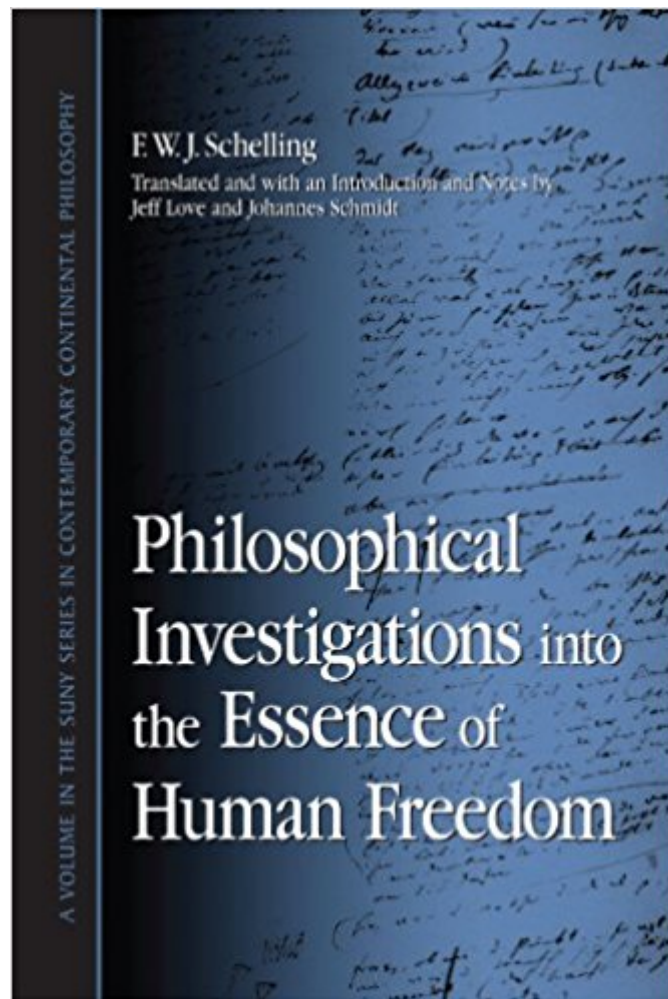


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Philosophical Investigations Into The Essence Of Human Freedom (Suny Series In Contemporary Continental Philosophy)



Synopsis

Essays on phenomenological encounters with the world. Taking Edmund Husserl's dictum to heart yet finding in it a new direction, *The Things Themselves* is an attempt to return philosophy to the world and, in so doing, know ourselves and our place in that world anew. The book deals with the myriad ways in which a phenomenological approach to philosophy can inform commonplace experiences and understanding. From a trip to Disneyland to a morning spent watching television exercise shows, from the commitment to become a vegetarian to the choice to become a political revolutionary, this book breaks down the barrier between theory and praxis, demanding that we both investigate and hold ourselves accountable to this world. Written in an accessible yet philosophically rigorous style, H. Peter Steeves not only attempts to return philosophy to the world but also to return philosophy to the nonspecialist, to those simply interested in the simplest things, the things themselves that fill our lives but inevitably, and most wondrously, prove anything but simple. *The Things Themselves* is a collection of essays dealing with the experiential dimensions of popular culture. H. Peter Steeves is a phenomenologically oriented hybrid of Roland Barthes and Jean Baudrillard, and not only is he quite as good as they are, his writing also offers a strong argument for why we need to expand the reach of phenomenology rather than set it aside. Steeves has an extraordinary eye for the revealing empirical detail. His essays on Disneyland and Las Vegas are masterpieces in the hermeneutics of irreality. His powers of observation are those of a writer or a painter, and his essay on Cézanne is quite as revealing as Merleau-Ponty's classic. This is a highly original book, full of ideas, and it brilliantly applies phenomenology to our real (and unreal) experience. It will have a major impact on the field.

— David Wood, author of *The Step Back: Ethics and Politics after Deconstruction*

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Customer Reviews

This book is a valuable contribution to the newest literature and foretold renaissance in Schelling research. Although there are three existing translations, all suffer from the defects familiar to the difficult exercise of translation. Among those, the Love/Schmid version suffers from these same problems, unfortunately. I mention only one serious error (the others largely being unavoidable) in that Selbstständigkeit is translated as 'independence.' While this word does grasp one of the meanings of Selbstständigkeit, it fails to grasp the richness of the word, especially in its asymmetrical opposition to Abhängigkeit (translated as dependence). My only complaint is that the translators did not note this particular locution. However, at almost all other places where there is doubt, they are careful to provide the German text. The advantage of this edition, which over all existing is significant, is the historical apparatus attached to this edition, including translations of several other timely works that influenced Schelling's thinking (Boehme, Lessing, Baader, Jacobi). Although there is a lot of fascinating contemporary commentary done on the text (and Schelling's work at large) in different venues, little of it actually addresses the context in which the Freiheitsschrift was written. The apparatus attached to this edition fills this lacuna.

Schelling's difficult idealism attempts to provide a positive account of radical evil as well as an account of human will. This is an immensely brilliant and mysterious text, which requires multiple readings. Schelling's philosophy has emerged as a major force in the history of German idealism, and is often the source of new work in Spinozan circles as well. The supplementary texts in this addition are an excellent point of entry to Schelling's work as well. However, the translator's introduction is pretentious and historically suspect.

This new translation, including the up-to-date editorial remarks and footnotes, is important. However, the numerous footnotes are not optimized at all (you have find them yourself), and the index is unusable. You might be better off with the print edition. Hence the three stars. Otherwise it would have been five stars.

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