

## Editorial

Welcome to Volume 8 Issue 1 of the *Journal of Philosophy in Schools* (JPS). This issue brings you six original articles and a book review, all available open access. Once again, we are delighted to bring you a truly international issue! We have papers from Australia, Hawai'i, New Zealand, Scotland and Zimbabwe.

Our first paper is 'An Afrophilic P4C intervention: The case of Sebakwe primary schools in Zimbabwe' by John Bhurekeni, who defends bringing children's heritage and cultural lens to bear on curriculum and pedagogical praxis. Drawing upon insights gained through his research, Bhurekeni makes use of an Afrophilic learning framework, specifically founded within the unhu/ubuntu philosophical framework, to develop a sociocultural approach to philosophy for children, in this instance, situated in Zimbabwe. The findings reflect those benefits commonly held dear to practitioners of P4C: critical and reflective thinking skills are evidenced, along with deep inquiry, and a learner-centred approach that builds enthusiastic engagement while also encouraging listening to others. But, furthermore, a connection to environment and cultural identity is witnessed when the Community of Inquiry (CoI) is infused with culture-based artefacts such as African proverbs, music, picture books, images and folklores. This approach resonates with the aim of decolonising the curriculum and supporting a pedagogy that is embedded within, and sensitive to, a specific cultural context. In this case, the praxis affords a synergy between P4C and the Zimbabwean heritage-based educational curriculum, serving to enrich both.

Emmanuel Skoutas is the author of our second article, 'Reconciling Socrates and Levinas for the Community of Inquiry: A response to Sharp and Lavery (2018)', which engages with Ann Sharp and Megan Lavery's paper 'Looking at others' faces', published in Gregory and Lavery's edited collection *In Community of Inquiry with Ann Margaret Sharp*. The Sharp and Lavery paper seeks to reconcile the CoI's commitment to Socratic inquiry with a relational and existential dimension to philosophy that involves recognising and responding to the Other. Skoutas here engages closely with this plea for reconciliation to point out the inherent tensions between the two approaches—Socratic maieutics and Levinasian alterity—as well as seeking a possible pragmatic way forward that, while being inclusive, also brings to light further important questions that need to be explored and interrogated.

'Philosophy for children and logic-based therapy' is the title of our third paper by Christos Georgakakis and it considers how P4C and logic-based therapy and consultation, a form of philosophical counselling, can usefully support and supplement one another in order to contribute to the distinctive educational value of philosophy. Building upon Michael Hand's argument about the way philosophy may support children's subscription to moral, political and religious standards, Georgakakis sees logic-based therapy as a way to further support subscription to emotional and practical standards as well. This use of philosophy to support reasoning therefore works in a pragmatic way to educate young people in ways that should support a well lived life, in so far as it equips them with the ability to reflect upon and choose whether—and how—to follow certain social, moral, and affective standards.

The final sentence of Georgakakis' article really strikes a chord and resonates with champions of P4C: 'If we envision a society of individuals who are trained to take care of their emotional well-being and to make well-reasoned and justified decisions in all essential matters of their lives, then philosophy appears to be integral for the accomplishment of that vision'. Here we see exactly how the defence of philosophy's distinctive educational value is further built upon and expanded, lending further justification to the claim that philosophy should be introduced into school curricula as a matter of necessity as well as urgency.

The most recent past issue of the JPS included Michael Hand's keynote, 'Moral education in the community of inquiry' that was presented at the 2018 Conference of the Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Associations (FAPSA) held in Fremantle, Western Australia, along with five critical responses, as well as Hand's reply to Cam, Sowe, Lockrobin, Splitter, Sprod, and Knight. Also at that conference, Bowyer, Amos and Stevens presented a paper that has since been developed into not one, but two published articles here in the JPS.

Lynne Bowyer, Claire Amos and Deborah Stevens have written a second paper to extend and further support their first paper that was published in Volume 7 Number 1, the special conference issue. Last year's paper, 'What is "philosophy"? Understandings of philosophy circulating in the literature on the teaching and learning of philosophy in schools', was a critical literature review focussed on how philosophy is defined amongst P4C publications, and this next paper is entitled 'What does philosophy do? Understanding the work that philosophy does: A review of the literature on the teaching

and learning of philosophy in schools'. It is this second paper that is our fourth article in this issue, and in it the authors explore claims circulating in extant P4C literature that philosophy, particularly when facilitated with young people utilising the CoI pedagogy, improves academic and cognitive abilities and/or promotes the art of living well together.

What is so useful about these two complementary reviews, published one year apart, is that they invite us to reflect on how we use central concepts and the work we expect them to do. This is key to our work as philosophers and assists further dialogue by firstly checking where we do or perhaps do not share meaning. As the authors articulate, 'When taken together, the two articles that have arisen from this research project lay out the diversity and the nuances of the interpretations and understandings of philosophy and the work that it does, which are circulating in the literature'.

Our fifth article is entitled, 'Student and teacher outcomes from participating in a Philosophy for Children program: Volunteer ethics teachers' perspectives'. In it, Gianni Zappalà and Ciara Smyth explore the impact of teaching philosophy and ethics to young people from a fresh angle, namely, by considering the facilitators' viewpoint. By engaging with Primary Ethics volunteers who teach ethics to primary school aged students using a CoI pedagogy across New South Wales, Australia, Zappalà and Smyth glean that these teachers believe they are having an influence on their students' lives. The teachers offer reasons for why they believe P4C is making a positive difference, especially in terms of the development of critical thinking and reasoning skills, increased confidence and self-expression, as well as enjoyment derived from class discussions. And furthermore, the teachers themselves find they are more reflective, especially in terms of engaging in critical thinking, ethical reasoning and deliberation.

There is a significant debate about the role of epistemic humility within the philosophy for/with children movement and one of the teachers is quoted here as saying 'I wonder if today, perhaps in an unintended way, I have learnt just as much as the kids have'. This sentiment reflects the epistemic modesty that the CoI pedagogy encourages: seated in a circle as equals, the facilitator may also learn new things and find themselves surprised by the richness of a philosophical dialogue, even when—or sometimes especially when—conducted with very young philosophers!

The sixth article in this issue is by Jianhui Zhang and Amber Strong Makaiau and it is entitled, 'Cultivating and nurturing a positive school culture and climate: Impacts of

Philosophy for Children Hawai'i at Chestnut Elementary School'. Our final paper paints a picture of a whole-school approach to P4C that has worked particularly well in a multicultural context, set in Hawai'i, with a student body that spans diverse ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds. Zhang and Makaiau identify features of a positive whole-school ethos that commenced in the practice of philosophy and now extends beyond the classroom. Focussing on the manifestation of the 'four pillars': community, inquiry, philosophy and reflection, even the counselling sessions that take place in this elementary school adopt P4C practices. The practices highlighted in this paper include creating environments which afford intellectual safety, learner-centred inquiry, engagement, deep thinking, academic success, and an integrated experience, all of which combines to build a reputation the school community (students, staff, faculty and families) are proud of. This paper contributes further to disseminating some of the best practice that comes out of p4cHI (Philosophy for Children Hawai'i) and definitely makes us want to visit as soon as the pandemic is over and we are all allowed to travel to such wonderful, exotic locations once more!

Also included in this issue is a book review. Andrew Rogers has reviewed *Philosophical Inquiry: Combining the Tools of Philosophy with Inquiry-based Teaching and Learning* (Rowman & Littlefield, London 2020) by Philip Cam.

Our next two issues will be dedicated to a particularly provocative theme—that has generated much debate and disagreement, that of the role for competition in philosophy. With the growing popularity of particularly high (senior) school philosophy competitions such as Philosothon, Ethics Bowls, and Philosophy Olympiads, there is debate as to whether the competitive element is compatible with the essence of the Community of Inquiry or the *raison d'être* of P4C. While there has been much yelling we mean, respectful philosophical dialogue—on this topic, in person or on social media, so far there has not been much published work available. In order to rectify this omission, the JPS sent out a call for papers and were pleasantly surprised by an overwhelming response! We are really looking forward to sharing some of this wonderful debate with you over the forthcoming issues. Of course, be pre-warned, there will be disagreement!

We hope you enjoy our latest issue and please do share the links via social media. We are on Facebook at 'Journal of Philosophy in Schools—JPS' and we are also on Twitter @JournalP4C. Drop us a like, share or tag!

Dr Laura D'Olimpio and Professor Andrew Peterson

*Editors*