

Editorial

We are pleased to publish Volume 4 Number 1 of *Journal of Philosophy in Schools* (JPS) in an open-access format. This issue contains five original articles exploring the efficacy of teaching philosophy to children in a variety of countries and cultural contexts. In this issue, we have researchers and practitioners represented from Hawai'i, Israel, Canada, America and the United Kingdom. This international and multicultural mix serves to remind us that philosophy can be taught in any country and with children of all ages, although some local, religious and cultural considerations and sensitivities ought to be applied in relevant ways to pedagogical praxis.

United by the inclusive manner of teaching philosophy using the community of inquiry (CoI), advocates of philosophy for children (P4C) have only started to explore ways in which cultural and other contextual factors shift and alter the democratic dynamic of philosophical dialogue within CoIs. Another theme explored in this issue is how the CoI may enhance students' affective engagement and their ability to reflect upon and express emotions. The CoI has a role to play in facilitating difficult conversations that allow participants to explore their ideas about culture, emotions and questions about religion. All of these topics are of vital importance to one's cultural and self-understanding within a global world, and are worthy of further exploration. The articles herein tackle such challenges and lay the groundwork for continued dialogue.

Our first article is written by Amber Strong Makaiau and explores how teaching and learning innovations inspired by P4C, including the CoI, may be successfully applied to the study of Ethnic Studies with public high school students in Hawai'i. *Using A Philosopher's Pedagogy to Teach School Subjects: The Case of Ethnic Studies at Kailua High School* examines the impact of Makaiau and Miller's 'philosopher's pedagogy' on developing student engagement in light of multicultural and social justice goals in schooling. Makaiau details how the students' questions engaged them in thinking about the Ethnic Studies content in relationship to their own lives and experiences – an example of the examined life in practice. Positive examples of student action emerged from this creative pedagogy, including students working with other members of the school community to improve the existing school culture.

On the Seam: Philosophy with Palestinian Girls in an East Jerusalem Village as a Pedagogy of Searching by Arie Kizel and Marlene Abdallah is our second article. This paper examines the effects of conducting P4C classes with female Arab-Palestinian students in

a public elementary school on the border between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The P4C pedagogy presents a challenge to the predominant form of education in traditional patriarchal Arab-Palestinian society, which is usually authoritarian in style with teacher-directed classes and a culture of obedience expected from students. The identity of women in Israel is usually confined to that of one's family, and their personal identity is often subsumed into their ethnic, communal and national identity. This cultural climate highlights the important role education may play in empowering the students and disrupting traditional conceptions and associated limitations of what it means to be a good woman, citizen and person. P4C offers these students a pedagogy of searching characterised by the asking of questions and doubting, with the cited benefits including 'the development of philosophical discursive skills, a classroom atmosphere of friendship and caring, and critical and creative thinking competence amongst the students'. The authors hope that students develop an ethical sensitivity that supports the formation of internal criteria for shared living.

Our third article is entitled *Using Engaged Philosophical Inquiry to Deepen Young Children's Understanding of Environmental Sustainability: Being, Becoming and Belonging* and is co-authored by Margaret MacDonald, Warren Bowen and Cher Hill. In this paper we learn how Engaged Philosophical Inquiry was employed with a group of young children, aged 3 and 4 years old, in order to broaden and challenge anthropocentric thinking about the environment. The theoretical underpinnings for this research reside in Rosi Braidotti's notions of posthumanism and her vision of philosophical thinking as subjective, multiple and interconnected, which offers the possibility of producing new ways of thinking and being. In the study conducted, the researchers sought to challenge and extend the children's ideas about environmental sustainability in light of their relationship with the forest parkland in which the activities took place. The children's anthropocentric views were playfully explored and questioned during P4C sessions that stimulated dialogue related to the themes of belonging and care.

Philosophical ethics in early childhood: A pilot study by Michael D Burroughs and Tugce B Arda Tuncdemir is our fourth article. This paper reports on a pilot study that engaged preschool children (aged 3–5 years old) with philosophy in an effort to advance their knowledge of ethical understanding. Aiming to fill a gap in the empirical literature, the researchers sought to ascertain the effectiveness of philosophical discussion of children's literature and extension activities for fostering ethical development in early childhood. The 12-week educational intervention explored themes of fairness, empathy

(perspective-taking), personal welfare and inclusion versus exclusion of peers. Promisingly, and as compared to what was termed the 'control' group, the study results demonstrated significant developments in students' ability to respond to ethical questions, increased use of emotion markers, and increased use of justification terms in support of responses correlated with the students' participation within CoIs. These initial results indicate that philosophical dialogue in a CoI and extension activities on ethical issues can support moral development and ethical understanding in pre-schoolers, and we eagerly await the results of further studies into this topic.

Finally, Asha Lancaster-Thomas has written our fifth article in this issue, offering readers the question, *How effective is Philosophy for Children in contributing to the affective engagement of pupils in the context of secondary Religious Education?* Lancaster-Thomas implemented a P4C program within a compulsory Year 9 Religious Education class. Interested in exploring the effects of P4C on pupils' affective engagement, this study looks at the qualitative results from 75 students, aged 14 and 15 years old, from an independent secondary school in the United Kingdom. Through participating in P4C, some pupils demonstrated and/or self-reported improved abilities to express their emotions and cultivate interpersonal relationships, feeling more confident in communicating their ideas and in understanding the feelings of others. The correlation between the students' participation in P4C sessions and their emotional and interpersonal engagement highlights promising areas for further research.

Also included in this issue is a book review. Jane Gatley has reviewed *The Routledge International Handbook of Philosophy for Children* (Routledge, Oxon, 2017) edited by Maughn Rollins Gregory, Joanna Haynes and Karin Murris.

Our next issue is a special issue guest edited by Professor Michael Hand and will explore the fundamental question of why should we teach philosophy in schools? Look out for that in November, 2017.

In other news, the biennial FAPSA (Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Associations) conference is to be held in Perth, Western Australia 9-11 July 2018. See <http://fapsa.org.au/conference/> for more details. We hope to see you there!

Professor Andrew Peterson and Dr Laura D'Olimpio

Editors