

Editorial

Welcome to the second issue of the *Journal of Philosophy in Schools*. We are pleased to report that our first issue received a wonderful reception. As of the 5th May 2015 the issue had received over 44,500 total abstract views, giving an average of over 4000 views per article. Total article downloads were over 6000, giving the issue an average article download of over 550. We have 853 Facebook 'likes' for our page, and 372 followers on Twitter (@JournalP4C). We thank you for your support and hope to continue the conversation about philosophy in schools and with school-aged children. With this in mind, it is our pleasure to launch the second issue, the first for 2015, which includes four brand new articles and a book review. We have also decided to continue the tradition of including a seminal article from *Critical & Creative Thinking* with a new introductory note by its author.

As the official journal of the Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Associations (FAPSA), the *Journal of Philosophy in Schools* (JPS) aims at providing an open, research-based source of academic articles pertaining to philosophy with children, philosophy in schools and, by extension, philosophy and education. The focus of the journal is research into philosophy with school-aged children (K-12 or ages 3-17 years). The JPS in some ways replaces *Critical & Creative Thinking*, FAPSA's official journal from 1993 to 2008. Published biannually in hard copy, *Critical & Creative Thinking* (C&CT) combined theory and pedagogy, including critical academic articles as well as articles that described and reflected on teacher praxis. In moving towards an open access, online journal, the *Journal of Philosophy in Schools* acknowledged its history in its first issue, published in November 2014, which invited authors to revisit seminal articles and either re-work them or write a new Introductory note in order to make those articles accessible to a new and ever-growing international audience.

Following in this tradition, the final paper in this issue is Susan Gardner's *Inquiry is no mere conversation (or discussion or dialogue): Facilitation of inquiry is hard work!* from C&CT Volume 3: Issue 2, October 1995. This article was selected precisely because its themes, although originally published twenty years ago, are still relevant and pertinent in education today, particularly with respect to philosophy in schools. Advocating for the central role of truth and the teleological aim of moving towards truth, Gardner highlights the work that must be done by the facilitator if a Community of Inquiry (CoI) is going to have any hope of attaining such a goal. Gardner's foundational starting points include considering what 'the truth' actually is or looks like (i.e. shared, democratic and rational). She considers the role of questions as a bedrock upon which the CoI rests and, further, by which members of the CoI are motivated to inquire and enter into dialogue. Gardner offers a reflective comment to accompany the article, reflecting on its development even after it was successively published in *Analytic*

Teaching Volume 16, Number 2 in 1996, a year after it was originally published in C&CT. We are delighted to include this seminal article in the second issue of the JPS and we will continue this tradition in the third issue of the JPS as well.

Our four original articles in this issue are all quite different to one another. It is exciting for a new journal to be able to present its readers with various perspectives on philosophy in schools and with children. This diverse selection demonstrates the innovative ways in which researchers and practitioners of philosophy with school-aged children are utilising the central methodology of the CoI, with a focus on promoting the shared values of critical, creative and collaborative thinking skills. This issue contains David Kennedy's *Practicing philosophy of childhood: Teaching in the (r)evolutionary mode; Socrates in schools from Scotland to Texas: Replicating a study on the effects of a Philosophy for Children program* by Frank Fair, Lory Haas, Carol Gardosik, Daphne Johnson, Debra Price, and Olena Leipnik; *Deep Ecology as a framework for student eco-philosophical thinking* by William Smith and Annette Gough; and *Kung Fu as critical thinking: An ethnographic analysis* by Olivier Habimana and Amy Stambach.

Our first paper in this issue is *Practicing philosophy of childhood: Teaching in the (r)evolutionary mode*, David Kennedy privileges the act of listening to highlight the importance of the facilitator's role when conducting a Community of Inquiry. Kennedy notes that teachers bring to this role their own understanding of children and childhood, and it is worthwhile taking the time to reflect on these concepts and assumptions that will underlie and inform the way in which we practice philosophy with children. In offering a practical methodology to support facilitators' reflection on their own philosophy of childhood, the reader is introduced to a phenomenological approach championed by American educator Patricia Carini, entitled the Descriptive Review Process. By employing this method whereby teachers also participate in CoIs, their facilitation of CoIs with children is said to benefit precisely because the facilitator's understanding of the children within their CoIs deepens.

Our second article *Socrates in schools from Scotland to Texas: Replicating a study on the effects of a Philosophy for Children program* by Frank Fair et al., replicates the Scottish study done by KJ Topping and S Trickey, published in 2006, with some important differences. In order to see if studying philosophy benefitted the children in their school in Texas, as Topping and Trickey had found in Scotland, Fair et al. implemented a P4C program and evaluated the results. Due to practical issues such as the school term length and duties of the teachers involved, the Texan program was not run for the same length of time as Topping and Trickey's program. Despite the shorter length of time spent studying philosophy in their classroom, the children's test scores and analytic thinking abilities were statistically improved as compared the control group of year seven students who were not studying philosophy. These exciting results support the

claim that philosophy in schools can assist with student's overall thinking skills, which are testable, and further suggest that making time in a busy classroom to practice P4C will have a beneficial effect on the participating children.

Thirdly, William Smith and Annette Gough's *Deep Ecology as a framework for student eco-philosophical thinking* focuses on the capacity for secondary school students in environment clubs to practice environmental philosophy with a view to becoming student eco-philosophers. In this paper, Smith and Gough promote the principles of deep ecology, which proffer an ecocentric lifestyle as opposed to an egocentric or anthropocentric existence. This ecosophy is suggested as a remedy to environmental issues we are currently facing, including planetary degradation and the depletion of non-renewable resources. Given these global issues, this timely paper makes use of A Naess's work on deep ecology to advocate for forming a metaphysical connection to the earth, referred to as 'self-realisation', which, in turn generates empathy for the idea of leading an ecocentric existence and becoming ecocentric beings.

Our fourth article, *Kung Fu as critical thinking: An ethnographic analysis*, presents an alternative view on critical thinking which considers the method of teaching used in Kung Fu to facilitate philosophical thinking skills in students. Drawing on data collected from participants at the University of Rwanda who were engaged in a Kung Fu course, Olivier Habimana and Amy Stambach consider the art of Kung Fu as a form of philosophical inquiry and reflection, claiming that this practice assists students to problem solve and reason independently. This example of Kung Fu serves to illustrate that philosophical thinking may be engendered in a teacher-led activity, as contrasted to the student-centred CoI that is usually advocated by practitioners of P4C. This interesting perspective is offered as an initial insight into an alternative model of teaching critical thinking skills within an educational setting.

Also included in this issue is one book review. Our co-editor Andrew Peterson has reviewed Phil Cam's *Philosophy park: A beginner's guide to great philosophers and their ideas* (including *Teacher Resource*).

We hope you enjoy our second issue of the *Journal of Philosophy in Schools*. We will publish Issue 2, Volume 2 in November 2015 and we are continuing to receive new articles for publication in future issues. Please continue to spread the word that the JPS is up and running in an open-access format with exciting new publications on developments in educational philosophy practiced with school-aged children.

Dr Andrew Peterson and Dr Laura D'Olimpio

Editors