Kant's dualism (his basic story about us sharing "physical" objects) is a mess. Not saying there's no gold in that creek. But the big picture fails.

J. S. Mill's phenomenalism, however, is solid. Enrich this phenomenalism with early Heidegger, etc., and we get something that works. We get a shared world that manifests itself to particular embedded subjects. An "ontological" perspectivism. Of course I've already explained this in detail elsewhere. Perhaps Ayer's *LTL* was the last famous work of phenomenalism in English. He builds on Mill, successfully.

The problem with philosophy is that most of it doesn't matter enough. A bad argument, a nonsense thesis, can even *work*, but *as* a prop for self-esteem. As a myth. Some like to think of pure physics as a "genuine" science in contrast to philosophy. I prefer to speak of technology directly as what is constrained in a way that philosophy is not. I don't have the expertise to be sure, but I suspect that there's plenty of nonsense and confusion in "pure" physics. In human things generally.

So technology is special. Does it perform as promised ? Does the pill make the pain stop ? Does the car start, so that I can get to work on time ? Did the call go through ? Am I talking to my spouse who is hundreds of miles away ? Technology should work *whether or not I expect it to work*.

Note that this criterion of *working whether I expect it to work or not*, is not itself a tool subjected to itself, to that criterion. So I "believe in" philosophy. As another kind of knowledge or meta-knowledge. Following the logical positivists and others, I see philosophy as largely the work of explication. What do we vaguely already understand by important terms like "knowledge" and "physical" ?

There's a negative use of the word "system," as if "system building" was necessarily questionable. I understand the caution. But I also see philosophers as tending toward a coherent set of beliefs about the world. A non-philosopher might be an expert in

some field but talk nonsense when it comes to how his or her field connects with the rest of world. The philosopher is well-rounded, you might say. Cares more than most about how it all fits together. Wants a solid big-picture. No obvious plot holes.

But I don't assume that any finite string of words can say it all. I expect any living philosopher to keep making minor additions and revisions. Assuming they've found a good basic framework, one that can survive further experience and reasoning.

I see my own position that way. As Peirce saw, inquiry is the settling of belief. Once settled, the inquiry moves to some other issue, which is less settled. I "understood phenomenalism" about a year and half ago. Off and on, I'd write many pages and make many videos in an attempt to find a better and better grip on the basic insight.

Now I only occasionally feel motivated to revisit the topic. In this paper, I don't even present the phenomenalism again, which would be redundant, but reflect on its context. Many who discuss philosophy have a "spiritual" motivation. Both the "supernaturalists" and the "metaphysical realists" need "things in themselves." Something hidden. Something trans-human and sanctified. Authoritative. Communicating that authority to its messengers.

I see phenomenalism as a kind of personal empiricism. What I can see and touch and smell and so on is "real." And I'm talking about the puppy right here that I pet. Not some astral projection of the puppy in an obscure noumenal realm. But I think we all *live* this way. So people who think they are dualists are only dualists within a certain conversational game.

But I don't go in at all for the therapy routine, where the anti-philosopher shows the fly the way out of the fly bottle. Which is like showing the baby a path away from its candy. The paradise of Cantor's set theory, for instance, is glowing and numinous. For those who can believe in it. To "cure" someone of this enjoyment is not obviously the action of a friend.

Likewise people don't want to be cure of their Wittgenstein wor-

ship, etc. It's more fun to be a knight than a foolish old man.