

**The Federation of Australasian  
Philosophy in Schools Associations**



**2014 Conference  
Philosophy's Contribution to School Education**

**7 -8 July, 2014**



**Hedley Bull Centre  
Australian National University**

Time	Monday, July 7	Tuesday, July 8
9.00-9.30	8.45-9.15 Registration 9.15-9.30 Welcome	Panel Discussion: <i>What contribution can philosophy make to school education?</i>
9.30-10.30	Gilbert Burgh <i>How Should Children Practice Philosophy?</i>	Philip Cam <i>On the Philosophical Narrative for Children</i>
10.30-11.00	Morning tea	Morning tea
11.00-12.00	Lynne Hinton and Sharon Baird <i>Implementing Philosophical Inquiry at an Independent Secondary School: a Measured Approach</i>	Rosie Scholl <i>Engaging Students in Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry</i>
12.00-1.00	Winifred Lamb <i>The value of philosophy &amp; its counter-cultural role in the senior high school curriculum</i>	Liz Fynes-Clinton <i>Deep Reflective Thinking through Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry</i>
1.00-2.00	Lunch	Lunch
2.00-3.00	Thom Robertson <i>The place of nature in a secondary philosophy curriculum</i>	Martyn Mills-Bayne and Virginia Kinnear <i>Children's use of justificatory language within and without the Community of Inquiry</i>
3.00-4.00	Britta Jensen <i>Philosophy in the foreign language classroom</i>	Christopher McCaw <i>A bumpy start: First encounters with philosophy teaching, from an experiential perspective</i>
4.00-4.15	Afternoon tea	Afternoon tea
4.15-5.15	Dan Smith <i>Creating a toolbox for thinking: Motivating philosophy and transforming school culture</i>	Robert Stevens <i>Cultivating Flourishing in Schools</i>

# PRESENTATIONS

## **Gilbert Burgh** *How Should Children Practice Philosophy?*

Since the early 1970s, when Lipman and Sharp began work on introducing 'Philosophy for Children' into schools, there have been many developments in the way teachers and educators have approached what Lipman identified as Dewey's pedagogical guidelines. In this paper I will compare and contrast these approaches in order to identify any significant educational difference in the way in which Lipman had intended philosophy to function educationally. I will look at method and content, including curriculum materials (e.g., the philosophical novel, purpose-written material and engagement with the existing curriculum), the role of reconstruction, and the 'phenomenology of inquiry'.

## **Philip Cam** *On the Philosophical Narrative for Children*

The obvious differences between narrative and philosophical argumentation and the widespread use of non-philosophical texts in undertaking philosophy with children suggest that the philosophical narrative for children is a problematic genre. Philosophical novels such those written by Matthew Lipman constitute an existence proof that such a genre is possible, of course, but this still leaves it open to say that the philosophical narrative for children is a mongrel as both philosophy and literature. In this talk I begin by considering what makes writing philosophical and then apply that to the philosophical narrative for children in order to explore both the difficulties and allure of the genre.

## **Liz Fynes-Clinton** *Deep Reflective Thinking through Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry*

This presentation will outline my current PhD research project and discuss preliminary analysis of the data. The thesis, *Deep Reflective Thinking through Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry*, examines ways in which students' engagement in episodes of philosophising connects to and facilitates the acquisition of meta-reflective practices. Key concomitant goals of the thesis are to categorise the types of philosophising in which students engage, and to investigate the extent to which they appropriate this engagement in other learning contexts. As part of the research, a range of activities were designed to support the students' development of intellectual inquiry tools. Examples of these activities will be included in this workshop.

## **Lynne Hinton and Sharon Baird** *Implementing Philosophical Inquiry at an Independent Secondary School: a Measured Approach*

In Queensland, Year Seven students are currently located in primary schools. From 2015 they will be moved to the secondary schools, thus bringing Queensland into line with other states. Hillbrook Anglican School, an independent secondary school in Brisbane's north, plans to use this opportunity to introduce Philosophical Inquiry to the school, beginning with the first cohort of Year Sevens in 2015. It will be part of the core curriculum of the school. This presentation will outline the planning and implementation process to date, including the trial introduction of PI within other year levels during 2013/14.

## **Britta Jensen** *Philosophy in the foreign language classroom*

The methods of philosophical inquiry have successfully been implemented in classrooms around the world - for most KLAs. Relatively little attention has been paid to the use of philosophical methods in teaching foreign languages. This talk aims to fill that gap. Drawing from experiences teaching French to Sydney secondary students (and possibly also from experiences teaching Danish as a second language through Concordia Language Villages (USA)), I will traverse some of the ways in which the tools of philosophy can be employed in the teaching of foreign languages.

### **Winifred Lamb *The value of philosophy & its counter-cultural role in the senior high school curriculum***

My experience of teaching philosophy at senior high school level supports the claim that it should be offered as a mainstream school subject for students at this stage in their intellectual and social development. The important questions are: what kind and what aspects of philosophy? I argue that these questions are [and should be] settled in schools differently from how they are approached in university faculties. I will explore some reasons with reference to philosophy in the senior high school classroom and will argue that philosophy should not only empower students intellectually but it should also develop epistemic virtues through the practice of philosophical enquiry. Finally, I suggest that the effect for them is counter-cultural in the present climate.

### **Christopher McCaw *A bumpy start: First encounters with philosophy teaching, from an experiential perspective***

This paper is a tour through the speaker's recent first encounters with the teaching of high-school philosophy. Employing the notions of productive disequilibrium, and the experiential perspective of John Dewey, I will reflect on various successes and failures in my professional transition from an open, experiential learning environment (the middle years dream?) to the highly ordered world of the "normal" classroom (the machine, the nightmare?). In the discussion I will draw upon my recent Maters research which documented how students' ideas of learning and schooling respond to the overlapping and often conflicting learning environments they encounter in schools.

### **Martyn Mills-Bayne and Virginia Kinnear *'Children's use of justificatory language within and without the Community of Inquiry'***

This paper will draw on data from Virginia Kinnear's doctoral research (which was carried out in Martyn Mills-Baynes' classroom at the time) and examine how children used justifications when engaged in task-oriented lessons and Communities of Inquiry, and how they also increasingly used this language in their interactions in small groups without teacher support and in social situations beyond the research.

### **Thom Robertson *The place of nature in a secondary philosophy curriculum***

*To find one's bearings within the cosmos*, so Leo Strauss describes one of the central aims of Ancient Greek philosophy. With the movement of modern academia towards what Russell extols, a "science...able to tackle its problems one at a time, instead of having to invent ... a theory of the whole universe", a focus on this aim risks being obscured, to the detriment of college-level students. To enable college-level students to properly locate themselves within the cosmos I will argue—from an experiential education perspective—that it is essential to expose them to nature.

### **Rosie Scholl *Engaging Students in Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry***

Students and teaching staff at Buranda State School have been engaging in collaborative philosophical inquiry together since 1996. Philosophy offers:

- Students - a time and place to engage in and improve their thinking
- Teachers - a methodology for broadening their pedagogical repertoire

The purpose of this presentation is to share current students' and teachers' experiences and perspectives about teaching Philosophy at Buranda State School.

### **Dan Smith *Creating a toolbox for thinking: Motivating philosophy and transforming school culture***

Currently, all year levels at Serpell Primary School engage in weekly class philosophical sessions. Through a collective ownership of the program by all staff, Serpell Primary has successfully integrated the norms, tools and thinking skills of philosophical discussion across all areas of the classroom.

Utilising deep questioning skills across all areas of the curriculum has also enhanced explicit pedagogical practices amongst staff. Recent teacher opinion data collected has demonstrated a significant impact on speaking and listening, engagement and thinking skills. Dan Smith will share Serpell's journey in building teacher capacity by establishing the skills in the development of classroom programs, planning and practice.

### **Robert Stevens *Cultivating Flourishing in Schools***

Aristotle's account of wellbeing or flourishing has experienced a revival of late in Philosophy, Psychology and Biology. This revival opens up the promise of a basis to better cultivate flourishing of children in schools. In this paper, I will examine the features of Aristotle's account of flourishing, and some of the drivers for the revival of this account of wellbeing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I consider how wellbeing, understood in the way that Aristotle did, can be better cultivated in schools.

## **NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS**

**Sharon Baird** is currently Chaplain at Hillbrook Anglican School, a position which combines her experiences teaching Business, IT and Music since 1997 with her more recent training in Religious Studies, Theology and Priestly Formation. Sharon has been implementing Philosophical Inquiry in a trial at Hillbrook within Religious Studies for the past 18 months and is very much a novice in this field.

**Gilbert Burgh** was the founding president of QAPS (1994-6) and president of FAPSA (2002-3). He is co-author of *Ethics and the Community of Inquiry: Education for Deliberative Democracy* (Thomson, 2006) and other books, and has published articles on democracy and education, and the theory and practice of collaborative inquiry-based teaching and learning through philosophy.

**Philip Cam** is Adjunct Associate Professor in the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of New South Wales. He has a doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Oxford and is currently Chair of the Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Associations. Philip has run workshops on philosophy in schools around the world and is the author of many books for teachers and children. His talk makes use of his philosophical novella *Sophia's Question* and of *Philosophy Park*, his recent history of philosophy for children in story form.

**Liz Fynes-Clinton** is employed at East Brisbane State School as Head of Curriculum and Philosophy Coach. Over the past five years she has lead the introduction and implementation of the Philosophy in Schools program at the school. Liz is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of Queensland. Her thesis is titled: *Deep Reflective Thinking through Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry*. Liz commenced her journey as a philosophy educator at Buranda State School in 2001. She is a co-author of the books '*Philosophy with young children: a classroom handbook*' and '*Philosophical and ethical inquiry for students in the middle years and beyond*'.

**Lynne Hinton** was principal of Buranda State Primary School in inner-city Brisbane for 14 years until the end of 2009, and is currently Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Education at Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane. She consults nationally and internationally on the practice of undertaking philosophical inquiry with young people.

**Britta Jensen** is a linguist, philosopher, and educator with experience teaching at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. She has expertise in philosophy of language, syntax, linguistics, logic, and language acquisition. Britta's doctorate is from the University of Oxford (2003), and she has worked in cognitive science, linguistics and education in Australia since 2006.

**Virginia Kinnear** worked as a lawyer before studying and teaching Montessori education in the USA and qualifying and teaching in early childhood in Australia. Virginia completed her PhD in early childhood mathematics and lectures in early childhood at Flinders University. Virginia's research interests include the role of language in reasoning, critical thinking and concept development and how mathematics is experienced, taught and learned in early childhood.

**Winifred Lamb** is a course developer and teacher at Narrabundah College of 'Theory of Knowledge', a two year introduction to philosophy course for ACT Year 11& 12 students. Her teaching subjects there also include English and 'Theory of Knowledge' in the International Baccalaureate Diploma. She is a School Visitor in Philosophy at the ANU. Her research interests and publications straddle the fields of philosophy of education and philosophical theology.

**Christopher McCaw** is a teacher of Philosophy and Extended Investigation at The University High School in Melbourne, Australia. His 2013 Masters research mapped students' ideas of learning and the purposes of school in relation to an intensive, experiential middle-years program, in which he taught for three years.

**Martyn Mills-Bayne** is a lecturer in Early Childhood Education at the University of South Australia. His doctoral research explored the use of the Community of Inquiry approach to foster children's empathic reasoning. Martyn is the secretary of the South Australian Association of Philosophy in the Classroom (SAAPIC), and the SA representative on the Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Associations (FAPSA).

**Thom Robertson** is a first year teacher, lucky enough to have snared his dream job teaching philosophy straight out of a post-graduate diploma program. Prior to teaching he worked as a public servant and studied philosophy, politics and law at the University of New England.

**Rosie Scholl** has been teaching since 1993 and at Buranda State School intermittently since 1998. She currently teaches a Year 4/5 class at Buranda State School. Rosie's PhD was concerned with understanding the impact of engaging in collaborative philosophical inquiry on pedagogy. Her research showed that teachers' pedagogical repertoire, particularly in the dimensions of intellectual quality, connectedness and recognition of difference, was broadened and transformed through engaging in collaborative philosophical inquiry.

**Dan Smith** is an Assistant Principal at Serpell Primary School in Templestowe. Dan is a Level 2 FAPSA trained philosophy educator who has successfully driven and refined Philosophical Inquiry programs both at Stanmore Public School in NSW and Serpell Primary School in Victoria, significantly transforming school values, culture and building teacher capacity through Philosophical Inquiry.

**Robert Stevens** is Manager of Research and Quality Assurance in the NSW Department of Education and Communities. He has a Doctorate in Philosophy from Macquarie University and a Masters of Education Policy from the University of Sydney. He is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Education at the University of Western Sydney.