

Editorial

Welcome to Volume 9 Issue 2 of the *Journal of Philosophy in Schools* (JPS). This issue is the second of two special issues that examine the question: *What is the place for competition in philosophy?* The original motivation and rationale for a special issue on competition was set out in the *Editorial* of the first special issue (D'Olimpio 2022). In brief, the intention was to invite authors to explore not only the various guises of competition but the very question of whether competition is or can be supportive of philosophical thinking and dialogue—particularly so far as philosophy with children and young people is concerned.

The questions underpinning this intention are theoretical, pedagogical and practical. In other words, to really grapple with competition in philosophy we need to be able to (i) conceptualise clearly what is meant by competition and philosophy (including their aims, purposes and outcomes), (ii) seek clarity about whether and how introducing competition can help children and young people to do and learn philosophy, and (iii) offer insights into how actual forms of philosophical competition might (or might not!) be structured and implemented in educational settings.

That we have been able to publish two special issues on the themes is indicative of the contested nature of competition within philosophical circles, including the teaching and learning of philosophy in schools, as well as the vibrancy of scholarship in the field. As editors, we have been overwhelmed with the response to the original call for papers, as well as the quality of the papers received—each of which have gone through the JPS' standard review processes.

This issue includes five original articles on the special issue theme and two book reviews.

Our first article is titled 'Communities of inquiry, competitions and capabilities: A cautionary response'. In this article, Harry Galatis, Janette Poulton and Emmanuel Skoutas focus on Community of Inquiry-styled competitions in the state of Victoria within which students and participant schools are pitted against one another, assessed and ranked according to professed philosophical Communities of Inquiry (CoI) criteria. These authors question whether the various models of competitions based on the CoI format can really accord with the key characteristics that have historically defined this pedagogical practice. Ultimately, the authors argue that competitions are largely incommensurate with philosophical CoI and suggest an admonitory approach if philosophy is to be associated with such competitions.

The second article from Félix García Moriyón and Irene Lafuente-Aliaga, 'Competitions and community of philosophical inquiry: Compatible or not?', also examines the commensurability of competitions and the community of philosophical

inquiry. Contrary to the first article, the argument given is that participation in competition is possible and even desirable if the negative aspects it might have are addressed. In particular, the authors contend that, in the Community of Philosophical Inquiry, notions exist that could potentially be favoured in competitions.

In the third article, 'The Philosothon: Philosophy as performance', Simon Kidd considers the example of the Philosothon. Kidd examines two standard criticisms of Philosothons, namely that those aimed at specific procedural problems and those aimed at the idea that the competitive spirit is inimical to collaborative philosophical inquiry. Drawing on Plato scholarship, as well as research from social science, Kidd advances an alternative interpretation of the Philosothon, contrasting it with ancient philosophy and describing it instead in terms of 'signalling'. In the end, Kidd concludes that what is at issue in considering the place of competition in philosophy is a metaphilosophical question about the nature of philosophy itself and that removing the competitive element would not change that.

In the fourth article, 'Cooperation and competition in the Philosothon', Alan Tapper and Matthew Wills also take the Philosothon as their focus. Here, these authors identify a tension—on the one hand, the Community of Philosophical Inquiry (COPI) values collaboration, while on the other hand, the Philosothon—which draws on the COPI—involves the element of competition which may seem antithetical to collaboration. Tapper and Wills survey seven questions related to this tension, before concluding that the competitive element in the Philosothon is not antithetical to the collaborative ideal of philosophy.

The fifth and final article is written by Ben Kilby. Titled 'Competition in philosophy is a feminist issue', Kilby argues that the role of competition in philosophy is not just a pedagogical concern, but also a feminist concern. Kilby's focus is to examine how dialogue that emphasises adversarial methods of argumentation can promote dominant notions of masculinity and to explore problems associated with this, including issues for competitive philosophy. Here Kilby focuses on three issues in particular: the disadvantaging of girls, the disadvantaging of all students, and the undermining of the values of the Philosophy for/with Children and the Community of Inquiry approach. Kilby's interest is in how the concern for competition in philosophy is not just about pedagogy, but about justice.

Also included in this issue are two book reviews. In the first, Aaron Yarmel offers a thoughtful and insightful review of Gregory and Laverty's *Gareth B. Matthews, The Child's Philosopher*, published by Routledge in 2022. In the second, Tim Sprod provides

a clear and perceptive consideration of Jana Mohr Lone's book *Seen and Not Heard: Why Children's Voices Matter*, published by Rowman & Littlefield.

We trust that you will enjoy these articles. When taken together with those published in the first of the two special issues, the articles offer a real and important contribution to existing thought and ideas about the place of competition in philosophical dialogue with children and young people. Having engaged with the provocations and arguments advanced, should you feel compelled to engage in further thought and reflection about whether competitions do have a such a place we would be delighted to receive further submissions on this theme.

Andrew Peterson

Editor

References

D'Olimpio, L (2022) Editorial. *Journal of Philosophy in Schools*, 9(1), pp. 1-5.