You are cordially invited to a lecture by

**Noah Moss Brender**  
*McGill University*

**Lecture:**  
“PHENOMENOLOGY AS PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE”

**Noah Moss Brender** completed his PhD at Boston College in 2012. His research lies at the intersection of classical phenomenology, cognitive science, and the philosophy of biology.

Evan Thompson has recently taken up Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *Gestalt* ontology as the basis for an embodied, enactive approach to cognitive science. By synthesizing Merleau-Ponty’s thought with more recent scientific developments — particularly the new science of complex dynamic systems — Thompson aims to eliminate certain residual dualisms in Merleau-Ponty’s ontology, and thus arrive at a fully “naturalized” phenomenology. In this talk, I argue that Thompson does not take the ontological implications of dynamic systems theory far enough. As a result, he falls back into the very dualisms he sought to escape. I attempt to overcome these difficulties by thinking through the phenomenon of *symmetry-breaking* in nonlinear dynamic systems. This phenomenon can help us to escape the antinomies of realism and idealism — but only if we allow it to challenge our atomistic view of nature as a machine that has no meaning of its own. In order to resolve the phenomenological problem of constitution, we must locate the origin of meaning not in consciousness, nor even in the living body, but in Being itself.

**Thursday March 6th, 2014**  
5:00 pm  
Harriman Hall 214

**Reception to Follow**