughts and interactions as always being unconditional. Taking up responsibility for the Other through an insistence on non-reciprocity refers to refusing to place demands on others. It only places demands on myself. The importance of non-reciprocity is that it does not assume that people are the same and respond in the same ways. Adopting practices without insisting on reciprocal actions is one further way in which taking up responsibility for the Other functions on an everyday level.

Another way in which responsibility for the Other functions on an everyday level lies in responding to others. As a feature of everyday ethics responding to others emphasises the concrete specificity of each person. Focusing on *their* specificity raises the significance of *their* needs and concerns. It ensures that my focus is not on how these needs and concerns impact on me. Taking up responsibility for the Other through responding to others derives from an acknowledgment of the concrete specificity of others. Responding to others by emphasising their concrete specificity is a form of taking responsibility for the Other because it highlights the needs of others over and above one self.

**Conclusion**

In this section I have pointed to ways in which the features of an everyday ethics allow me to take up my responsibility for the Other. I have suggested that taking up responsibility for the Other involves types of orientation as well as forms of practice. The orientations through which I take up my responsibility for
the Other impel me to engage in a struggle to maintain knowing others through open categories, through forms of inclusion that encourage consultation and co-operation, through communication that encourages discussion with conflicting voices and through the humanising of knowledge. The practices through which I take up my responsibility for the Other include engaging in a continual process of learning, adopting vulnerable positions in order to admit past errors, insisting on non-reciprocal forms of action and responding to the concrete needs of others. These orientations and practices illustrate multiple ways in which taking up responsibility for the Other can function on an everyday level.

**Conclusion**

In this part of the chapter I have discussed the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I have demonstrated that these conditions and features reflect a synthesis of Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas. The conditions I have pointed to include the possibility for change, the importance of the situated nature of bodies, connections between people and the construction of knowledge and the importance of dialogue and discussion. I have extracted from these conditions the features of an everyday ethics. I have presented these features in two groups. In the first group I discussed forms of orientation as features for this everyday ethics and in the second group I discussed types of practice. Together these two groups comprise the features of an everyday ethics. Finally, I have pointed to the practices in which these features take up responsibility for the Other on an everyday level. This part has demonstrated, therefore, how living well towards
others concretises ethics in everyday actions that function through types of orientation and forms of practice.

**CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I have identified the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I have developed these positions through synthesising aspects of Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas. I have used my device Echoes of the Other in order to locate Levinas’s view of the ethical relation in the everyday world. This has pointed to the conditions that surround the ethical relation and allowed for the identification of areas of constraint and expansion. I have used these factors to draw out the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I have developed these points over three parts. In the first part of the chapter I employed the resonances and reverberations of the Other to locate Levinas’s ethical relation in the everyday world. In the second part, I discussed conditions in the everyday world that affect the ethical relation. In the third part, I extracted the conditions for and features of this everyday form of ethics. This chapter has established, therefore, the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.

I have used this chapter as a vehicle to identify those conditions and features that comprise the form of ethics I seek in the everyday world. This chapter concludes my attempt to draw on insights and perceptions from Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas. In order to develop this discussion of ways of living well towards others I will develop an illustration of my understanding of an everyday form of ethics over the next two chapters. In the next chapter I will outline the
method I will use to describe everyday situations in which an everyday ethics can be understood. In the final chapter I will employ these research methods in order to illustrate my discussion of an everyday form of ethics.
CHAPTER FIVE

METHOD

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I move from a discussion of Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas to an elaboration of the methods I will employ to develop an illustration of my understanding of everyday ethics. My aim in this chapter is to outline how I will observe, analyse and describe everyday situations in which an everyday ethics can be practised. In this chapter I will outline the methods and techniques that I employ in the following, and final chapter to illustrate my discussion of an everyday form of ethics.

I will rely on qualitative research methods, as this seems to be in keeping with my attempt to develop an everyday ethics. These methods emphasise the connection between phenomena and meaning through the experiences of people undertaking their everyday life. Ezzy explains that ‘qualitative research engages with the complexity of analysing human action in terms of meaning’ (Ezzy 2002: 29). That is to say, qualitative inquiry is an attempt to engage with the meanings behind action. An effect of using these methods is that the researcher aims to ‘be more aware of the processes involved’ (Ezzy 2002: 20). My intention in adopting a qualitative approach is to add to my previous discussion of the development of an everyday ethics. In other words, my aim is to develop an awareness of the processes behind the situations I observe in order to describe something of the development of this everyday form of ethics.
Adopting a qualitative approach will also allow me to try to “concretise” my research in a case study. As my observations and interpretations aim to provide an illustration of the development of an everyday ethics, they also provide the basis for a case study that illustrates this approach to ethics. Case studies aim to draw information or data from naturally occurring situations (Gomm et al 2000: 3). They provide, therefore, one way in which to explore how acting in the world and being ethical are entwined. As my research does not rely on surveys or interviews and I do not undertake quantification of my observations, I provide a case study of everyday instances that, when taken together, constitute an illustration of this approach to an everyday ethics.

The methods and techniques I will employ in my case study reflect those that typify phenomenological research. I aim to use these methods in order to develop an account of an everyday ethics. I employ phenomenological research methods because both Schutz’s and Levinas’s work is phenomenological. As previously stated, Schutz undertakes a phenomenological account of everyday existence, and Levinas provides a phenomenological study of how the Other affects the realms of human existence. I will use this chapter to outline how phenomenological methods can be used as a research tool.

As this chapter outlines the methods of inquiry I will employ in my research I will begin by restating the basic tenets of phenomenology. I will also re-establish Levinas’s and Schutz’s respective positions in relation to phenomenology. In the second part I will establish how phenomenological research can be undertaken. This will involve identifying the ways in which the
philosophical tenets of phenomenology link into methods for studying lived human experience. In the third part, I draw out the particular processes and concepts that are significant for my study; and in the fourth part, I will outline the specific methods I employed for collecting, organising, and analysing the observations I recorded during my research.

PART ONE: WHAT IS PHENOMENOLOGY

Previously I have presented phenomenology as a mode of inquiry that investigates the link between consciousness and the world. It is the study of phenomena, or in other words, the study of the way in which things, or events and matters appear. Phenomenology is concerned with the relatedness of things to humans. Husserl explains that phenomenology is a method and an attitude of mind. For him, phenomenology is ‘the specifically philosophical attitude of mind and the specifically philosophical method’ (Husserl 1973: 19). The main concern, for phenomenologists, is with the origins of awareness, in that they attempt to describe phenomena as they appear, or as they manifest themselves in consciousness (Moran 2000: 5).

While phenomenology involves an attempt to describe human experience as it is lived, it does not present a unified or set method that accepts one theoretical position or point of view. Many philosophers have been identified as phenomenologists and, while they share certain philosophical principles, their interpretations and applications of the methods and processes of phenomenology are diverse. Such diversity has led Dermot Moran to argue that phenomenology is
best understood as a practice rather than a system (Moran 2000: 4). As a practice, it attempts to ‘revive our living contact with reality . . . to capture life as it is lived’ (Moran 2000: 5). Phenomenology, therefore, involves an attempt to describe the experience of living in all its complexities and emphasises the role of consciousness in human lived experience.

While phenomenology does not present a unified approach, there are some underlying tenets that, while open to interpretation, form the basis of phenomenology. As previously explained, these refer to the principle of presuppositionlessness, the role of consciousness and intentionality and the significance of lived experience. There are several other characteristics that are also fundamental to phenomenology. These include the constitution of meaning, intersubjectivity and the role of knowledge and language. I have previously discussed these in the context of Schutz’s and Levinas’s works. My purpose in this chapter is to highlight the basic characteristics of phenomenology, as these provide me with methods of inquiry. To do this I will re-establish the relationship between Levinas and Schutz and phenomenology.

Phenomenology is an open ended manner of interpretation. This requirement reflects the significance of Husserl’s principle of presuppositionlessness, which can be taken to involve an attempt ‘to be attentive only to what is given in intuition’ (Moran 2000: 9). It is this principle that laid the basis for the call for a ‘return to things themselves’ (Husserl 1967: 12). As previously stated, returning to things requires bracketing all assumptions about the world so that the mode of givenness of any phenomena can be discussed. In
phenomenology the givenness of any phenomenon is what remains when the everyday judgements and presuppositions associated with that phenomenon have been bracketed. This enables the essence of the phenomena to be distinguished and described.

The intuitive process in phenomenology is imperative in separating essences from any assumptions and judgements in relation to phenomena (Husserl 1967: 90). For Husserl, intuition is a type of knowing that forms the basis of all cognition. Multiple intuitions are part of all experiences and forms of knowledge. He argues ‘that every originary presentive intuition is a legitimising source of cognition’ (Husserl 1982: 24). Intuitions, in the phenomenological sense are not to be confused with mystical revelations. Instead, intuitions relate to insights that have come through scrutiny and examination. They are a necessary requirement for describing what is given. Intuitions are the ‘presence to consciousness of an essence with all that that implies by way of necessity and universal validity’ (Lauer 1967: 153).

Consciousness and the structure of intentionality are also central categories for and integral to phenomenology. As previously discussed, the structure and quality of consciousness and intentionality have been interpreted and reinterpreted by phenomenologists. Primarily, consciousness is characterised as ‘consciousness of” (Fuchs 1976: 12). In other words, consciousness is always directed towards something. The concept of intentionality refers to the functioning of consciousness or, to the multiplicity of acts that give meaning to the world as it appears to consciousness. For Husserl, intentionality is understood
to reside in the contemplative actuality of consciousness (Critchley 2000: 2). This means that it resides outside the givenness of phenomena. Heidegger, however, argues that intentionality is not separate from phenomena but alongside of things (Heidegger 1962: 64). In Heidegger’s view, this is necessary in order to describe how consciousness can encounter something other than itself.

The structure of intentionality, as previously explained, can also be understood in terms of the noetic-noematic unity of each act of consciousness. While there is discussion and debate, within phenomenology, as to the functions and capacity of the intentional character of consciousness there is some agreement as to the structure of each act of consciousness. Acts of consciousness, according to Husserl, have two poles. The noetic pole, or noesis, is the acting-toward or the intending part of consciousness. The noematic, or noema, is the acted toward or the intended. The noesis gives a sense to the act and the noema contains a sense (Lauer, quoted in Rodgers 1983: 23). For example, when I look at my dog asleep on his mat the noesis is perceiving and the noema is the dog-as-perceived. In looking at my dog, however, I might remember when the dog was young. The noesis here is remembering and the noema is the dog as remembered. I might also remember the person who gave me the dog. In this case the noesis is still remembering and the noema is the person as remembered. Both of these acts are required to return to the givenness of any phenomena. This illustrates that all forms of givenness involve more than the simple existence of any phenomena. These acts also illustrate that, for phenomenologists, consciousness has many forms that engage with phenomena and that at any moment the givenness of phenomena can fluctuate.
Intentionality also has a horizontal quality that relates to the noetic-
noematic unity of acts of consciousness (Rodgers 1983: 25). The horizontal
qualities refer to the set of possibilities that help determine phenomena. Horizons
consist of all the intentional possibilities predelineated by the indeterminate sense
of the intentional act of consciousness (Husserl 1967: 45). To put this in a
different way, horizons are made up of all the imaginable possibilities that
precede the movement of consciousness towards some phenomena. This indicates
that horizons continually extend through the multitude of possibilities that
surround each emerging phenomena. For example, in relation to the previously
mentioned dog, in which the noesis is perceiving and the noema is the dog as
perceived. I can also look at the dog from different angles, however, to extend my
possible determinations of the dog. Part of the horizons available in this context
could include the dog as perceived as asleep, or as too fat. Alternatively, the
intentional act of consciousness may focus on his bedding. The noema becomes
the bed as perceived – and one possible horizon becomes the bed as dirty and so
on. This illustrates that horizons are always fluid, but also provide a necessary
limit to the meanings derived from all acts of consciousness.

A further aspect of phenomenology that needs to be restated here is the
significance of lived experience. For phenomenologists, lived experience refers to
the everyday, practical experience, though not in the guise of ‘what do we
experience but ‘what is experience’ (Rodgers 1983: 35). Of importance for the
phenomenologist is not necessarily what one experiences, but what brought about
the experience. Lived experience emphasises the prepredicative processes that
underlie everyday life. It emphasises the multitude of possible horizons that

295
constitute the everyday world. Focusing on experience as it is lived demonstrates that experience is not isolated or self contained (Rodgers 1983: 38). Rather, it is essentially open due to its horizontal structure. Lived experience can still be interpreted, however, through the intentional character of consciousness.

By stressing the significance of lived experience, phenomenology provides an explanation as to how experiences are always forms of interpretation. In that experience is not self-contained and that it occurs within fluid but still limited horizons, it is open to interpretation. Lived experience, within the phenomenological framework, is interpretive in two ways. First, it is interpretative through the constitution of meaning. This occurs through referring the known to the unknown, thus rendering the unfamiliar familiar (Schutz 1972: 83). It is also interpretative when experiences reach a ‘break off point’ (Husserl 1973: 81). This refers to points at which the individual has fulfilled, more or less, the intentions of the acts of consciousness. This does not imply that every experience will be interpreted. Rather, for the phenomenologist, it refers to the view that ‘every lived experience, at root, is interpretive since it fixes a sense that is prereflective and uniquely constituted’ (Rodgers 1983: 38).

A final element of phenomenology that merits repetition here is the significance of intersubjective reality. As I have previously pointed out, there has been much discussion regarding the structure of the intersubjective relation. However, the role of the intersubjective relation provides a description of the relationship between oneself and the community in which one lives. In other words, it describes the relationship between how I experience and know myself
and how I experience and know others. For phenomenologists all forms of knowing another person are inherently different from the way in which I know and understand myself. This insight has significant implications for understanding relations between people and between people and the social world.

Both Schutz and Levinas are phenomenologists. Alfred Schutz undertakes a phenomenological analysis of the features of human lived experience in the everyday world. In his view, everyday life is a dynamic interrelated set of processes that are played out through the role of consciousness and the structures and processes that constitute the everyday world. Schutz’s phenomenology has been termed a ‘mundane phenomenology’ (Vaitkus 1991: 54) in that he focuses on the taken for granted status of everyday experience and how this is rendered intelligible. Levinas’s work is a response to the phenomenological enterprises of Husserl and Heidegger. In his view, phenomenology clearly shows that there is always a connection between consciousness and all phenomena. Levinas’s interpretation of the structure of intentionality and the role of consciousness posits consciousness as a process of interestedness that encounters the world as never completely known. According to Levinas, this describes the ways in which consciousness encounters something outside itself, that is something Other.

PART TWO: PHENOMENOLOGY AS RESEARCH

In this next section I will draw out the manner in which the basic characteristics of phenomenology can guide research. Phenomenology, as a practice and a method of inquiry emphasises human processes such as looking,
seeing, listening and hearing. Phenomenology, as a form of research, inquires into subjective experience in order not to distort emerging phenomena. This requires rigorous awareness and radical reflection on the part of the phenomenologist, as it is the nature of the phenomena that is brought to bear and not one’s preconceptions concerning assumptions regarding the phenomenon.

Phenomenology represents a call for a return to things as they actually appear, or as they are given. It requires a way of looking at things that reflects our participation in the emergence of phenomena. Instead of viewing phenomena, whether they are objects or forms of perception and experience, through the lens of a controlled experiment, the phenomenologist attempts to become one with the subject of our interest (Moustakas 1994: 44). Harmon argues that certain things can be learnt from distancing oneself from the subject of interest, but other kinds of knowledge come from intuitively becoming one with the subject concerned (Harmon 1991: 53). This becoming one with the area of interest requires that the phenomenologist avoids making any suppositions or assumptions about the phenomena concerned. Moran explains this method as similar to a member of a jury who is asked to suspend judgements, associations and inferences in order to focus exclusively on the evidence that is presented (Moran 2000: 12). As a form of research, phenomenology requires that investigators immerse themselves completely in the world of the concerned area of study and observe whatever emerges without prejudice or bias (Moustakas 1994: 65).

As phenomenology incorporates a form of intuition as the basis of cognition means that, as a form of research, it is concerned with the wholeness of
phenomena (Moustakas 1994: 58). This requires the continual examining and re-examining of phenomena from various perspectives and positions. For the phenomenologist, the wholeness of any emerging phenomena refers to the appearance of the phenomena, its essences (real and imagined) and how these are constituted through intuitive reflection. In other words, the wholeness of any phenomena incorporates both the objective reality of the phenomena, or its appearance and the subjective reality of the phenomena, that is, the constitution of the phenomena’s meaning by the person who is doing the perceiving.

Another aspect of phenomenology that illustrates the way in which it can act as a form of research lies in its commitment to descriptions, instead of explanations or analyses of phenomena in all its forms (Moustakas 1994: 59). Phenomenology insists on the significance of the intentional structure of consciousness. This requires a description of the relationship between subject and object. This emphasis on descriptions renders apparent the material properties and phenomenal qualities to enable the phenomena to emerge as close to its actual nature as possible (Moustakas 1994: 59). Further to this, phenomenology’s emphasis on description means that a reflexive moment is imbedded in its structure, in that, the subjective element is indicated within every object of study. While this offers some insight into the essence of phenomena it also illustrates that there can be no direct, or naïve, understanding of any phenomena. Rather, the form of any phenomenon’s emergence is always interwoven with how it emerges, who views the emergence and the situational context of that emergence. These characteristics are integral to any form of phenomenological research.
The importance of description for phenomenological research is emphasised by the role of questioning. As previously discussed, the intentional structure of consciousness continually seeks meaning through its movement towards phenomena. In Levinas’s view, consciousness is characterised as open interestedness and, for Schutz, it resembles a never ending, dynamic process that continually engages with an emerging world. Consciousness, for phenomenologists, intimates forms of questioning that open up avenues for inquiry, provide direction and meaning and shape interests and areas of concern. The requirement within phenomenology for a continual return to the starting point necessitates potential endless questioning that ensures that points are clarified and positions validated.

Finally, as a form of research, phenomenology illustrates that all forms of social inquiry must include reference to an intersubjective reality as part of the process of inquiry (Moustakas 1994: 59). This requires that investigators recognise and acknowledge that their attempts to grasp the experience and meaning of another person always involve some form of interpretation. Moreover, it requires acknowledging that all attempts to comprehend another person’s experience are limited because each person’s experience is essentially inaccessible to any other individual. This necessitates that researchers acknowledge that their positions are always interpretations. This is not to suggest that all forms of research are relative. Rather, it is to insist on the interpretative nature of inquiry. This acknowledges that a form of study, based on phenomenology, is not an attempt to discover ‘truths’ existing in the world.

33 This is also the point that Schutz makes in relation to undertaking research in the social sciences. See, for examples, Schutz (1967) and (1970b).
In this section I have pointed to the basic tenets of phenomenology as methodological practices. I have pointed to the manner in which phenomenology lifts some interpretative insights out of the realms of mundane human lived experience and how, as a form of research, it requires a particular way of looking on the part of a researcher. It requires, instead, that a researcher become one with the phenomena concerned. I have also established that looking is concerned with phenomena in their wholeness by being attentive to their materiality and their phenomenal essences. Finally, I have indicated that phenomenology is a descriptive method that emphasises questioning and open-ended interpretation.

PART THREE: PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH PROCESSES

In this part, I will expand on these principles by identifying major processes within phenomenology that distinguish it as a methodology. The aim of phenomenological research is to describe the linkages between the common sense experience of objects or matters and the phenomena that fill out human experience. That this is the focus of phenomenological practice necessitates processes that expel, or at least, highlight biases that cloud phenomena as they are given. Phenomenology is a form of inquiry that is concerned with the constitution of meaning and the acquisition of knowledge. As a practice it draws on particular methods that assist with these processes. I will seek to identify some of these processes in order to clarify the method I used for the “case study” presented in Chapter Six.
The Epoche Process

To begin, phenomenological inquiry requires a form of abstention that Husserl termed the epoche. This involves ‘putting out of action the general thesis of the natural attitude’ (Husserl 1973: 72). It requires that phenomenologists must put aside their preconceived ideas about the world when conducting research. It calls for a suspension of belief in the world in order to open a researcher to whatever appears in her or his consciousness. This setting aside, or bracketing, of prejudgements enables objects of analyses to be presented as pure phenomena, or known as they are given. The epoche is the condition that means that ‘whatever is known is known as essential and necessary’ (Lauer 1965: 49). This putting aside, or suspension, of the ‘factual matters’ that are presupposed in everyday life does not oppose the relevancies of everyday life. Rather, it requires that the phenomenologist refrain from engaging with the subjective beliefs connected with the attitudes of everyday world. As Fink explains it ‘the disconnecting of the belief in the world, the epoche is not a refusal to hold a belief which is already known to be a belief, but, in truth, the first authentic discovery of the belief in the world’ (Fink 1970: 110).

The epoche calls for a specific way of looking. This is a becoming aware that does not involve the imposition of judgements concerning what is seen, imagined or felt (Moustakas 1994: 86). This method operationalises Husserl’s call for a return to the things themselves. The suspension of all previously held predispositions allows objects, matters and people to enter into consciousness as if for the first time. Phenomenology, in this respect, can be called a naïve form of
investigation, in that it encourages looking and noticing without also insisting on the making of judgements. The epoche requires simply that what appears be allowed to linger, to stand as it appears such that ‘no foreign elements [are] permitted into the analysis’ (Lauer 1965: 50).

As a form of looking, the epoche does not encourage any position to be taken up or conclusion drawn. It is pure suspension. Every appearance that enters into consciousness has equal value (Moustakas, 983: 87). The greatest challenge presented by the epoche is that nothing is to be pre-determined or pre-judged. Those who use this as a basis for research are to simply allow whatever appears to consciousness to be. The epoche, as a form of pure suspension, encourages the researcher to remain present (Moustakas 1983:87). Practising the epoche opens the researcher up to their being in the world. While the everyday assumptions and forms of knowledge are bracketed out of action, I, as a conscious person, remain. Husserl explains that

I am the one who performs the epoche, and even if there are others, and even if they practice the epoche in direct community with me, (they and) all other human beings with their entire act-live are included for me, within my epoche, in the world-phenomenon, which, in my epoche is exclusively mine . . . it is I who practice the epoche, I who interrogate as phenomenon, the world which is not valid for me according to its being and being such

(Husserl 1970: 184).

---

34 Heidegger’s criticism of Hussel’s understanding of the practise of phenomenology is important in this context. See Heidegger (1978). For Heidegger, the idea of a presuppositionless science is incoherent. Rather, for him, there can be no understanding of any phenomena with a pre-understanding. Heidegger’s key insight for phenomenology highlights that for phenomenological enterprise it is important to render explicit our pre-understanding that has conditioned the phenomena we are trying to investigate.
Phenomenological research derives evidence from first person accounts and
descriptions of human lived experiences. It is a solitary enterprise, in which I, the
researcher, concentrate on what appears before my consciousness. The solitude
required by the epoche allows everything that appears before my consciousness to
become available for self-referral and self-revelation (Moustakas 1994: 87-8).

The epoche, as a research tool, requires uninterrupted concentration, time
and, as Schleidt explains, ‘a wholly irrational delight in the beauty of the object’
(1982: 78). To undertake such a process, researchers must silence the multitude of
voices that can cloud their perceptions. Moustakas argues that this emphasis on
solitude indicates that the epoche is meditative (Moustakas 1983: 89). The epoche
encourages researchers to allow whatever to appear before their consciousness to
emerge together with any preconceptions and biases. This enables researchers to
look at their preconceptions, label them, write them down and review them until
whatever hold these assumptions have on their consciousness is released
(Moustakas 1983: 89). This process also illustrates how phenomenology, as a
research practice, emphasises first person accounts of experience. It is the
perceptions and acts of consciousness of the researcher that result in the
constitution of meaning and the acquisition of knowledge.

Another aspect of the epoche that enhances research practices is that it
inclines the researcher towards receptiveness (Moustakas 1994: 89). In other
words, researchers are encouraged to simply be with what appears before their
consciousness. This will allow them to acknowledge their preconceptions and
assumptions. Further to this, it enables the researcher to be receptive to another.
The epoch encourages researchers to actively engage with other people and to look and listen to whatever is presented without prejudgement or bias. While the epoche encourages this receptive stance, this requirement is hard to satisfy. However, the underlying intention is to encourage a ‘reduced influence of any preconceived thoughts, judgements and biases’ (Moustakas 1994: 90) that could affect research.

*Eidetic and Phenomenological Reduction*

**Eidetic Reduction**

The eidetic reduction mediates between the epoche and phenomenological reduction. This reduction acts as the ‘positive counterpart’ (Lauer 1967: 50) to the epoche. While the epoche begins phenomenological inquiry by opening up a sphere of experience outside of the ordinary common sense mode, it does nothing with respect to grasping essences as they appear before consciousness. The eidetic reduction serves this purpose, in that its ‘aim is to make something of what remains’ (Rodgers 1983: 72) after the suspension of the common held view of experiences in everyday life. The eidetic reduction, according to Husserl, institutes the phenomenological principle that ‘every fact can be thought of merely as exemplifying a pure possibility’ (Husserl 1967: 71). In other words, the eidetic reduction emphasises that what is given in the epoche is an example of an undetermined but pure possibility (Rodgers 1983: 72).
The phenomenologist utilises a method of free variation to arrive at this pure possibility. Using this practice, researchers presuppose that all phenomena or ‘existents are necessarily possible and imaginable and, therefore, exemplifies a class of possibilities’ (Rodgers 1983: 72). This method of free variation allows the researcher to vary phenomena while still maintaining their status as imaginable. This allows researchers to go through various permutations of the object-as-example to ascertain what elements determine the object. In this process, researchers look for what remains constant or invariant throughout the imaginative variation of the original object (Rodgers 1983: 72). This reveals the essence of the object, or the elements that are required for this object to be conceived or imagined. The eidetic reduction is not an attempt to search for evidence of the actuality of the object. Rather, it is concerned with the essential possibility and impossibility of an object. This establishes limits as to what examples of such objects might include (Rodgers 1983: 73).

**Phenomenological Reduction**

Phenomenological reduction is the next important technique that phenomenologists may utilise in their research. This involves researchers shifting their focus from the imagined variation of the object to the object itself. While the elements that make up an object are derived from the eidetic reduction, the phenomenological reduction focuses attention on the object itself and elucidates its existence. Alfred Schutz explains that ‘through the attending directed glance of attention and comprehension, the lived experience acquires a mode of being. It becomes differentiated, thrown into relief and this act of differentiation is nothing
other than being comprehended’ (Schutz 1967: 50). In other words, phenomenological reduction is a way of returning to the things themselves through specific modes of attention. As a practice of research, it leads investigators back to their own experience of the emergence of things, objects or people.

In research, phenomenological reduction involves describing what investigators see, hear and experience. This description incorporates both the external character of the phenomena and the internal act of consciousness, or in other words, the experience of the phenomena in relation to the researcher (Moustakas 1994: 90). This task requires repeated descriptions from the varied perspectives gained through intuitive reflection. Each new gaze increases awareness and extends the features of the phenomena. This process can never be totally exhausted. Rather, it can be designated as adequate when researchers can illustrate that there is adequate evidence regarding the existence of the phenomenon (Miller 1984: 184).

As phenomenological reduction is an attempt to grasp the wholeness of phenomena, it requires a repeated and continuous reflection. Husserl explains that ‘it is only through acts of experiencing as reflected on do we know anything of the stream of experience and necessary relationship to the pure ego’ (Husserl 1931: 222). For the researcher, reflection is integral to the process of phenomenological reduction. It enables the addition of new perspectives and horizons. Reflection also becomes more precise through correcting what was previously held in only one manner. Reflection has the capacity to undo illusion
‘through approaching something from a different vantage point or with a different sense or meaning’ (Moustakas 1994: 93). As a practice of phenomenological research, continued reflection on emerging phenomenon enables different expectations and meanings to coalesce.

The last aspect of phenomenological reduction that has influenced practices of my research is that it necessitates the incorporation of intersubjective descriptions of what appears as a phenomenon (Moustakas 1994: 94). In that phenomenological research emphasises personal perceptions and reflections as fundamental to understanding human lived experience, it is also attentive to intersubjective understanding. Schutz explains that ‘we grasp the other’s experience with the same perceptual intention that we grasp a thing or event presented to us’ (Schutz 1967: 106). This means that, once the phenomena has been grasped from our own vantage point, it is open to further reflection through our interaction with others. Engaging with the thoughts, feelings and actions of others provides the possibility for the development of new perspectives and additions to the ways in which phenomena had been viewed (Moustakas 1994: 95). As a form of research practice, this recognition of the significance of intersubjective descriptions enables the researcher to both delve into their own individual perceptions and reflections and to be attentive to the role of others in our understanding of all aspects of human lived experience.

*Imaginative Variation*
Imaginative variation is a research practice that can follow phenomenological reduction. This practice involves describing the underlying factors that have brought about the experience of the phenomena (Moustakas 1994: 98). While phenomenological reduction focuses on the object itself, describing it in all its possible permutations, (including its essential possibilities), imaginative variation reveals the structural components of an experience and the way in which these might be integrated with the emergence of an experience. This focus incorporates such structural characteristics as time, space, corporeality, materiality, knowledge, language, subjectivity and intersubjectivity. The imaginative aspect of this technique involves ‘varying the frames of reference, employing polarities and reversals, and approaching the phenomenon from divergent perspectives, different positions, roles or functions’ (Moustakas 1994: 97-8).

Imaginative variation reflects the free variation used in eidetic reduction. It involves the same technique of free play. Rather than being an attempt to get at the invariant elements of the phenomena, however, it describes the way in which certain structures hasten the occurrence of the experience of a phenomenon. As a technique of research, imaginative variation requires the investigator to view the descriptions derived through phenomenological reduction in terms of their relation to the structural characteristics of daily life. This process highlights the relationship between the structures of daily life and the emergence of an experience (Moustakas 1994: 99). The imaginative element is evident in the inquiry into the linkages between an experience of the phenomena and the structural characteristics that surround the phenomena. For researchers, this
means that a project includes recognising the underlying themes or contexts that
might account for the emergence of a phenomenon (Moustakas: 1994: 99).

Imaginative variation enables researchers to reflect on the way in which
the structures of human lived experience are integrated into the very essence of an
experience. This technique within phenomenological research enables researchers
to inquire into ‘how the experience of the phenomena came to be what it is’
(Moustakas 1994: 98). In other words, imaginative variation situates phenomena
within the dynamics of the everyday world. Imaginative variation demonstrates
that there are always multiple possibilities for any phenomenon, and that these are
never completely exhausted. However, it also illustrates that, at a particular place
and time and from the perspective of this particular investigator, these experiences
can be drawn. As Husserl explains, ‘every physical property draws us on into
infinities of experience; and that every multiplicity of experience, however
lengthily drawn out, still leaves the way open to closer and novel thing-
determination; and so on infinitum’ (Husserl, 1931: 54-55).

Synthesis

The final aspect of phenomenological research that is important for the
research presented in the following chapter concerns the combination of these
descriptions, reflections and imaginings. This involves a synthesis of the
meanings and essences of an experience (Moustakas 1994: 144). Here,
researchers are required to focus on the combination of elements that form the
complexity of any emergent experience of phenomena. Synthesis involves taking
the ‘what’ of an experience of a phenomenon. In this synthesis combines the descriptions derived from the epoche, the eidetic and phenomenological reductions and imaginative variation. This will produce a textual-structural synthesis. The descriptions drawn through phenomenological reduction refer to the textual character of phenomena, while structural characteristics fill out the description (Moustakas 1994: 79). Researchers are, therefore, able to discuss the meanings and essences of an experience.

Synthesising these components makes possible the conditions in which what is non-evident in the life world is disclosed (Rodgers 1983: 76). Through these textual-structural descriptions, researchers aim to develop a coherent statement of the experience of phenomena as a whole (Moustakas 1994: 100). This, again, involves a descriptive process wherein the studied phenomena is opened up, described and situated within the structural characteristics of the everyday world. As a research practice, this enables clarification of the qualities, meanings and essences that constitute an experience. Further, it also has the capacity to clarify the world as it is experienced and, therefore, provide some insights into the intelligibility of the world of human experience.

**Conclusion**

In this part I have extended my discussion of the way in which phenomenology can be understood as a method for investigating human lived experience. I have situated phenomenology as a form of research that emphasises first-person accounts of human experience. These descriptions render intelligible
both the world and one’s experience of the world. I have pointed to the major processes of phenomenology that aid with investigating the intelligibility of the world. This has involved an explanation of the epoche process as a form of ‘abstaining from’ which requires a way of looking without imposing judgements. I have also discussed the processes of eidetic and phenomenological reduction and how these can be utilised as research tools. Both forms of reduction require repeated observation and description. The former being attentive to the invariant elements that constitute phenomena and the latter focusing on the phenomena itself, describing it in all its complexities and perspectives. I have also explained the role of imaginative variation in phenomenological research. This provides a description of the linkages between phenomena and the structural characteristics that ground everyday life. Finally, I have explained that the role of synthesis as a practice of research. Synthesis requires combining each of the component parts of the phenomenon under study into a unified account of the phenomenon.

PART FOUR: PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS

In this next part, I will shift from the broad parameters of phenomenology to the specific methods I will use in my study. I will discuss my method for collecting data, how the data will be organised and analysed and how this will be synthesised around the aims of my project. As previously indicated, my aim is to provide an illustration that is complementary to my discussion of the development of an everyday form of ethics. Using these methods will enable me to illustrate situations from which an everyday ethics could emerge.
Collection of Data

I collected data by being a participant observer amongst groups of police officers undertaking various courses at the Western Australian Police Academy. In my view, participant observation follows the tenets of phenomenology because it requires researchers to become one with their subjects. Researchers engage with their subjects by ‘looking with a wide angle lens’ (Spradley, 1980: 56) in order to emphasise the wholeness of their area understudy. Further, by being attentive to the broader picture, participant observation requires the investigator to become increasingly aware of the complexities of any human experience (Spradley 1980: 55). This leads researchers to ask ‘what’ questions, as in ‘what are the qualities of such an experience’, and ‘how’ questions, such as ‘how might these conditions come to be what they currently are’. Participant observation necessitates, therefore, that the investigator make explicit some of that which might otherwise have been hidden.

Participant observation also requires first hand descriptions as a method of data collection (Spradley 1980: 76). These descriptions are intended to point to the intricate detail that constitutes an experience. They require repeated observations with each moment of observation being an attempt to reveal different aspects and dimensions of the subject under study. Participant observation also requires that investigators reflect on their experience of the phenomena being studied. Introspection and self reflection add further dimensions to any area of research by highlighting the researcher’s assumptions and biases.
The characteristics of participation observation provide, in my view, an adequate phenomenological method for data collection.

Participant observation also requires that observers engage in activities appropriate to the situation and observe the activities undertaken by the people involved and in the physical aspects of the situation (Spradley 1980: 54). Spradley identifies a range of participant observation phases that can highlight different aspects of a phenomenon under study. These phases he calls passive, moderate and active participation observation (Spradley 1980: 59). In the passive phase researchers are most often bystanders who for the most part do not interact with the people being studied. The moderate phase involves greater engagement with those who are being studied. This can include identifying with the activities undertaken and emotions expressed by those studied. (Spradley 1980: 123). In this moderate phase researchers acknowledge their position as ‘outsiders’, while engaging with people who are always ‘insiders’ (Spradley 1980: 60). In the active phase of participant observation, researchers undertake the same activities as the people being studied (Spradley 1980: 61).

In collecting my data, I engaged in both passive and moderate phases of participation observation. This involved attending courses, seminars, meetings and observing procedures such as “orientation” and “graduations” over the course of eighteen months. I saw some people for only a matter of hours while others I encounter over several weeks. All encounters were used to develop first-hand descriptive accounts of observations for that period. The notes I took were in point form, however, I also recorded words and phrases used by officers attending
the Academy and diagrams to help me to illustrate some of the observations I made. These field notes were then expanded in my field-work journal. This journal became the primary resource for my attempt to provide an illustration of the development of an everyday ethics.

*Organization and Analysis of Data*

I used a two part structure in organizing and analysing the observations I made during my encounters with police officers. Developed through Moustakas (1994), this analytic process draws on the major phenomenological practices outlined above. This process involves three techniques. These are horizontalization, thematic portrayal and synthesis. These techniques culminate in a summary of the research project in order to discuss implications and limitations of the project.

*Horizontalization*

Horizontalization is a preliminary method of analysis drawn from a phenomenological understanding of the intentional character of consciousness. As previously explained, horizons involve the intentional acts of consciousness, in that they constitute all the imaginable possibilities that help to determine any phenomena. Horizons reflect the ways in which we consider and reconsider our experiences. Horizons provide the means for our perceptions of experience and, as such, are unlimited (Moustakas 1994: 95). In the context of research, horizons provide a way to describe the phenomenon under study.
Horizontalization reflects the importance of horizons for phenomenological research. Horizontalization is an active practice of analysis that requires investigators to ‘consider each statement of data with respect to [its] significance for [a] description of the experience’ (Moustakas 1994: 122). In short, horizontalization requires investigators to list all statements that describe an experience of a phenomenon. The process necessitates that investigators are receptive to all statements and to inquire into the ways in which each statement can assist with a description of an experience of a phenomenon. Each statement is given equal value because all are required to give an adequate description of a phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994: 123).

From all of these expressions and descriptions investigators derive invariant horizons. That is, the lists of horizons are examined for their common features. At this point, researchers inquire into the unique qualities of an experience (Moustakas 1994: 128). This refers to the qualities that are constant in the experience of a phenomenon. The process of deriving invariant horizons follows the trajectory of eidetic reduction. It requires the researcher to continually reduce each horizon of experience of the phenomena concerned in a bid to ascertain its essence. In other words, researchers inquire into what remains constant about an experience in all of the accounts given. Invariant horizons point to the elements that are required for a phenomenon to be conceived or imagined. This process of analysis requires investigators to go through each of the horizons expressed regarding a phenomenon and both list and describe the elements that remain constant and, as a result, constitute an experience of the phenomena.
Thematic Portrayal

Thematic portrayal requires investigators to utilise phenomenological methods of reflection and imaginative variation to construct thematic depictions of the experience of a phenomenon (Moustakas 1994: 131). This requires grouping together the essences and meanings derived from the analytic process of horizonaling into central themes that constitute the experience of a phenomenon. This analytic process draws on the phenomenological practice of reflection. The researcher must look repeatedly at the invariant horizons from varied positions, points of view and perspectives (Moustakas 1994: 133). This also draws on imaginative variation, as researchers attempt to link these constant elements into the structural characteristics of everyday life. It is through this combination of reflection and imagination that researchers can construct core themes associated with an experience of a phenomenon being studied.

In thematic portrayal these core themes are then synthesised into a description of both the textures and structures of the experience of the phenomena (Moustakas 1994: 133). This draws on the descriptions of phenomena derived from phenomenological practices of reduction and reflection. Thematic portrayal produces textual and structural descriptions of a phenomenon being studied. Textual descriptions describe the experience through its phenomenal qualities and structural descriptions locate these within the structures of daily lived experience. (Moustakas 1994: 133). The goal is to describe the situation, its conditions and its relationship to the core themes as adequately as possible. This provides a description of the conditions that evoke an experience. These textual and
structural descriptions fill out the core themes derived from an analysis of the invariant horizons in order to develop an understanding of an experience of a phenomenon.

**Synthesis**

The final stage in the analytic phase is a synthesis of these textual and structural descriptions produced from the core themes of the experience (Moustakas 1994: 144). This requires pointing to the connections between the textual and structural descriptions of the core themes of the experience. The purpose of this aspect of the analysis is to highlight the qualities, core themes and conditions that constitute an experience in its wholeness. This synthetic phase attempts to unify the analysis of an experience by pointing to the ways in which each component of the analysis adds to an understanding of an experience.

**Phenomenological Analysis: A Summary**

The stages of phenomenological method of study culminate in a summary of the project. This involves pointing to any possible limitations in, implications of and outcomes from a study (Moustakas 1994: 155). The purpose of the summary is to provide an overview of the project as a whole. Accordingly, this involves stating what has been gained from the study, discussing the implications of the project and suggesting future research projects.
Conclusion

In this part I have outlined the specific methods I will use for the purposes of achieving my research aims. I have outlined my method for data collection and I have discussed the organization and analysis of data. I have discussed the phenomenological methods of horizontalization, thematic portrayal and synthesis, and what these methods will achieve. Finally, I have indicated the role of a summary for the case study in which limitations, implications and outcomes of the study are elucidated.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have discussed the methods I will use in developing an analysis of real life interactions that are intended to complement my attempt to develop an everyday ethics. I have discussed how I will observe, analyse and describe the everyday situations I encountered that will illustrate aspects of an everyday ethics. Using qualitative research methods that are consistent with a phenomenological research project I seek to uncover the possibility for “the ethical” that can be found in the data collected and analysed from participant observation at the Western Australian Police Academy.
INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will use my observations at the Western Australian Police Academy to complement the discussion of an everyday form of ethics. This chapter acts as a case study, however in the sense that it provides an illustration of the conditions and features that comprise my approach to an everyday ethics. My observations and analyses function as a vehicle to “flesh out” the features of an everyday ethics. I am not attempting to use these analyses as a representation of ethics in the Police Service. My observations are drawn from police officers I encountered at the Police Academy. This refers to both those officers who work at the Academy and officers who attend the courses at the Academy. My observations do not lead to any reflection on the guidelines police have for interacting with people involved in criminal cases.

I will present this case study in four parts. In the first part I will provide a short introduction to the research project. In the second part I will discuss the Western Australian Police Service and generally the ethical dimension of their work. I will present my interpretation and analyses of data in the third part, and in the final part I will summarise the ideas presented in this study. The purpose of the first part is to provide some background information for this study, the second part provides a sense of the nature of police work. The third part functions as an illustration of some of the issues involved in my attempt to develop an everyday
ethics. The purpose of the final part is to summarise the study and to point to some of the limitations and shortcomings involved in the study.

PART ONE: THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Introduction

In this first part of the case study I will provide some background to my research. I will discuss the way in which I established contact with members of the Police Service and the manner in which my relationship progressed over the course of the study. I will also point to my prior knowledge of and interactions with the Police Service. I will use this part to discuss the duration of the study and how the research was undertaken. This preliminary part, therefore, introduces myself as a researcher, the participants of the research and the hopes that I had for this research project.

'I' the Researcher

The idea of using the experiences of police in the Western Australian Police Service as a vehicle to complement my discussion of an everyday ethics developed through meeting some police officers at conference on ethics and in conversations with my Supervisor. My knowledge of the police was limited to the occasional speeding ticket and media releases. I arranged, through meeting these police officers, to attend the Police Academy and observe some of their work. My observations involved attending courses at the Academy and listening to
discussions conducted during these courses. These discussions raised points about
the characteristics of a good police officer, forms of corruption, police culture –
its good and bad points - and issues concerned with cultural diversity. From
these observations my awareness of the ways in which prescribed categories of
“like me” and “not like me” function. I was also aware of the effects of these
evaluative ways of knowing others and as a result, my observations related
directly to the form of ethics I was attempting to develop.

The case study evolved over an eighteen-month period. This involved
gaining permission from the Police Service to use the experiences of police as
part of my project, attending the Academy and observing courses of interest. I
was granted permission to attend a range of courses and take notes (but not to
tape record the discussions during these courses). During 2002 I attended the
Police Academy to observe courses for new recruits. This included orientation,
swearing in procedures, ethics training, cultural diversity, legal aspects of
policing and courtroom procedures. These courses aimed to promote discussion
and contestation regarding attitudes and feelings about policing. I also observed
courses for officers seeking promotions to Constable - First Class and Senior
Constable. These were police who had been in the system for seven to ten years.
Other observations involved officers seeking promotion to Sergeant. These
officers had been in the Service for over ten years. I also observed courses for
officers seeking to become detectives. The duration of service for these officers
ranged from seven to ten years. These courses discussed case scenarios and
ethical dilemmas that are part of police work. I also sat in a limited number of
sessions of the Officer Management Course. I was included in meetings with the
principal of the Academy, and at one point met with the Commissioner of Police. I also had a number of discussions with other members of staff at the Academy.

During these observational times I informed the participants as to who I was and what I was doing and made clear that obtaining their consent a necessary was part of this study. Over the period of study I spent 188 hours in observation and came in contact with some 250 officers. None of these officers was unwilling to have his or her views used as part of the study. In general, the police officers I met, observed and engaged with were frank, helpful, interested, a little cautious (with reason), direct and passionate people attempting to do a job that is fraught with complexity. Many of these people deal with events that would provoke shock and fear amongst the general community. As one officer explained to me, ‘When anything really terrible happens, we’ll be there!’

**Conclusion**

I have used this part of the chapter to provide some background information to the area of study. I have discussed my prior relationship with the Police Service and how I made contact with the Service for the purposes of my study. I have pointed my role as an observer and how I gathered data for my research. I have also discussed the range of officers I came in contact with and the amount of time I spent in observation.

---

35 In order to differentiate between my voice and the voice of the police officers I encountered I will use “italics” to represent the voice of police officers.
PART TWO: POLICING – AN OVERVIEW

Introduction

I will present a brief overview of the Police Service in Western Australia in this part of the chapter. I will comment on the structure of the Service and the newly emerging attitudes within the Service with respect to the need for training in ethics. I will also discuss the role policing. This will involve a discussion of the relationship between authority and power, accountability and responsibility and the nature of police culture. Finally, I will discuss the ethical dimension of police work. My aim is to provide an account of the Western Australian Police Service, which involves who they are, what they do and how they undertake the complex decisions involved in their work.

Who Are the Police?

The Police Service in Western Australia, as one would expect, is hierarchically organised. At the peak of hierarchy is the Police Commissioner. The structure then moves down through Superintendents, Inspectors, District Officers, Senior Sergeants, Sergeants, Senior Constables, Constables – First Class, Constables, Probationary Officers and, finally, to new recruits. The Police Service also employs many public servants and support staff, who carry out a wide range of duties and responsibilities in support of police officers. The Service is currently undertaking a pro-active approach to employing women and people from ethnic backgrounds. Historically, the Service had a high percentage of white Australian men, aged between 21 and 65 years of age. Gaining entry to the
Service involved demonstrating intellectual competence and physical prowess. There has been an emphasis on height, speed and fitness in selecting officers for the Service. Views have altered regarding the physical criteria that determine suitability and, now the height to weight ratio is taken into account. Attempts have also been made to change the ethnic mix of the Police Service. There has been an increase in numbers of officers from the local indigenous population within the ranks that was achieved through the introduction of the Aboriginal Police Liaison Officer Service. These officers provide an intermediary between the Aboriginal population in city and country areas of Western Australia and the Police Service. This was introduced due to the large proportion of Aboriginal people detained by police because of minor crimes, homelessness, alcohol related issues and inconsistencies between traditional Aboriginal laws and the court based Westminster legal system of which the police are part.

What do the Police do?

Policing is one of the highest profile occupations in modern society. Its high profile status appears to derive from the work police carry out. Whether there is a hint of romanticism about the job is open for discussion, however, a brief look at a local television guide suggests that people in western culture are fascinated by police work. On a weekly basis there is a plethora of TV police shows from around the world, England, the USA, Germany, Austria, France and Australia. Newspapers also contain many stories about the police – ‘Police break crime syndicate’, ‘the police hero’ and ‘police corruption’ – are some of the themes raised in the papers.
This high profile status is made abundantly clear to new recruits in their first day at the Police Academy. In the first lecture during the Orientation Day for new recruits their squadron leader made the following comment:

‘Now you are a police officer you will be watched by everyone. You’re friends and family will want to know what you do – and it’s not just the uniform, other people wear uniforms and it’s certainly not just the gun’.

The implication is that people seem intrigued by police. Whether this interest is an effect of the media’s fascination, or whether the interest springs from a human fascination with the distinction between good and bad is unclear. On the first day as a new police officer, however, recruits are told to forget any romantic ideas about ‘playing Colombo and catching the bad guys in a matter of days. Police work is slow, tedious, repetitive and mundane, so be prepared’.

While police work does involve being in the public eye, police are also under scrutiny from within their ranks. Policing involves types of power not available to the general public and officers can, and do, abuse this power. Engaging in unprofessional shortcuts and questionable actions can lead to a downhill slide for many a police officer (Miller 1997: ix). Internal surveillance is used as a deterrent against and a means to “weed out” corrupt or inappropriate behaviour. Again, this is made clear to the new recruits on their first day. The squadron leader, mentioned above, informed his audience that

‘You will see things that other cops do and they shouldn’t. When you see this you have to come forward and report it. It’s really hard to do, but we have to do something to change things. You really need to have some guts in this job.’
Police serve a particular occupational role that is governed by a multiplicity of ends and means. The ends are governed by their role in preserving law and order, by crime detection, the apprehension of criminals and the prevention of crime and the protection of basic moral rights, such as, the right to life, security, property and liberty (Miller 1997: 39-41). The means required to fulfil these ends entail various activities that can place demands on police that no ordinary member of society would be likely to accept. Police can be called on to deal with matters including domestic disputes, assaults, controlling politically motivated demonstrations, murder, traffic control, organised crime, rape, drug related crimes, armed robberies, fraud, prostitution, and providing education on prime prevention.

Their work places great demands on police officers. It requires them to develop responses different from those that might be expected of members of the general public. For example, during one course I attended a long serving police officer commented that

*The first time you attend a murder will stay with you forever. When the new guys [sic] come back from a bad case you can see it in their face, you just have to leave them to it and you develop a way through it*.

For police officers to act effectively in these difficult situations they need to find ways to respond appropriately to such emotionally charged encounters. That is, they need to develop, and display qualities that indicate ‘physical bravery,
perseverance, and carefulness’ (Miller 1997: 11) so that they can continually move towards the achievement of the ends they are employed to pursue.

As police occupy an institutional role in relation to law and order they carry particular responsibilities associated with their authority. Police are responsible in two ways. First, they are responsible in the ordinary sense of the word. That is, as people, police, are responsible for their own actions and behaviour. Second, because police officers are sworn officers of the law their occupation carries a legal right to decide how to deal with certain matters (Miller 1997: 51). It is this aspect of their responsibility that links the work of police to institutional authority. Due to the legally sanctioned right of police to decide what to do means that police exercise authority over other people. A simple example of the authority linked to these responsibilities can be seen in the role of a police officer directing traffic. In the advent of an accident police are responsible for redirecting traffic away from the scene and, thus, have the authority to control the actions of others.

The responsibility and authority of police officers is also linked to their accountability (Miller 1997: 107). As police have legal responsibility and authority over others they must be accountable for their actions. Police are held to account for their actions by those who belong to other regulatory agencies and by particular mechanisms within the Service. Public forms of accountability refer to the Office of the Ombudsmen, Police Boards and, occasionally, Parliamentary Inquires and Royal Commissions. Internal mechanisms of accountability include accountability to superiors. Internal accountability can also include ‘integrity
tests’, drug testing and forms of indemnity for corrupt police to inform on other members of the service (Miller 1997: 108).

The accountability of police has been regarded as an area of concern within the Police Service and for the community in general. Some police officers, through their corrupt actions, have tarnished the image of police, which has resulted in many initiatives being undertaken to combat police corruption. As police often deal with people in extreme situations they can be tempted to act in less than appropriate ways. Several studies have shown that police can, over time and through the temptation to pursue short cuts or turn a blind eye to some criminal acts, become susceptible to corrupt behaviour. 36 It is also important to note that police can fall victim to the temptation to use tactics that are corrupt to achieve the desired results. Police might use what is termed ‘noble cause’ corruption in a bid to achieve a conviction. Fabricating evidence or confessions, known as ‘verbaling’, to gain a conviction are types of corrupt behaviour that police can use.

Another feature that affects policing is police culture. Situated within the rules and procedures that govern police actions is an informal and implicit dimension that also has an important impact on the way police officers function. This implicit dimension refers to the attitudes and values that are pervasive within the Service. This culture informs the relation between the police, their colleagues and the general public (Cohen & Feldman 1991: 14). The issue of police culture was evident in my observations and discussed openly within the Service. An

emphasis on ‘being one of the boys [sic] and ‘standing by your mates’ pointed to the significance of solidarity within the Service. Another aspect of police culture that was discussed by officers I observed was being overly suspicious of others, or as one officer said ‘having a siege mentality is part of being a cop’. For example, in the first instance, my presence was greeted with caution. One officer commented that ‘perhaps I was really a plant from Internal Affairs to get as much information from us guys [sic] as possible’.

The Ethical Dimension of Police Work

Police work involves a multitude of tasks that often require contact with people. The fact that policing also involves making decisions that can have serious consequences for all people also indicates the ethical nature of their work. The simple act of issuing a speeding fine carries such ethical decisions, as it raises such questions as ‘are there extenuating circumstances?’ or ‘is the person deserving of just being warned?’ Policing places demands on officers that can be incompatible with the task of crime prevention and the apprehension of criminals.

The complexity of decisions that police face means that questions of ethics and morality can be understood to be integral to police work. The occurrence of any illegal action that is detected by police institutes a chain of moral dilemmas that can be played out in a multitude of different ways. In short, if an illegal action has taken place the police have a moral obligation and duty to enforce the law. However, enforcing the law, in certain circumstances might also bring about undesirable moral effects. For instance, a minor drug related crime
might have greater consequences than the offence deserves and issues of prostitution may also bring about a form of injustice that will alter the circumstances of the people concerned.\footnote{See, for example, Miller (1997), pp. 56-71.}

Ethical questions and issues concerned with morality are part of police work on both individual and institutional level. On an individual level, the police officer is faced with issues of discretion on a daily basis. However, institutionally the Police Service can be under pressure to ‘get crime rates down’. The push to apprehend “persons of interest”\footnote{POI’s or “Persons of Interest” is police jargon for people suspected of committing criminal acts.} can lead officers to adopt inappropriate practices in order to bring about these means, which can detrimentally affect the lives of others. One example raised by participants in this study concerned the issue of when officers should intervene in crimes that are under surveillance. This raises serious ethical questions for the police concerned. Questions were raised such as

> ‘Is it appropriate to intervene prior to a known criminal act, or is it more appropriate to wait until the crime had been committed. What happens if one of the people involved innocently in the crime is a member of your family. Well, you wouldn’t like it.

This raises concerns regarding innocent people who might be caught up a crime. These issues are not easy to resolve. They often involve generating a distinction between “right” and “more right”, which illustrates the significance of ethics for those working as police officers.
The Western Australian Police Service has created ethical guidelines for its members. This illustrates an awareness within the Service of the significance of ethics for serving police officers. Moreover, police are instructed on the ethical dimension of their work from the level of new recruit upwards. Illustrating the importance of ethics for police is intended to help officers make decisions in line with the ethical guidelines that govern the Service. While some officers commented that a course in ethics was a ‘soft option, because it doesn’t have any exams’, most acknowledged that the lack of an ethical base for the Police Service would reproduce past problems with respect to corrupt behaviour and that the Service would not achieve the community respect required for it to be a modern professional organization.

Conclusion

I have used this part to provide an overview of policing. I have discussed the structure of the Western Australian Police Service and I have also discussed how policing is subjected to external and internal forms of supervision. Issues of responsibility, accountability and authority as part of police work together with an informal culture that emphasises solidarity have also been raised. Finally, I have discussed the significance of the ethical dimension of police work in order to illustrate how their decisions involve ethical dilemmas. I have dealt with these issues in order to provide a background to the discussions that comprise the remainder of this chapter.
PART THREE: PRESENTATION OF DATA

Introduction

In this part, I will present my analysis and interpretation of the data I gathered over the course of the eighteen months during which I interacted with officers within the Western Australian Police Service. As I have previously stated, I am using these observations to complement my discussion of the development of an everyday ethics. My analyses and interpretations will provide an illustration of the features of an everyday form of ethics. I will develop this illustration by pointing to the ways in which these features can be diminished and enlarged in the everyday world. My aim is to provide an in situ discussion of these features in order to demonstrate what they can look like and how they might occur in everyday life.

I have divided this part into three sections. Each section will address a different aspect of policing. I will focus on the ‘attitudes’, ‘relations’ and ‘actions’ of the police I observed in order to “flesh out” my discussion of the conditions and features that comprise an everyday ethics. I will begin each section with a description of the aspect discussed. Next, I will develop this description through a discussion of each of the components of phenomenological research methods identified in Chapter Five. That is, I will identify forms of horizontalization, invariant qualities, core themes and textual and structural underpinnings evident from these descriptions. Through synthesising these components I will illustrate important features of the aspect of policing being
analysed. Finally, I will use these descriptions in either of two ways: I will use descriptions that illustrate the conditions or features of an everyday form of ethics or I will use these descriptions to show how these conditions and features can be limited. Exposing the effects of diminishing these conditions and features will further indicate the significance of an everyday ethics.

Section One: Structures and Divisions

Introduction

In this section I will present my observations and interpretations of those attitudes of the police studied that indicate the way in which they position themselves with the social world. I will provide a brief description of these attitudes and then analyse them in terms of particular horizontal descriptions, thematic portrayals and textural and structural descriptions that mark the structures of their everyday world. I will then synthesise these components in order to provide an overall picture of the constitution the social world by members of the Police Service. This process will enable me to point to some of the conditions and features that comprise an everyday form of ethics.

Policing Attitudes

The attitudes towards their work expressed by police officers during my observations ranged from passion to cynicism. A majority of the newer officers showed an obvious passion for developing the skills they needed to do their job. Many long serving officers, however, demonstrated a cynical attitude towards the
Service and their work. The most important aspect of their approach to their work for this section, related to how it brought them into contact with outsiders. A central feature of their constitution of the social world in which they worked was the distinction between those “inside” the Police Service and those “outside” it.

Often referred to as ‘Joe citizen’, the general public is understood as being ‘out there’ as opposed to being ‘one of us’. The police, in my observations, reiterated the view that ‘we are different’. Identifying oneself as different was an overriding and common attitude evident throughout each level of the Police Service. The new recruits are informed that ‘this job will change you. You need to consider if you can deal with the change’. More long serving police officers also commented that ‘this job makes you different, the things you do and see affect you’. Thus, the most significant attitude evident within my observations of the police was how they, as a group, mark and understand themselves as occupying a different place in the social world from that occupied by all others.

_We are Different – Horizons of the experience_

The practice of distinguishing between police and the general public begins at the new recruit level. On their first day as a new recruit officers are told that being a police officer means that

‘you never knock off. Once you are sworn in then you take up this responsibility, while you might be a “newbie” the general public will look to you in times of crisis because you hold power’. 
The newer police officers appeared to accept this ‘never knocking off’ as a mark of being special. Several commented on how proud, though a little intimidated, they were to begin a career as a police officer. One officer commented that when she first put on her uniform she ‘felt such pride and privilege’ to become a member of the Police Service. Another officer said the following:

*I couldn’t wait to get home and try on all my uniform, and I walked around the house I thought I looked so great.*

Long term serving members of the Police Service shared their views of being marked as different from the general public. I recorded comments such as ‘people always know you’re a cop, it doesn’t matter if you wear a uniform or not’. Being marked as different appeared to reside in the way in which police present themselves. For example, ‘being a cop is great, we get to do things no one else does, we get to play with big toys!’ and ‘being a cop is a good job, you get to investigate things that others don’t’. Other comments that related to being marked as different involve people on the outside not understanding what being a police officer entails.

*Joe citizen doesn’t really understand what we do, they only see us giving out speeding tickets, or when something really bad happens and they get their ideas from beat ups in the media.*

Other markers of difference can be found in their views of the expectations and pressures that arise in their work. Several long-term police officers described their difficulties with the disparity between the expectations of the public and the actual processes of policing. I noted comments such as,
‘Joe citizen expects us to catch the bad guys, but the courts often let them go. We do all the hard work, that no one sees and then the legal system lets these dirt bags go.’

“Pressure” is another way in which these police officers understood themselves as different. Police see themselves as under pressure both from internal and external services. Internal pressures derive from the need to follow rules, regulations and processes when undertaking an investigation and pressure they were under to make arrests and obtain convictions. The work involved in any 'brief' is often long, tedious and painstaking and involves a number of police working as a team. External pressures come from the expectation of the public but also from family and friends. One police officer commented that

‘it’s harder for my family than it is for me because they don’t know what I’m doing when I’m at work, especially when I am called out at one in the morning’.

Another way in which the police understand themselves as different derives from their use of their own language and communication. Frequent use of abbreviations and codified language constitutes a specific police language. Referred to as ‘talking the talk’ this language is often indecipherable to those “outside” the Service. Further, talking the talk also includes reference to “jokes” about policing and jargon phrases that reinforce a distinction between those inside the Service and the general public. While police practices are in place to encourage officers to avoid the use of jargon, many officers commented that

39 For example, ‘The wooden tops will pick up those bodies’, meaning country police officers would apprehend the people concerned, another example I noted that required some translation was ‘you proby’s need to get on the APLO’s’, this meant that probationary officers need to develop good working relationships with Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers and ‘you don’t want to join the road nazis’. This last comment referred to joining the traffic police.
being accepted requires that they adopt these ways of communicating with their colleagues.

**Invariant elements of being different**

The qualities that derive from being different because one is a serving police officer can be divided into positive and negative invariant elements. The positive elements refer to the passion police have in relation to their work. This is evident in the “swearing in” process that new recruits undertake on their second day as a police officer. While passion for their work may ebb and flow over the course of a police officer’s career, it was still evident on the part of most the long term serving members I observed. Even those officers who displayed an open cynicism and frustration at the bureaucratic processes of the Police Service were still passionate about ‘locking up the crims’.

A further quality that goes with the attitude of being different can be noted in the pride police have in relation to their work. Many stories were told over the course of my study that illustrates this pride. Pride is an effect of both internal and external acknowledgements of a job well done, in police terms ‘ata boys’. One officer commented that

*The best part of the job was informing a family that a long standing crime against a member of their family had been solved and a person had been convicted. This is really the best. It makes the job worth doing.*

Another constant element that adds to the construction of self as different because one is a police officer is reflected in an attitude of wanting to make a
difference. While many occupations aim to make a difference to people’s lives, members of the Police Service I observed commented that their rational for joining the Service was to make a difference by making society safer. Many commented that their goal was to make a difference to society by helping to deal with a perceived increase in the level of crimes, whereas others commented that they brought qualities to the Service that might make a difference to the way that the Service functions. For example, one new recruit had worked as a police officer in another country and commented that

‘Policing is a bit different where I come from, the attitudes are different and maybe this will help me handle situations differently here.’

The negative invariant elements that also inform this distinction between police and the general public can be found in the repeated references to the development of cynical attitudes. Many police commented that, over time, they became cynical because nothing changes. Constantly working in a pressured environment can lead to complacency and negativity, which lead some officers to develop entrenched views that resist change. Instructors at the Academy often suggested that many long serving officers who attended the courses at the Academy had an attitude of ‘knowing it all’ and ‘you cannot teach me anything new’. The instructors commented that was hard to challenge and the concern was that their influence could affect newer serving members.

Another invariant element that added to the construction of the police as being different was reflected in references to a lack of understanding and acknowledgement of police work. This appeared to function both internally and
externally. During this study, many police officers commented that they felt they were different because the public did not know or understand the complexities and frustrations involved in their work. While they acknowledged that other occupations also involve complex work processes, the police I observed uttered variations of the comment that ‘it is this job that makes you different’. The unique quality of this missing acknowledgement left some officers feeling as though their work had little value. For example, one long serving officer commented

‘I have been doing this job for so long, if I left what would I do. I can’t do anything but lock up crims. Who would give me a job’.

In relation the internal lack of acknowledgement, again, a sense of not being valued was noted. Several comments were made by long serving officers. These included the claim that

‘there seems to be rules for them [management] and rules for us’ and ‘you really have to watch your back around here. You can’t really trust anyone. You have to be really careful’.

**Thematic Portrayals, Textures and Structures**

Two core themes can be drawn from the descriptions of the police as seeing themselves as being different from the general public. First, policing generates feelings of being special and second, that policing is also about surviving. The textual qualities and structural conditions that surround these core thematic portrayals will enhance this discussion of police as being different. The textual qualities will add particular beliefs, feelings and desires, which shape the
experience and the structural conditions will point to what underpins these experiences.

The core theme of being special is an effect of many of the processes that police go through. First and foremost, a feeling of being special is generated through being accepted into the Police Service. Many of the new recruits I met over the course of my study commented on how lucky they felt to be accepted. ‘It’s such a long process, it has taken me over ten months to start’ was one comment. Several new recruits also moved from interstate in order to gain acceptance into this Police Service. Other sources of feeling special reside in the “swearing in” procedure and in graduating from the Academy as a probationary officer. These two events involve a public display of commitment to the State. These events point to the ways in which police officers develop a feeling of being special in relation to the general public.

This feeling of being special is also generated through external means. Society marks police officers as different through the legal sanctioning of their power. This further generates a feeling of being special, in that it is only the police who are legally authorised to enforce the law and maintain order. Society also marks police as different through an acceptance of the power of police to legally control the actions of others. Society invests in police the right to maintain peace, and therefore we accept that it is the duty of the police to actively work towards these ends. External markings also come through an acceptance of the use of coercion in policing. These markings from the “outside” contribute to police understanding themselves as special.
The qualities that enhance these feelings of being special also refer to exposure to events, information and knowledge that are denied to the general public. Policing also generates a feeling of being special on a group level. Many officers commented that they identified with being a member of a large group or “family” that shared similar values and beliefs. A final aspect of feeling special refers to feeling overwhelmed by the processes. As one new recruit commented ‘sometimes you just get so caught up in it all. It can take over’.

The second core theme drawn from the descriptions of police being different refers to them treating surviving as an integral element of policing. Survival, for police, means both staying alive and achieving results under the circumstances within which the police work. Surviving also refers to developing ways to combat the stresses and pressures associated with their work. The comments of one long serving officer help make these instances clear.

‘It’s hard enough in this job having to do what we do, but then having to work with a boss who doesn’t support you, or treats you like an idiot and doesn’t listen to what you say. You just have to find ways to survive.

Surviving as a police officer includes developing skills and behaviours to help alleviate feelings of isolation, disappointment, frustration and constraint.

The structures that underpin these characteristics of feeling special and having to survive include those of time and space, forms of knowledge, language and communication and relations with others. The structures of time and space
underpin feelings of being special by providing a historical context in which police can be situated. In short, this connects current police officers with the development of the Police Service as an organization. Spatial structures also add to this feeling of being special by emphasising the types of bodies that the Police Service employs. An emphasis on physicality, strength and courage can increase the feeling of being special, or of an elite, in relation to the general public.

The characteristic of survival in the experience of police as different is also underpinned by the structures of time and space. However, these characteristics point to the ways in which policing repeats the events and processes of the past. Surviving requires officers to develop a multitude of ways in which to alleviate frustrations and disappointments associated with their work. An attitude of having to survive can allow officers to undertake inappropriate actions, shortcuts and develop habitual behaviours that have been historically part of an implicit police culture.

These experiences of being special and having to survive are also underpinned by the structures of knowledge. On the one hand, police learn particular forms of knowledge that emphasise rules, regulations, procedures and protocols for behaviour. These forms of knowledge, while designed to make police accountable, also add to frustrations and cynical attitudes, in that they can interfere with the means police use to bring about ends expected of them. On the other hand, police also deal with people in extreme situations and need to rely on personal forms of knowledge and discretionary tactics that may contradict the emphasis on regulations. Negotiating a balance between these competing forms
of knowledge can increase feelings of being special and affect the tactics for survival that some police officers develop.

The structures of language and communication also underpin these characteristics of being special and surviving within the Police Service. Police have developed a language that is often indecipherable to those on the outside. The common place language of policing that I observed involved short forms and abbreviations that, for outsiders, like me, required explanation. Communication amongst officers also involves both formal interactions and informal discussions that incorporate types of jargon that further reinforce the police as both special and having to survive. The special character of these short forms of expression establishes connections between police. Having to survive requires that each officer must adopt these forms of language to be accepted within the Service.

The structure of “self and others” also underpins these experiences for police officers. Emphasising the distinction between police and the general public provides officers with a means to engage with others through prescribed categories. Distinguishing between those ‘like me’ and ‘not like me’, or those ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ further increases the feelings of being special and having to survive. The “special” quality resides in identifying with an “in group” that are privy to pieces of information and ways of acting unavailable to outsiders. However, feelings of having to survive within an organization plus feeling that those “outside” do not understand reinforces feelings of isolation and frustration.
During my times of observation I found that police wanted to have people “on the outside” understand what they do. Many comments were made regarding my views of the police. For example, once people realised I had attended many sessions I was asked ‘had I changed my views about the police’, and ‘what did I think of the police now that I had seen them in action’, and another commented that ‘now you can see what we have to deal with’. Thus, while I was someone who was “not like them”, because I was interested in what they do, how they do it and what they must go through I was seen as someone who was interested in what “being like us” entails.

Synthesis of the experience of being different

For the police the experience of being different emerged from a variety of distinctions between police and the general public. First and foremost, the experience of being different resides in the constancy of being a police officer. This affects all aspects of a police officer’s life, in that they are open to scrutiny both internally and externally. Further, the experience of being different is also marked by the expectations and pressures associated with policing. Police officers are required to act in accordance with rules and guidelines for professional behaviour that are unique to them. However, the pressures of policing can also lead to the adoption of inappropriate actions and means to bring about the desired ends of police work. The experience of being different for police is also constituted through the view that those on the “outside” do not understand the complexities of policing and the problems and hardships that police face on a daily basis.
The experience of being different as a police officer has both positive and negative characteristics. The positive qualities of being different refer to a sense of passion and pride for policing. Operational police, from new recruits to long serving sergeants, evidenced a passion for their work. These positive qualities emphasise that police work is concerned with making a difference to society. Police identified with making life safe and secure for the general public and saw their roles as paramount to bring about these ends. These positive elements resulted in police feeling special in relation to the general public.

The characteristic of feeling special for police provides a link between current and past generations. These linkages connect police officers and provide the conditions for officers to feel part of a larger group with similar views and experiences. Further, these feelings of being special also make possible the conditions for police to constitute an “in group” that is marked as different from the general public. Police also express feelings of being special because of an emphasis on physicality and courage in their work. These qualities enhance their experience of being different from the general public.

Police also experience themselves as different from the general public because survival is an integral aspect of their work. Many police feel that developing ways to survive within the environment of policing is important for remaining in their job. Surviving, as an aspect of being different, can lead many officers to develop cynical attitudes to their work, their colleagues and the Service. Cynicism within the Service emphasises feelings of not being valued both within the Service and by the community. Police often described themselves
as feeling misunderstood and unsupported. This can generate negative feelings that lead many officers to feel isolated and also makes possible the conditions for inappropriate actions and complacency.

Surviving, as an aspect of feeling different from the general public, can reinforce feelings of frustration for police officers. These feelings of frustration, isolation and cynicism also link current police officers to past problems. These linkages emphasise the difficulty and complexity of instituting change within the Service. Those characteristics that enhance feelings of having to survive also highlight the ways in which police experience themselves as different from the general public.

These descriptions of the ways in which police experience themselves as different highlight the qualities that constitute this experience. While police can experience being different through qualities that enrich their lives and their work practices these qualities can diminish over time. The effects of this reduction can lead to both complacent work practices and inappropriate or corrupt actions. The experience of being different for police, therefore, resides in their attempts to negotiate between the conflicting feelings that their work can engender.

*Everyday Ethics: An Illustration*

These descriptions of the experience of police as being different can provide a complement to my discussion of the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I will use these descriptions to “flesh out” my discussion of the
conditions that enable the possibility for change, reflect the situated nature of bodies and indicate the importance of communication. I will also focus on the everyday features of looking beyond oneself and self reflection. My intention is to use descriptions that act to either illustrate these conditions and features or demonstrate their significance in diminishing these conditions and features. Much of this discussion, however, will focus on the diminution of these conditions and features. The descriptions of the experiences of police will provide, therefore, an indication of the possibility of an ethics that functions on an everyday level.

The first condition that makes possible an everyday ethics is the possibility for change. This condition is integral to an everyday ethics because it makes possible new ways of living, and therefore, living well towards others. The police’s experience of being different and having to survive, though, diminishes the possibility for change. For the police, survival is an integral element of their work. To survive police must negotiate feelings of being unsupported and worthless and which generally manifests in a sense of frustration. Survival limits the possibility for change because it results in cynicism, complacency and inappropriate actions. Unless practices are adopted that interrupt the attitudes associated with difference and survival, cynicism and its associated actions will continually be repeated.

The next condition I discussed that makes possible an everyday ethics is that of the situated nature of bodies. This condition emphasises the specificity of bodies that can provide openness to the ways in which bodies are known. Descriptions of police as different suggest ways in which prescribed categories of
“like me” and “not like me” function in everyday life. While these categories provide the means to group people together into an “us”, the descriptions of being different for police also highlight the ways in which these categories can lead to feelings of isolation and a lack of support. These descriptions of self, highlight the fact that engaging with others through prescribed categories can limit the concrete specificity of all people because engaging with people through these categories standardises bodies and their actions. Further, these descriptions also demonstrate Levinas’s key insight into the detrimental effects that result from the reduction of otherness to sameness. Engaging with people through these prescribed categories elides the uniqueness of people and decreases our ability to develop new ways of living well towards others.

Particular forms of communication also provide conditions for an everyday ethics. Discussion marked by invitation and welcome constitute ways of living well towards others, in that they create the conditions of possibility for previously silenced voices to speak. The experience of being different for the police demonstrate this condition, for language and forms of communication that these police employed excludes others. Police are required to use jargon and forms of communication that are not readily available to “persons of interest”. Only widely used words and forms of communication has the capacity to include others. Refusing inclusive language constrains the possibility to engage with others and further reduces the ways in which people can live well towards others.

The descriptions provided of the experience of police as different suggest that recognition of our differences from other people might assist in the
development of an everyday ethics. Looking beyond one self which emphasises self reflection, constitutes one of the features of an everyday ethics because it makes possible ways of living well towards others by generating types of engagement that do not assume that all people are the “same”. Further, self reflection, as a feature of everyday ethics also emphasises the importance of questioning our responses and attitudes towards others in order to challenge the limited or biased views we have developed in acquiring our social roles.

Descriptions from the experience of police as different that complement these features can be found in their passion for policing and their desire to make a difference to society. The descriptions of these two qualities highlight the effects of being willing to looking beyond our self. Passion and wanting to make a difference make possible the conditions to challenge familiar, habitual and typical ways of acting and engaging with others. Further, being passionate and wanting to make things different also makes possible the conditions to reflect on our personal views and our responses to others. These descriptions drawn from the experiences of police demonstrate some of the ways in which features of an everyday ethics may function on an everyday level.

Conclusion

In this section I have used my descriptions of the attitudes of police to generate an illustration of some of the conditions and features of an everyday ethics. The most prevalent attitude I described is the experience of being different. I have pointed to the ways in which this experience is constituted and I
have also outlined the effects of this experience of being different. I used these descriptions to complement my previous discussion of the conditions and features that comprise an everyday ethics. I have achieved this by using descriptions to either highlight the ways in which these conditions and features function on an everyday level, or to highlight the effects of constraining these conditions and features.

I engaged with descriptions of “survival” and “difference” for police to illustrate the conditions that can constrain the possibility for change. These descriptions illustrated the detrimental effects of closing down these possibilities for developing ways of living well towards others. I also discussed the way in which categories that evaluate bodies can limit the possibility for change. These descriptions highlight the effects of constraining attempts to change. Engaging with bodies, however, can open us up to difference if we do not assume that people are the same. Another description I engaged with referred to particular forms of communication. I used this to illustrate the way in which language can exclude others and, therefore, limit living well towards others. Finally, I used the description of passion for policing and wanting to make a difference as an example of a way in which to facilitate change. These examples demonstrate some of the conditions and features of the everyday ethics I am attempting to seek.

Section Two. Vertical Relations and Horizontal Relationship

Introduction
In this section I will focus on the structure of the Police Service to complement my discussion of an everyday ethics. My aim is to use the ways in which police officers experience their structured working environment and relations and relationships to add to this discussion. I have interpreted the structure of the Police Service as involving vertical relations and horizontal relationships. Vertical relations refer to interactions that follow an upward or downward trajectory, depending on one’s position. Horizontal relationships refers to people working together, who might not necessarily be of the same rank, but whose positions are reasonably close.

I will begin this section with a brief discussion of the vertical relations and horizontal relationships between the police officers that I observed. These will be used to provide some examples of horizontalization, thematic portrayals and textual and structural descriptions. I will then synthesise these descriptions to provide an overall picture of the experiences of police through these relations and relationships. Finally, I will use these descriptions to further “flesh out” my approach to an everyday ethics.

_The ‘Ups’, ‘Downs and Sideways Movements of Policing_

The Western Australian Police Service is structured along hierarchal lines. The Police Commissioner is at its peak and those at the recruit level forming its lowest ranks. As with any hierarchal structure, each layer is responsible for particular aspects of the policing. This hierarchical structure produces both
vertical and horizontal lines. The vertical lines, or “relations”, create connections between police officers through ‘a chain of command’. The vertical relations I observed included connections between the teaching staff at the Academy (all serving police officers ranging from senior constable to senior sergeant) and those in more managerial positions of Inspector, Superintendent and, on a few occasions, the Commissioner of Police. I also observed vertical relations between new recruits and teaching staff at the Academy and, at a more distant level, between teaching staff and those involved in the management of the Academy.

Horizontal relationships between working colleagues were also evident. Attitudes of friendship, support and commonality emerged during my observations, especially when officers engaged in discussions about their home life, their achievements and hopes for the future. These horizontal relationships, while evident among the police working at the Academy, were also noted in encounters among groups of police attending the courses at the Academy. The officers evidenced strong ties to other serving members, whether they had met before or not. Discussions appeared to be open, frank exchanges regarding the types of work they do, the problems associated with their work and attempts to reform the Service.

Horizontal relationships were also evident in the groups of new recruits I observed during my study. The difference between those in their first few days as new recruits and those who had been working together as a “squad” was notable. These horizontal relationships develop when police encounter different issues as part of their study. While initially officers were reluctant to speak and discuss the
issues they faced eventually discussions became heated, with many views being expressed. Further, the new recruits developed a support group in order to help each other through the demands of their entry into a new occupation.

Relations and Relationships

In the Police Service, relations on a vertical level are concerned with passing on information, communicating directions and ensuring appropriate procedures are observed. It is important to state that I was not privy to meetings between those at higher levels of the Service and more “operational officers”. My observations and interpretations are drawn from comments made by officers regarding those in higher positions as well as comments made by more managerial officers attempting to negotiate changes to the Police Service.

Vertical relations allow for communication and information within the Police Service. While the flow of communication and information is often from the “top-down”, there are, however, avenues for those in lower positions to communicate with officers in more managerial positions. The types of communication that these relations engender are often in the form of written instruction, either electronically or in hard copy, and structured meetings. These vertical relations appeared to be structured around gaining or imparting pieces of information, procedural changes and policy directives. However, some officers in managerial positions commented that officers in operational positions are unlikely to respond when their views are sought. A more senior officer commented that ‘we will often send out questionnaires and electronic packages
to develop better ways of policing, but people ignore them’. Another aspect of these vertical relations resides in the relations between the newer recruits and officers who teach at the Academy. These vertical relations are concerned with encouraging new recruits to develop skills appropriate for their job.

Horizontal relationships are very different. Relationships on a horizontal level emphasise being faithful to ones “mates”. These relationships were largely based upon informal channels through which common experiences were shared. These informal channels were sometimes attempts to overcome problems with communication within the Service. They also reflected the importance of developing relationships with the people one works with most closely. Comments symbolic of the importance of relationships are evident in the following statements.

‘You need to rely on your mates here’, ‘you can only really trust the people that you work with, and that’s only some of them’, ‘you have to be careful what you say’, and ‘it’s working with these people that makes the job what it is’.

These statements emphasise the need to work together and to define safe channels of communication, because it is through these connections that police develop a sense of being supported.

The strength and importance of horizontal relationships is further illustrated in the intensity of the new recruits course. Recruits spend six months together learning various skills and techniques for their job. They must pass all aspects of this course in order to take up the position of Probationary Officer. Many officers comment on the connections between recruits. This was evidenced when a long serving officer attending the Academy met up with a colleague who
had been part of the same cohort of new recruits. While these officers had been new recruits 15 years ago, their connection was obvious. This officer commented that ‘its like that when you go through that intense time together, its like you’re back there sharing the time together again’.

The distinction between these vertical and horizontal relationships can result, however, in miscommunication and tensions between these groups of people. Some operational officers commented that they often felt unheard and unsupported by those in managerial positions. Statements of this sort included ‘we never know what is going on, we are just told what to do’, ‘those up there don’t tell us what all the changes are about’, and, ‘I went to my sergeant to suggest some changes to our procedures and nothing ever happened’. Many operational officers expressed feelings of exclusion from decision making procedures and policy directions.

Comments by other officers, however, do not support these views. In a discussion about police culture one female officer commented that ‘I have always been encouraged by those above me to learn and to get as many skills as possible’; while another said that ‘I have felt supported in my work as a police officer and have even been asked to join particular departments’. These officers also commented, however, that ‘its really hard if you get stuck in the country, you feel really left out there’.

Invariant elements of relations and relationships
The constant and unique qualities that add to the descriptions of these experiences are those of trusting and sharing experiences. Trust appeared to be under tension between the different levels of the Service. The comments made by operational officers demonstrated that, in their view, being excluded from decision making processes was indicative of not being trusted. While there was much talk around the table about trusting each other and people needing to work together there was obvious caution regarding trusting anyone. One specific comment summed up this attitude, ‘we are in the business of not trusting people, how are we then supposed to trust people around here!’

While there was much talk about not trusting those in higher positions, comments were also made regarding those who could be trusted. These included ‘-------- was always good to work with,’ and ‘-------- deserves that promotion, ------- has always been a fair cop’. Issues of trust were significant for all the police I observed, especially given that the Service was under scrutiny from a Royal Commission. Trust requires a belief in a system in which appropriate forms of command, supervision and support are engendered on the part of all concerned. The general feeling that was apparent during my study was that trust in all relations was under stress within the Service.

The second invariant element associated with police developing relations and relationships is that of sharing experiences. Horizontal relationships emphasise sharing through recounting stories of police work. Many officers commented that telling stories, or in police jargon, ‘warries’ established connections between officers. For many of the operational officers these stories
alleviated the sense of isolation. However, for others, story telling acted as a way to indoctrinate new officers into police culture. Many officers commented that they were concerned with this aspect of “warries” because it perpetuated problems of past generations of policing. On the one hand, ‘warries’ can provide graphic detail of police actions, and therefore reinforce a “hero cop status”. On the other hand, however, “warries” gave newer officers vital bits of information.

*Thematic portrayals, textual and structural descriptions*

These descriptions of vertical relations and horizontal relationships highlight the importance of loyalty to policing. The textual qualities of loyalty, however, indicate different characteristics in vertical relations and horizontal relations. A discussion of these differences will enhance an understanding of the types of relations and relationships that are part of police work. Again, textual qualities point to beliefs and feelings evoked through these relations and relationships and structural conditions locate these qualities in the everyday world.

The influence of loyalty can be found in the emphasis on trust in both vertical relations and horizontal relationships. Loyalty, as an effect of vertical relations, begins with the “swearing in” procedure and is reinforced in the graduation ceremony. These processes instil in new officers a feeling of loyalty to the Service and to their superiors. This is marked through forms of deference, or respectful regard, for more superior officers. Loyalty, as an aspect of vertical relations, requires officers in lower ranks to comply with the commands of those
in higher positions. The marks of loyalty refer to saluting a senior officer and standing when a commissioned officer enters a room, and in informal terms when officers are referred to by their rank and not their name. For example, officers call their superiors “Senior” or “Sarg” depending on their position.

The textual qualities of loyalty, as an aspect of vertical relations, also require compliance to rules, regulations and procedures within the Service. Each officer, from recruit level up-wards, is required to study their appropriate manuals and know the expected procedures for their area of work. Loyalty is also manifested through these vertical relations by provisions within the Service that ensure that officers receive appropriate training and supervision in their work. Loyalty, within the Service, implies a dual carriageway wherein an allegiance is sworn, and, loyalty demanded. Conversely, appropriate skills need to be taught to officer to ensure such loyalty can be fulfilled.

The textual qualities of loyalty, as an aspect of horizontal relationships, emphasise different qualities. Loyalty, in horizontal relationships, refers to being faithful to ‘mates’. These forms of loyalty follow more informal channels. Loyalty can mean ‘having a drink, sharing a joke’ and maintaining the distinction between ‘those up there and us’, (in other words, between “us” the workers, and “them” in management). Loyalty is also played out in the distinction between those who work as police officers “catching the crims” and those who work in “internal affairs” or managerial positions.

Loyalty, as an aspect of horizontal relationships, engenders feelings of solidarity between officers who work together. These feelings are developed over
time, and while “being loyal to one’s mates” is not an overt demand, it is an aspect of police culture that is implicit in forms of action and behaviour. Comments such as ‘you don’t rat on your mates’ and ‘when it comes down to it, it is only these people you can trust’ signify the hidden pressure of being loyal in these horizontal relationships.

The structures that underpin the characteristics of loyalty include structures of knowledge, language, and those that constitute relations between self and others. The structures of knowledge that underpin these vertical and horizontal relationships emphasise different aspects of the ways in which matters are known. The emphasis in vertical relations is on knowing correct procedures for undertaking police actions. In horizontal relationships the emphasis is on knowing how best to support colleagues. When viewed together, these two forms of knowledge highlight the tensions between relations and relationships within the Police Service. Supporting colleagues can involve transgressing procedures, whereas maintaining procedures can involve not supporting work mates. This tension can reinforce feelings of being unheard as well as a lack of trust with respect to some officers. Police must negotiate a balance between these competing aspects of knowledge.

Structures of language and communication also underpin the quality of loyalty. In vertical relations, language and forms of communication are formally based, whereas in horizontal relationships communication follows more informal channels. Being loyal in vertical relations requires using appropriate channels of communication and complying with the directives and procedures of the Police
Service. Loyalty in horizontal relationships, however, emphasises connections to colleagues. Again this disparity can increase feelings of not being heard. Operational officers feel they can discuss issues openly with their colleagues. When consulted by those in managerial positions, however, these requests are often ignored. This again highlights the ways in which communication between these different levels within the Service can increase feelings of exclusion for all parties.

The structures of self and others also underpin the exclusion for police. Like the distinction between police and the general public, these relations and relationships also demonstrate the effects of engaging with others through prescribed categories. Distinguishing between those “like me”, as in operational officers, and those “not like me”, as in managerial officers, or vice versa, closes down ways of knowing each other. The experiences of feeling unheard and excluded, for police, can therefore be seen to be an effect of this engagement process.

*Synthesis of vertical relations and horizontal relationships*

That police work in a structured environment forces them to constitute particular relations and relationships. Relations within the Service function along vertical lines whereas relationships follow a horizontal trajectory. The vertical relations derive the top-down direction that the Police Service has developed. Horizontal relationships derive from the closer connections that emerge between officers who work together or with those with whom they have attended courses
at the Academy. The dynamics between these two groups within the Police Service highlight different types of interaction within the Service, different feelings among officers and have different effects officers within the Service. The dynamics associated with these differing structures require for police to negotiate what are often competing demands that complicate their experience of working within a structured environment.

Vertical relations within the Police Service are intended to facilitate extraction or imparting of information. These relations attempt to produce officers who function in line with the procedures and protocols considered appropriate for police officers. Often vertical relations emphasise resources, some aspects of these relations reflect the need to consult officers regarding their views and encourage officers to develop new skills. Horizontal relationships have a different purpose. These relationships aim to provide support for officers working together as colleagues. The development of these relationships depends on officers making connections, sharing experiences and negotiating issues of trust. The descriptions derived from these relations and relationships highlight the ways in which police officers experience their structured environment.

The effects of these different experiences expose particular tensions within the Police Service. For some officers the emphases in vertical relations, on information, procedures and policies creates feelings of exclusion, being untrustworthy and unsupported. Vertical relations also emphasise feelings associated with being loyal to the Service. However, loyalty is understood to involve compliance with the procedures and protocols demanded by higher
echelons within the Service. For many officers, these vertical relations can result in miscommunication and tension between the different levels of the Police Service.

Horizontal relationships fill in some of these gaps in feelings of not being supported or trusted. These relationships depend on the development of trust between officers. However, being trustworthy and supporting each other can go against the formal procedures of the Service. Horizontal relationships also emphasise a different quality associated with loyalty. This results from placing the importance of colleagues over that of the Service. This aspect of loyalty acts to maintain the distinction between divisions within the Service.

The descriptions highlight the ways in which police experience working in their structured environment. On the one hand, police express the effects of these structures as compliance with the procedures that are part of their working environment. On the other hand, police also express the effects of these structures in attitudes and actions that can be detrimental to the Service as a whole. The effects of these structural processes can also reinforce distinctions between the levels of the Police Service.

_Everyday Ethics: An Illustration_

These descriptions of the ways in which police experience the structured environment of the Service further illustrate the conditions and features of an everyday ethics. I will “flesh out” my discussion of these conditions in terms of
the connections between knowledge and people and the importance of discussion and debate. I will also illustrate the everyday ethical features of dialogues that invite participation, and the significance of non-reciprocation. My use of these descriptions will either highlight these conditions and features or demonstrate the effects of limitations on these conditions and features.

One of the conditions I discussed that make possible this everyday form of ethics are the links between knowledge and people. This condition is integral for an everyday ethics because these linkages highlight two factors. First, the quest for knowledge must also include questions regarding its significance and, second, that knowing other people also requires maintaining an open view. Using descriptions of the dynamics between vertical relations and horizontal relationships within the Service enables an illustration of the effects of diminishing these connections.

Vertical relations within the Service emphasise the passage of information, horizontal relationships emphasise connections with colleagues. For many officers, however, the interactions between these levels can produce feelings of being untrustworthy, being excluded, and unsupported. The emphasis of vertical relations on information, regulations and procedures can cover connections to people. The opportunity to temper the effects of these vertical relations is limited, with the main form of resistance being silence. Emphasising information, rules and procedures over connections with people reinforces habitual ways of knowing and prescriptive ways of engaging with others. This
exposes limitations with respect to the capacity for linkages to develop between knowledge and people.

A further condition that makes possible an everyday form of ethics is communication. This condition emphasises discussion and debate as ways in which living well towards others can be engendered. The ways in which police experience their structured environment indicate limitations in engaging in discussion. The different dynamics that operate within vertical relations and horizontal relationships indicate problems that derive from different approaches to communication. These differences demonstrate that the capacity for discussion and debate between officers in these different levels is again limited. While communication is imperative in vertical relations, the channels used can reinforce the tensions between levels of police. Without practices that encourage discussion and debate among officers in different levels the possibility of generating feelings of support and trust is further constrained.

The descriptions provided of the ways in which police experience the structure of their Service reveal other features of an everyday form of ethics. An approach that invites people to respond and welcomes their view makes ways of living well towards others possible by enabling previously silenced voices to be heard. The experiences police have in their relations and relationships highlights the effects of limiting approaches that invite participation. The interactions between the vertical and the horizontal limit approaches that invite. The insistence in vertical relations on extracting or imparting information produces resistance from those lower down in the hierarchy, such as ignoring requests from
those in higher positions. This limits the possibility for silenced voices to speak and be heard. This illustrates some of the effects of diminishing the features of an everyday ethics.

Another feature of an everyday form of ethics discussed earlier was the practice of non-reciprocation. This practice emphasises that living well towards others involves unconditional acts of giving. Non-reciprocation indicates that living well towards others always refers to the effects of our actions on others. It highlights that acting ethically in everyday life is not a form of contract wherein we agree to act in particular ways. The experiences of the police, described earlier showed how these relations and relationships diminished their capacity for non-reciprocity.

This was most evident with respect to loyalty, which was evidenced both to the Service and to colleagues. Loyalty is most often a demand placed on officers. In vertical relations, loyalty is required as a sign of respect for the procedures and protocols of the Service. In horizontal relationships, loyalty requires officers to act in ways that support each other. Transgressions against loyalty can result in ostracism for officers, or to disciplinary actions. The demand to be loyal, as an act of reciprocity, reinforces pressures that result from both vertical relations and horizontal relationships. These pressures constrain the interactions between the different levels of the Service, and demonstrate the detrimental effects of demanding reciprocity from officers.

40 My point in this context is that for everyday life to take on an ethical dimension living well towards others requires more than mere reciprocity. While I have derived the principle of non-reciprocation from Levinas’s work and demonstrated the ways in which it acts as a condition of everyday ethics, the descriptions of these experiences of the police highlight that reciprocity and loyalty can have a role to play in everyday ethical life.
Conclusion

This section presented ways in which police experience their structured working environment. I have described these experiences in terms of vertical relations and horizontal relationships. In pointing to the different ways in which police experience these different levels of the organization I have sought to highlight the effects of the dynamics that occur between these organisational levels. This complemented my discussion of the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics by indicating the effects of limiting these conditions and features of an everyday ethics.

I used the experiences of police to point to the effects of limiting the connection between people and knowledge. This example illustrated the importance of developing and maintaining these links because they require retaining an open view where others are concerned. I raised the importance of discussion and debate by highlighting the effects of closing down communication. This illustrated the way in which feelings of support and trust are generated through discussion and debate. I also engaged with the effects of demanding loyalty for police as an example of constraining the practice of non-reciprocation. These examples highlight the effects of diminishing the conditions and features that comprise an everyday form of ethics.

Section Three: Acting the Part
**Introduction**

In this section I will focus on the different forms of acting that police undertake as part of their work. My aim is to highlight how these different forms of acting constitute different experiences for police officers. The descriptions will add to the ways in which the conditions and features of the everyday ethics can be understood. Again, I will begin with a brief description of some of the actions police undertake. I will use these descriptions to provide examples of horizontalization, thematic portrayals and textual and structural descriptions. I will then synthesise these descriptions to develop a picture of the ways in which police act. Finally, I will use these descriptions to further illustrate some of the conditions and features of an everyday ethics.

**Police Action**

The types of action police officers undertake are always actions intended to bring about particular ends. Police are required to use strength, weapons, investigative skills and an understanding of a multitude of associated legal issues. While these actions serve as the backbone of policing, there are many others that are not so well known. Teaching is an action relevant for the police. Not only do experienced police teach newer recruits important aspects of police work, the police also teach the public about personal safety and crime prevention.

Not only must police ‘talk the talk’ they must also ‘walk the walk’. As a form of action, ‘walking the walk’ refers to the ways in which police officers are
trained to present themselves. While this can refer to various drills and marching formations that police practice at the Academy, it also refers to a bearing, which expresses the pride, confidence and authority that is marked as typical for police officers. New recruits practising for their “swearing in” procedure were told to march to the front of the chapel, state their oath and march back to their seat. ‘You’re officers now’ they were told, ‘you must walk like police officers and move like police officers, show some confidence in what you do’.

Police work involves many forms of action together with ways of acting the part of a police officer. Police work, therefore, involves a type of balance. Officers need to balance between getting on with colleagues, following procedures and rules, taking risks, and still find ways to protect themselves. The dynamics of this balancing act highlight the intensity of police work and the pressures that are part of policing.

*Action Man and Action Woman*

Many illustrations and examples of the types of actions that police must undertake in their work were discussed during the course of my study. A significant number of police commented that their work involved acting in extreme situations in which split second decisions were made and that were only accounted for at a later date. These forms of acting, for police, involved acting as part of a team wherein each member must play a significant role if their desired ends are to be achieved. Most of my observations were of operational police officers and new recruits, so the emphasis was on acting in concert with others to bring about desired ends.
Acting as a police officer often involves deciding what to do when actions were unpredictable. In discussions about particular scenarios and in more informal conversations, it became obvious to me that policing involves a constant process of acting and making decisions. This was expressed in comments such as

‘I don’t know how many times I have had to chase someone on foot, over fences only to lose them later on’ and ‘there is so much work you have to do to just catch someone, you constantly have to decide which is the best way to go’.

Another aspect of acting for police is associated with learning the skills necessary for their job. The fact that my research was conducted at the Academy many of my observations related to learning process. Police officers at all levels attend courses at the Academy. The emphasis of these courses is on officers learning new skills or better ways of using pre-existing skills. Many new recruits commented that ‘you have to learn so much in the six months at the Academy, it’s so hard to keep it in your head’. The experience of learning for police officers appeared to support the view that ‘we are trying always to do a good job’. Further comments such as ‘we are trying to catch the bad guys’ and ‘we are trying to make the Service better by unlearning some of our past practices’, further support the view that acting as a police officer involves not just catching the ‘bad guys’, but also acting in ways that will enhance the procedures police follow and the public’s view of police as providing a “Service”.

*Invariant elements of police actions*
There is a constant emphasis on acting within the Service. Police officers seemed to be always acting in relation to something, whether in the form of acting with others, acting along, acting within a bureaucracy and acting within the broader community. This emphasis on acting with others highlights the significance of teamwork for police. The forms of acting with others that I observed were not actual ‘briefs’. Instead, the acting I observed concerned learning. On one level, police learn formal procedures and ways of acting appropriate for promotions or different types of police work. However, on another level, police learn through sharing time, space and dialogue with others. One comment summed up this experience, ‘being a cop means wanting to do a good job and this means learning new things that can help me do that’.

While police work emphasises doing with others, it also involves some form of acting alone. Learning, as a form of acting, requires police officers to reflect on their practices in order to develop different skills as part of police practice. Several comments were made that ‘these courses make you think’. Some officers commented that what was really good about attending these courses was that it gave them time away from what they normally do and presented them with different ideas so they could think about things in a different way. One officer commented that ‘this really makes you think. I can’t turn it off when I go home. You have exercises and homework to do that keep you thinking. It’s really intensive’. Acting, for police does, therefore, include some times acting alone.

The actions of police also include forms of acting within a bureaucratic organization. These include acting in accordance with the rules and regulations of
policing and following the formal and informal structures that govern relations and relationships within a hierarchy. Some forms of acting within these bureaucratic structures, however, can lead to actions that transgress the sanctioned behaviour of police officers. Some of these actions, both on an individual and collective level, were being made public in a Royal Commission into police corruption conducted at the time of this study. These actions, in that they are being made public, affected all members of the Police Service.

Another constant element of policing is that it involves acting within the broader community. Policing involves acting on members of the community in order to maintain law and order and protect other citizens from transgressions against laws. For police officers recognising that helping others is a significant aspect of police work indicates that police work incorporates a form of acting for others. This form of acting for others can take many forms, and is not only confined to convicting those who harm others. For example, one officer commented that a situation in which he was made aware of the fact that crimes affect all the people involved, not just the victim and their family but also the perpetrator and their family, had changed the way he dealt with people in later cases. ‘It changed the way I thought about these people. I hadn’t really given them (the family) much thought, I was only ever concerned with catching the crim’.

*Thematic Portrayals, Textual and Structural Descriptions*
The experiences of police emphasise two key themes. First, policing is people focused and, second, policing is rule governed. The people focused character emphasises that the actions of police always involve engagements with people. The rule governed character emphasises an objective approach to human action. This approach is intended to assist police to develop the best practices for the Service. These key themes expand on the ways in which police experience different forms of acting as part of their daily work.

**Policing is people focused**

Police work involves forms of acting with and for others and acting alone. This people focused character highlights the connections between people that are part of these actions. Being people focused takes into account not just the actions of others but also includes reference to their attitudes, beliefs, feelings and emotions. The textual qualities of this people centred approach emphasise connections between colleagues that are part of police work. Previously, I have pointed to these connections through the significance of “story telling” and “mateship”. These characteristics provide a human element to the work of ‘catching the crims’.

Another way in which police work emphasises a people focused approach relates to relationship between the police and the community. As much police work is concerned with criminal acts, focusing on the perpetrators of those acts is an obvious task for police. This involves taking into account the attitudes, beliefs and feelings of those who commit these acts. Police incorporate these ways of
thinking and acting into their actions in order to apprehend people who commit offences. As one officer commented ‘to catch an armed robber you need to think like one’. Developing a people focused approach to their work also makes police officers aware that people often act in unexpected ways. This alerts officers to a need to be aware of the unexpected. As one officer explained ‘it is a good tactic to expect the worst in a lot of the people we deal with, so if it doesn’t happen you have done well, but if it does you are prepared’.

A further aspect of this people focused approach can be found in the issues addressed in the courses presented at the Academy. The courses raise many issues that are intended to challenge attitudes police officers may have towards others. Raising the awareness of officers in relation to the lives of Aboriginal people is one example of this. After listening to visiting Aboriginal elders speak and being involved with discussions with Aboriginal police officers many new recruits commented that they were not aware of the complexity of Aboriginal life and the problems that many Aboriginal people face.

A second theme that can be derived my observations is that police work is rule governed. These rules affect all levels of police work and affect a multitude of forms of acting within the Police Service. Rules govern the appearance of police officers, indicate who they can and cannot speak with, determine who has access to cars and how fast these cars can be driven, regulate dealings with the media, specify appropriate processes and forms to fill in for each ‘brief’ and identify the legal processes that must be followed for all forms of investigation.
The textual qualities derived from these rule-governed situations are twofold. First, rules provide a safety net in an environment in which one’s morals are under pressure. Rules and procedures ensure that each officer is aware of what is required to fulfil best possible practice. One of the new officers commented that while ‘there’s lots of rules and procedures to know, it does give you some idea of what to do when you are out there’. The second point that can be made regarding working in this rule-governed environment came from comments from more experienced officers. Their feeling is that rules often impede their work. These officers also commented that rules changed whenever there was a threat to the internal coherency of the Service. For example, ‘they seem to bring in new rules because they are scared of what the Royal commission will bring out’. These textual qualities indicate feelings of frustration directed at the Service and the legal system. Frustration was evident in cynical attitudes towards the Service and the amount of support police could access. Alongside, and as a result of these feelings of frustration, was an evident feeling of low morale amongst the police I observed during the course of my study.

These themes are underpinned by particular structures of knowledge and relations between self and others. Knowledge underpins the rule-governed character of the Police Service, with its emphasis on rules and regulations. As has been previously discussed, the forms of knowledge associated with police work emphasise particular frameworks that ensure that their work practices are standardised. However, this does not mean that they are closed systems of knowledge, which cannot be challenged. Comments made by some police suggested that they do alter depending on the circumstances of the day. While
these comments were not intended to present such changes in a positive light, they do indicate that systems of knowledge, no matter how entrenched, are open to challenge and alteration.

The second structure that underpins the forms of action within the Police Service is that of self and others. Embedded within these people focused forms of action, are ways of looking that orient the ways in which police officers act towards others. On the one hand, they reinforce the “us and them” mentality, both internally and externally. This often relies on already established views in relation to individuals and groups. People’s actions are marked and judged in particular ways that supports the distinction between those who are “us” and those who are “them”. On the other hand, that they are people focused also makes possible the conditions to share feelings, experiences and beliefs and, therefore, to challenge the ways in which others are interpreted.

*Synthesis of Police Actions*

The experiences of police undertaking the different forms of acting required of them emphasise feelings associated with connecting to people while being governed by particular rules and procedures. Police undertake many forms of action in their daily work. Due to the nature of police work, officers need to perform a balancing act between competing pressures that include supporting their colleagues, following procedures, taking risks to solve crimes and protecting themselves in the line of their work. These different types of acting can involve split second decisions that affect the lives of many people.
The “doings” of police emphasise many forms of action. For police, acting almost always refers to acting as a team. This means that acting with others is paramount. Police also act within the community and with others in the community so they develop forms of action with other people. Police also learn new skills, which can involve being persuaded to jettison old and “outmoded” ways of acting. This requires forms of action as learning. For police, learning, as an aspect of acting, emphasises gaining new skills together with reflecting on the ways in which these can be incorporated into their daily practices.

The experiences of police that derived from different forms of acting indicate that a people focused orientation is an integral element of police work. This makes possible connections to people within the Service and within the community. Internally, this people focused character is necessary for support amongst colleagues working in a stressful and pressured environment. However, this people focused character can also reinforce pre-existing ways in which others are known. This is especially highlighted in the attitudes required for police to apprehend people involved in types of crime.

The different forms of acting that constitute experiences for the police also reflect the rule governed character of the Police Service. While these rules are a necessary part of policing they can lead to frustration and cynicism for many officers. The rule governed character of the Police Service is supposed to provide an objective approach for guiding the actions of officers. However, many officers experience these rules and procedures as forms of surveillance of their
actions and behaviour. The effects of the rule governed character of the Service can lead to low morale for many operational officers.

These descriptions of the experiences of the different forms of acting for police again highlight the balancing act that is an integral part of police work. For police, most of their work emphasises engaging with people, both internally and in the community. While the people focused character of the Service requires certain types of acting, its rule governed character can hinder the development of these types of action. The effects of this blockage can further reinforce attitudes of cynicism, frustration and isolation and makes possible the conditions for complacency or inappropriate actions on the behalf of police officers.

*Everyday Ethics: An Illustration*

These aspects of the different forms of acting that police experience can also complement my discussion of the conditions and features of an everyday ethics. I will do so by pointing to the conditions that emphasise possibilities for change. The features of an everyday ethics that can be derived from these descriptions include the orientation of looking beyond one self, self reflection, the practices associated with learning, adopting a vulnerable position and responding to others. Unfortunately, experiences of the police in this context tend to highlight the effects associated with diminishing these conditions and features, though some descriptions illustrate possibilities for expanding these conditions.

As I have previously indicated, the conditions that emphasise the possibility for change are integral to an everyday ethics. The possibility for
change enables learning from past errors and establishes the capacity for new beginnings. In short, the possibility for change constitutes new possibilities. Comments by police experiencing the action of learning suggest that the possibility for change can be an effect of attending courses at the Academy. The accounts of police officers confronted by the implications of crimes for all the parties involved demonstrate that exposure to these issues enables a capacity for change. It is this capacity for change that is integral for developing ways of living well towards others.

A further indication of the capacity for change derives from the people focused orientation of the Police Service. This orientation makes possible ways of engaging with others that emphasise the feelings, emotions and attitudes of other people. For the police, attending courses that raise their awareness of cultural differences makes possible the conditions to challenge and change any preconceived views they may have in relation to people of different ethnic backgrounds. Their accounts highlight that raising awareness enables people to look beyond themselves and consider their responses and attitudes towards others. These descriptions of the experiences of these police demonstrate how change is possible, and further how changing views can make possible ways of living well towards others.

The descriptions of the experiences of police undertaking different actions also point to some of the features of an everyday form of ethics. They highlight the ways in which learning constitutes one of the practices of an everyday ethics. Newer police officers want to do a good job and learn new ways of acting and
dealing with people. To do so, they must look beyond themselves and reflect on themselves. This requires a capacity to hold themselves open to new ways of knowing, not just people but also issues of concern. The descriptions of police wanting to learn how to do things better demonstrates one of the ways in which new possibilities for living well towards others can be engendered.

Another feature of an everyday form of ethics is the practice of being vulnerable. As a practice of everyday ethics, vulnerability refers to a willingness to learn through others and to admit past errors. As a way of living well towards others, this practice ensures that we are open to others through exposing our fallibilities. In this context, the importance of adopting a vulnerable position is evidenced in an ability to unlearn past practices. For the police, admitting that some of their practices have been questionable makes possible the conditions to generate different practices. Many police identified, however, an inability to adopt a vulnerable position as a cause of the repetition of past practices. The descriptions of the experiences of the police in the context of vulnerability again highlight the importance of Levinas’s insights in relation to adopting such a position.

Responding to others is another feature of an everyday ethics. This feature emphasises recognition of the concrete needs, concerns and conditions of others that allows for their specificity to be taken into account. This requires that we focus on the significance of others’ needs and not on the ways that these needs affect us. Using the descriptions of police whose attitudes have been challenged by moments in which their awareness of the needs and concerns of real flesh
blood people was raised provides an illustration of forms of responding to others. Without practices that raise their awareness of the concrete needs of others, the capacity of police to respond to the concrete needs of others is diminished.

**Conclusion**

In this section I have discussed the different forms of acting that police undertake that add to my exploration of an everyday ethics. I have presented policing as involving many forms of acting and pointed to the ways in which police experience these forms of acting with others. I have highlighted the importance of learning as one aspect of acting for police. I have also demonstrated that the police Service has a people focused orientation as well as a rule governed character. I then have used these descriptions to complement my discussion of an everyday ethics by pointing to some of the conditions and features that comprise this form of ethics.

I engaged with the experiences of police learning about others as one way in which change can be engendered. I discussed the experiences of police regarding their awareness of cultural differences to illustrate the effects of looking beyond oneself and challenging personal biases and assumptions. I also discussed adopting a vulnerable position as a feature of an everyday ethics and used the experiences of police to highlight the effects of diminishing this position. I then engaged with actions of police that close down their awareness of the concrete needs of others. These descriptions demonstrate the effects of diminishing our capacity to respond to the unique characteristics of each person.
Conclusion

In this part I have presented my interpretation and analysis of data I gathered over my time at the Western Australian Police Academy. My observations have been used to provide a “real life” illustration of the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I have presented my data in three sections in order to provide a range of examples of the conditions and features of this approach to an everyday ethics. Descriptions of the attitudes observed allowed me to expose the effects of limiting the possibility for change. Engaging with these descriptions also exposed the effects of obscuring the uniqueness of each person and these descriptions revealed the effect of refusing to use inclusive forms of language. A discussion of relations and relationships enabled me to expose the effects of diminishing links between people and knowledge and the effects of closing down communication. I used the experiences of police to illustrate the ways in which feelings of support and trust are associated with expanding these conditions. Considering the actions of police allowed me to illustrate the effects of raising an awareness of other people. I used their experiences to demonstrate the effects of looking beyond oneself and challenging personal biases. I have used these experiences of police to complement my discussion of the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.
PART FOUR: A SUMMARY

This “case study” has intended to illustrate the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. My observations of the experiences of police attending the Western Australian Police Academy provided an avenue to complement my discussion of this approach to ethics. I have presented this case study in four parts. The first part introduced my research process and discussed my relationship to the Police Service. The second part provided an introduction to the Police Service in my study and the third part presented and analysed my data. This fourth part presents a brief summary of my attempt to develop an everyday ethics by indicating some limitations and outcomes developed through the study.

Limitations of Study

While this study was intended to act as an illustration of the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics, it was limited in several ways. The first relates to an application of Levinas’s and Schutz’s insights and perceptions to an everyday situation. Applying the insights of Levinas and Schutz to an everyday situation required that I develop specific ways in which these insights could be used for understanding everyday situations. While their insights assist with theoretical discussion, when faced with using these insights to inquire into the actions and attitudes of real concrete people, however, the ways in which these can be applied is open to contestation. While my case study has developed one way in which these insights can be used and applied, a different method may provide alternative examples that illustrate attributes of an everyday ethics.
The second limitation of this study relates to the officers I observed at the Western Australian Police Academy. The police officers I observed were removed from their daily routines and were engaging with unfamiliar officers. My observations were based on the comments and actions of these police in these circumstances. This could limit the types of attitudes, actions, structural relations and relationships that I observed. The descriptions derived from behaviour and comments of the police I observed may not be the same as descriptions derived from officers who work more closely together.

A further limitation of this study relates to my limited contact with officers who work in middle and upper management. I attended only one session for these officers. More extended observations of these managerial officers might have resulted in different accounts of police of attitudes, actions and approaches to structures within the Service. The descriptions I have derived from the experiences of police may be limited or skewed towards operational police officers.

The third limitation of this study relates to the number of officers that were part of this study. As I came in contact with some 250 police officers this case study has provided a particular snapshot of experiences that illustrate the conditions and features of an everyday ethics. Observing a larger group of officers may have produced a different account of the experiences of police. Whereas studying smaller, more localised, group of officers working in a particular section or station may have produced a different account that could
point to different ways in which the conditions and features of an everyday ethics could be grasped.

**Outcomes**

As a case study that provides an illustration to complement my discussion of the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics some of its outcomes deserve brief attention. First, it highlights that being ethical in everyday life is complex and often constrained by the conditions that constitute everyday life. This outcome distinguishes my study from other approaches to ethics because it reveals that being ethical is not simply a matter of “choosing” to act in responsible ways in relation to some people and not others. Rather, my study reveals that being ethical in everyday life is a constant process that affects all aspects of our lives and our interactions with others.

Second, this case study has indicated ways in which people can be open to being ethical as well as illustrating the effects of constraining the opportunities for ethical engagement. Again, this outcome distinguishes my study from other approaches to ethics by demonstrating that ethics does not depend on logical deduction or measuring consequences. Rather, my study reveals that ethics emerges through being open to others and responding to their mortality. Further, my study also exposes the ways in which our capacity to respond to others is diminished in everyday life. Exposing these conditions generates the possibility to develop ways of expanding our capacity to respond to the uniqueness of others in our everyday lives.
A further outcome, specifically in relation to the police, is that the dynamics and structures within the Service limit the possibilities for developing ways of living well towards others. Most of the descriptions derived from the experiences of police expose ways in which living well towards others is constrained. While the Police Service has introduced a more people focused orientation and measures to encourage better relations with the broader public, the conditions that reinforce entrenched attitudes still exist.

**CONCLUSION**

Hopefully, the limitations noted above do not negate the value of this “case study”. While the first two sections were important in situating this study, explaining the research process and presenting my relationship to the Police Service, the third part constituted the crucial part of this study. Here, I indicated that an everyday ethics must encourage conditions that enable the possibility for change, emphasise the uniqueness of each body, encourage attempts to humanise knowledge and generate conditions that encourage discussion in our everyday lives. These conditions reflect the possibility to develop ways in which we can live well towards others in our everyday lives.

I also used this chapter to complement my discussion of the features that comprise an everyday ethics. In this context, I discussed features that also assist with developing ways of living well towards others. These features included the capacity to look beyond myself as well as encouraging self reflection. I engaged with these features to illustrate the importance of challenging assumptions and
personal biases for an everyday ethics. I also discussed the features of developing inclusive forms of language, humanising knowledge and encouraging the capacity to learn through others. These features demonstrate that an everyday ethics is a constant process that affects all aspects of our lives. I then discussed the features of adopting a vulnerable position, responding to the needs of others and encouraging a non-reciprocative approach towards giving to others. I used these features to illustrate that an everyday ethics provides the possibility to concretise ethics in everyday types of action, everyday practices and everyday forms of engagement. I have used this chapter as one way to compliment my discussion of these conditions and features of an everyday ethics.
CONCLUSION

My aim in this thesis was to inquire into what it means to live well towards others. I focused my aim towards developing an understanding of the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I was concerned with exploring how existing in the world and being ethical are entwined. I developed this everyday ethics through synthesising the respective ideas of Emmanuel Levinas and Alfred Schutz. This process provided a macro approach to the everyday world and highlighted the micro characteristics of the ethical relation. Synthesising the insights from the respective ideas of Levinas and Schutz illustrated the significance of the Other for existing in the world and for the ethical relation. My strategy of “Echoes of the Other” made it possible to locate the Other in the structures of the everyday world and further enabled the minute characteristics of Levinas’s ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world. Enhancing these characteristics in the everyday world exposed areas of constraint and enlargement. Focusing on these areas enabled me to point to the conditions and features that comprise an everyday ethics.

Due to my concern with what it means to live well towards others and how this can inform an everyday ethics I used Levinas’s view of the ethical relation as an overarching perspective. I favoured his understanding of the ethical relation because it demonstrates the ways in which this relation is an integral element of human existence. As I have explained, this relation resides in the simple facing of another human being. It plays an important role in attempting to
understand one self, one’s environment and the everyday responsibilities and obligations that are part of human existence.

A further aspect of my concern with what it means to live well towards others required that I focus on the complex relations that make up everyday life. The manner in which people meet, interact and engage with each other is also significant for exploring what it means to live well towards others and how this can inform an everyday ethics. To grasp these complexities I used insights and perceptions from the work of Alfred Schutz. For him, the everyday world provides the background to experiences. His analyses provided a description of the processes that constitute the everyday world and therein pointed to its inherent social character. Emphasising this social character enabled me to highlight the significance of the Other in the everyday world.

I also focused my concern for exploring what it means to live well towards other by drawing an in situ illustration of these conditions and features that constitute an everyday ethics. I used descriptions of experiences of police officers attending, or working at the Western Australian Police Academy to “flesh out” my discussion of the conditions and features that comprise an everyday ethics. This illustration acted in a complementary way to my discussion of the ways in which people can live well towards others. The descriptions used do not represent an investigation into ethics in the Western Australian Police Service.
This Conclusion serves two purposes. First, to recap on the way in which I developed this approach to an everyday ethics. The second purpose will include a discussion on the effectiveness of applying the ideas of Levinas and Schutz to developing an everyday form of ethics. This discussion has been included because it will point to the ways in which Levinas’s and Schutz’s respective ideas assisted with some aspects of what it means to live well towards others as well highlighting areas in which their respective ideas were not so helpful. My purpose in undertaking this discussion is to demonstrate that the approach I have adopted in this project is not definitive of what constitutes an everyday ethics. The conditions and features I have put forward as comprising an everyday ethics have been derived through my interpretation of these works. Combining the insights of Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation with scholars who are more attentive to developing models for ethical behaviour may highlight different conditions and features. Further such combinations may also provide strategies that can assist with ethical decision making. However, my project, in synthesising the ideas of Levinas and Schutz provides one way in which to grasp what being ethical in everyday life can include.

* * * * * * *

My intention in this thesis was to synthesise aspects of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation with Schutz’s understanding of the everyday world. My contention was that this synthesising process would expose the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics. I developed this synthesis in three ways. First, I used Levinas’s descriptions of the significance of the Other and Schutz’s analysis
of the structures and processes that constitute the everyday world to locate the Other in the everyday world. Next, I focused on allowing the minute details of the ethical relation to manifest in the structures and processes of the everyday world. This exposed the ways in which this relation affects and is affected by conditions within the everyday world. The third way I developed this process was through identifying these areas as this enabled me to point to the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.

I presented the development of these conditions and features of an everyday ethics over six chapters. In Chapter One I drew out the significant features of Schutz’s view of the everyday world. I highlighted the conditions and characteristics, the dimensions and practices and the ways in which human relations function in the everyday world. The purpose of Chapter Two was to focus on the characteristics of Levinas’s view of the ethical relation. In this chapter I described Levinas’s understanding of subjectivity, intersubjectivity and the communal dimension. The significance of this chapter was to provide a detailed account of the significance of the Other in these three areas because these descriptions point to the dimensions of the ethical relation. These two chapters provided the basis from which I combined their respective ideas.

The third and fourth chapters dealt with synthesising these respective ideas in order to develop my approach to an everyday ethics. The purpose of Chapter Three was to allow Levinas’s descriptions of the significance of the Other to manifest in the structures and processes of the everyday world. The significance of this chapter was developing my heuristic device for this purpose.
Termed “Echoes of the Other”, this device allowed me to point to resonances, reverberations and resoundings that highlight the ways in which the Other occupies the boundaries of human existence. This chapter provided a multiplicity of means through which to locate the Other in the everyday world.

Chapter Four was significant because I pointed to the conditions and features of this approach to ethics. I identified these features by allowing the ethical relation to manifest in the everyday world. Emphasising these resonances and “echoes” of the Other provided the means for minute details of the ethical relation to be highlighted. This process also illustrated the ways in which this relation affects and is affected by the conditions that constitute the everyday world. Identifying these points enabled me to point to the conditions for and features of an everyday ethics.

The fifth and sixth chapters were concerned with pointing to an in situ illustration of these conditions and features that comprise an everyday ethics. The significance of Chapter Five was specifically to outline the method I used to gather and analyse data that provided this illustration. The significance of Chapter Six was developing a pictorial reference of these conditions and features that comprise this approach to everyday ethics. In this chapter I used descriptions of experiences of police officers at the Western Australian Police Academy to point to some of the ways in which this approach to ethics can be witnessed in everyday life. This chapter highlighted that adopting an ethical position is often constrained by the conditions that constitute everyday life. The importance of this chapter, however, is that it provides concrete examples of the complexities
involved in developing ways of living well towards others that can inform an
everyday ethics.

This dissertation is one attempt to use the insights of Levinas and Schutz
to develop an understanding of ethics in the everyday world. It acts as one study
that hopefully contributes in a variety of ways to the development of what I
consider to be important in relation to sharing a world with other people. Most
significantly, this dissertation synthesised the respective ideas of Levinas and
Schutz in order to inquire into some of the ways in which one can live well
towards others. However, the results of this synthesis are by no means
exhaustive. While the beneficial aspects of this synthesis have been discussed in
the Introduction, some limitations can also be raised. Focusing on the
effectiveness of applying the insights of the respective ideas of Levinas and
Schutz will raise some further suggestions for developing ideas about what it
might mean to live well towards others in everyday life.

I will begin this discussion by first recapping what I considered to be the
benefits of this synthesis. I will then move to discuss the limitations and
effectiveness of applying these ideas in the everyday world. Previously, I pointed
to four benefits that can be derived from synthesising the respective ideas of
Levinas and Schutz. The first benefit referred to demonstrating that this form of
everyday ethics is manifested in all areas of one’s life. The features of this
everyday ethics that illustrate how this is manifested in one’s life refer to the
importance of looking beyond one self and reflecting on one’s attitudes and
assumptions. These characteristics make possible the conditions to question assumptions and biases that influence the way in which one acts towards others.

A further benefit referred to exposing the conditions in the everyday world that act to either enlarge or diminish the effects of the ethical relation. The benefit of this aspect of synthesising Levinas’s and Schutz’s ideas is that it highlights where forms of interruption are required and it also takes seriously that everyday life involves types of conflict and confrontation in order to develop ways of living well towards others. The features I have pointed to that demonstrate these characteristics refer to the importance of questioning, debating, dialogues and discussion. These features allow marginalised voices to speak and therein also make possible the conditions to develop ways of living well towards others.

The third advantage of this synthesis referred to considering ways in which taking up responsibility for the Other can be grasped on an everyday level. The benefit of this aspect resides in concretising ethics in everyday forms of action, practice and modes of engagement. The features I have pointed to that demonstrate these characteristics refer to holding open the ways in which others are known, encouraging consultative and co-operative forms of dialogue and emphasising the capacity to humanise knowledge. These features highlight how concrete actions make possible the conditions to develop further ways of living well towards others.
I also pointed to this synthesis as providing one possible way to bridge the gap between the demands of applied ethics and that of philosophical ethical theory. My intention was to show how the insights of Levinas’s ethical relation could be applied when ethical standards are considered. In this respect the benefits of this synthesis are more attentive to highlighting the conditions that enable developing ways of living well towards others. Applying these insights would require a method that adapts these insights such that they can be incorporated into the development of ethical standards. However, the insights derived from my study suggest that any development of ethical standards requires being attentive to one’s own assumptions, emphasising the possibility for change and developing ways of communication that invite people to respond.

While my project has made these initial, hopefully significant, contributions to understanding what it can mean to live well towards others, some limitations can be highlighted. I will use these limitations to discuss the effectiveness of the application of these ideas for developing an everyday view of ethics. In the Introduction to this project I discussed some of the traditional approaches to ethics and I raised my dissatisfaction with these models. While these models, in varying degrees, do not emphasise the significance of the Other, they do provide some form of guidance for human behaviour. The relevance of these models is that they aim to develop the means for guiding decision making processes that emphasise promoting both the happiness of others and self improvement.
Integral to my project has also been an emphasis on developing ways of living well towards others and improving oneself. While synthesising the respective ideas of Levinas and Schutz has pointed to the conditions and features that can provide the means to develop ways of living well towards others, this project has not necessarily provided a means for guiding decision making processes. This was also made apparent during my observations with the police at the Academy. These officers commented that most of their decisions involve split second timing, and therefore, they did not have time to consider the best available option. Afterwards these officers did have time to reflect on their decisions, however, often these decisions had detrimental and irreversible consequences. It may be worthwhile, therefore, to develop a decision making model in consultation with these more traditional approaches to ethics. This would allow the insights and perceptions of Levinas’s understanding of the ethical relation to inform practices that guide decision making processes.

Another area of limitation that can inform the effectiveness of this approach to an everyday ethics refers to the ways in which taking up responsibility for the Other functions in everyday life. This aspect of my project has provided the possibility to concretise ethics in everyday forms of action and modes of engagement. However, being attentive to these concrete forms of action does not highlight ways in which to balance self affirmation with responsibility for the Other. This is especially the case for people who historically have been marginalised. A beneficial practice therefore could include developing practices that seek to balance responsibility for the Other with affirming one’s valued position in everyday life.
A further limiting factor I became aware of during this project was that this synthesis did not highlight strategies that would necessarily generate more inclusive forms of action. While this synthesising project highlighted the conditions in the everyday world that constrain and limit the effects of the ethical relation, I did not develop strategies that would necessarily expand these effects. In the structures of language and space, I highlighted that strategies are needed to generate inclusive forms of action, however, I did not draw out what these strategies might include. This again would be a beneficial area to consider.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The purpose of this project was to consider what it means to live well towards others. While many areas of research investigate the effects of living with other people, my aim was to consider how living well towards others can inform an ethics that is part of everyday life. I developed my aim through synthesising the respective ideas of Levinas and Schutz. I used their respective ideas to point to the conditions and features that comprise an everyday ethics. It is the results of this combination that, for me, represent the contribution of this project to the development of scholarship. These results, however, are not intended to represent a “complete” or “final” approach to what it means to live well towards others. My results are also not meant to provide an exhaustive interpretation of the respective ideas of Levinas and Schutz. As I have previously stated, my project represents one approach to their respective ideas, and one approach to synthesising these ideas. As my aim was to delve into what it means
to live well towards others, perhaps the words of William Blake sum up my intentions, ‘Can one see another’s woe, And not be in sorrow too? Can I see another’s grief, And not seek for kind relief?’ (Blake 1789). It is these sentiments that provided, for me, the impetus to explore the ways in which people can live well towards others.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Peperzak, A. 1993, *To The Other: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas*, Purdue University Press, West Lafayette.


