

pesgb



Newsletter 2020–2022

Welcome to the annual Newsletter of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (PESGB).

The Society was formed in 1964 to promote the study, teaching and application of the philosophy of education. The Society holds an annual three-day national residential conference, other regional conferences and local branch meetings. The Society's primary publication is the internationally renowned *Journal of Philosophy of Education (JOPE)*.

Administrative enquiries concerning the Society and its activities should be addressed to Stephne Graham at pesgb@sasevents.co.uk

Contact Stephne at this address if you have a notice you wish to circulate to the membership.

Readers might like to pass this Newsletter to education students and professionals, or direct them to the Society's website at www.philosophy-of-education.org

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Edited by Jane Gatley

Designed by Kevin Ashill

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Information, notices and reports



Michael Hand
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From the Chair

For two years now the COVID-19 pandemic has been wreaking havoc in our lives. The work of the Society, like so much else, has been significantly disrupted. International travel has ground to a halt. In-person opportunities for the exchange of ideas, for collaboration in research and teaching, for breaking bread and raising a glass together, have been severely curtailed. For a community like ours, spread so thinly across academic institutions, confinement to quarters is a cruel and unusual punishment.

Nevertheless, we have adapted. The combined efforts of the new PESGB virtual branch and several of our regional branches have yielded a rich and varied programme of online seminars, many of which are permanently available on the Society's YouTube and Spotify pages. One notable benefit of moving events online is that geographical distance from the host institution is no longer a barrier to attendance; another is that it is no longer a constraint on who can be invited to speak. At last year's online conference on Relationships and Sex Education, co-sponsored by the PESGB and the History of Education Society, four of the five keynote speakers were based in North America. Likewise, the online 2021 PESGB Summer School, now hosted by Liverpool Hope University and capably organised by John Tillson, included a lead tutor and three guest speakers from the US. Adapting to the circumstances of the pandemic has, if nothing else, greatly expanded the pool of speakers and the potential audience for our events and activities.

And, of course, in September 2021 the Society held its first ever online Annual Conference. With a bespoke conference platform featuring meeting rooms, an exhibition space, a networking lounge and a help desk, and a programme comprising two plenary sessions, 22 individual papers, five symposia, eight workshops and five advice sessions, the conference was a huge logistical undertaking – and a huge success. Mandy Fulford (conference chair), Ruth Wareham (conference organiser) and the team at SAS demonstrated convincingly that most – if not quite all – of the things we most value about our Annual Conference can be replicated in the virtual space. Encouragingly, 96% of attendees who gave feedback said they would attend another online PESGB conference in the future. ▶ [page 3](#)

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Confinement to quarters is a cruel and unusual punishment. Nevertheless, we have adapted.

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Pandemic aside, the other major change in our affairs over the last two years is the phenomenal expansion of the *Journal of Philosophy of Education*. In 2020 we moved from four to six issues a year and the page budget for each volume was lifted. The impact was immediate: in the five years prior to 2020, the average length of a volume was 750 pages; the 2020 and 2021 volumes came in at just under 1700 and 1200 pages respectively. That represents a seismic shift in the quantity of work we are publishing, and a corresponding increase in the workload of the editors. The editorial team now has an unprecedented 14 members – an executive editor, two co-editors, two associate editors, eight assistant editors and a reviews editor – but the burden on them remains considerable. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to David Bakhurst and his team.

Thanks to the income generated by the journal, the Society continues to operate a generous large grants scheme. In 2021 we were able to fund five doctoral studentships and a seminar series on post-critical approaches in educational research. The 2022 scheme is open now and the deadline for applications is fast approaching. This year we are offering a new type of large grant – the staff-led doctoral studentship – awarded on the strength of a doctoral research proposal designed and submitted by the prospective lead supervisor. Studentships of this type have been offered for a number of years by UKRI Doctoral Training Partnerships and are a good way to build capacity in areas of existing research strength. Visit the large grants page on our website to find out more. ▶ [page 4](#)

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A seismic shift in the quantity of work we are publishing

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Other aspects of our work continue to develop apace. The mentoring scheme devised by the Committee on Race and Ethnicity is up and running, with eight postgraduate and early career researchers now supported by senior colleagues. With the support of the Development Committee, Andrea English coordinated a highly successful seminar series on decolonising the curriculum in higher education last year. And June 2021 saw the publication of the 26th IMPACT pamphlet, Robert Eaglestone's *Powerful knowledge, cultural literacy and the study of literature in schools*. The pamphlet, along with a podcast of the launch seminar, can be found on the IMPACT homepage.

This is the first issue of the Society's newsletter since the death of our co-founder and long-serving President, Paul Hirst, in October 2020. Paul was a titanic figure in our field and his influence on educational thought, policy and practice, particularly in the 1960s and 70s, was profound. His works continue to be widely read, discussed and taught – his papers 'Liberal education and the nature of knowledge' and 'What is teaching?' are both on the list of essential readings I set for my first year undergraduates at the University of Birmingham. I am delighted that Patricia White and David Bridges are putting together a set of essays in Paul's honour for a special issue of *JOPE*. He will be very much missed.

Let me conclude with a word of thanks to Jane Gatley, our newsletter editor. The work involved in planning and designing the newsletter, in commissioning pieces and chasing tardy contributors, in editing and proofreading, is not to be underestimated. This is another fine issue that records our activities, celebrates our successes and mourns our losses over a uniquely challenging period: thank you, Jane, for bringing it together. ■



Blessing Chapfika presenting at the 2022 Annual Conference

Information, notices and reports



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Secretary's notices

PESGB Officers and Executive Committee

The Society's affairs are managed by an Executive Committee of President, Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Conference Programme Chair, Conference Organiser, Editor of the *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, six elected members and up to six co-opted members.

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PESGB Annual General Meeting 2023

The 2023 Annual General Meeting will be held 31 March – 2 April 2023 at the Society's Annual Conference at New College, Oxford.

Branch Secretaries

Up to date information about branches is [online](#).

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Carrie Winstanley
University of Roehampton

Small Grants Scheme

Free money! Spread the word!

If you aren't familiar with the Small Grants Scheme, please read all of this short article. If you are already familiar..... what are you waiting for? Head to the website, where you can download and complete a form.

The Small Grants Scheme is open to PESGB members of minimum one year's standing. Up to £750.00 can be awarded annually to support your work in philosophy of education. By far, the most significant number of requests is for conference attendance, where the £750 is typically used to cover conference fees, travel, accommodation and daily subsistence.

With the global pandemic putting a stop to travel and face-to-face conferences for a couple of years, some members found some slightly different ways of making use of the Small Grants funds, such as subscriptions to specialist libraries to support research projects and administrative support for projects. As things started to open up, other requests started to materialise, such as collaborative working. For example, some scholars had arranged to stay with, or near to colleagues, and made Small Grant requests for travel and some shared meals. They reported a collegial and productive experience.

During the pandemic, the Finance and General Purposes Committee reviewed the Small Grants exclusions and considered lifting these, but instead, the decision was taken to roll over unused funds. Because we consequently have more money in the pot than usual, we have reverted to allowing members to make an application once a year (rather than one application in a 24-month period).

Small Grants can't be used for purchases of IT equipment or software, and they aren't available for events that we already subsidise (such as our own conferences). For support with Doctoral fees, we'll refer you to the Large Grants Doctoral Studentship fund and for some activities like seminar sessions, we may suggest speaking with your Branch Secretary, as funds are available through the branches. There are also Development Committee grants for your innovative ideas.

Small Grant applications are welcome all year round, but do please note that responses may take a little longer outside of regular term-times. Submissions should be supported by a clear rationale with a distinct focus and some tangible expected outcomes. Please find further detailed information on the [website](#). I look forward to receiving your applications. ■

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Emma Williams
Warwick University

Large Grants

Seminar Series Grant

The Seminar Series Grant provides support of up to £10,000 for the organisation of seminar series in the philosophy of education. A seminar series typically brings together thematically related papers or other presentations in meetings over the course of a year or in a colloquium lasting a day or a few days.

The Miscellaneous Grant

The Miscellaneous Grant offers up to £3,000 to support such activities as one-off seminars, seed-corn research meetings and other qualifying initiatives.

British Academy/PESGB Grants

The PESGB continues in partnership with the British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant Scheme to support research in philosophy of education.

This funding is intended “to facilitate initial project planning and development; to support the direct costs of research; and to enable the advancement of research through workshops or conferences, or visits by or to partner scholars”.

Applicants may seek support for any combination of eligible activity and cost, up to the overall limit of £10,000.

Staff-Led Doctoral Studentships

Staff-led doctoral studentships are intended to cover tuition fees at the home student rate (or contribute to tuition fees at the international student rate) for a PhD in philosophy of education at a UK university. The society will normally cover the home student tuition fee for three years of full-time study or six years of part-time study.

Doctoral Scholarships

Doctoral Scholarships contribute towards tuition fees for full-time or part-time students pursuing doctorates in the philosophy of education, normally at UK universities. The society will normally distribute up to £20,000 in total for doctoral support in one year. ■

Full details on how to apply for all these Large Grants appear on the [PESGB website](#).



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Digital connections in philosophy of education



Mary Richardson
PESGB Website Editor
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This past year has been quiet in terms of the bedding in of the revised website: we are reaching more people and having dedicated time from Sharon on social media means that news, ideas and other communications are working much more smoothly.

We'd still like to have more resources on the site and would welcome suggestions, ideas and submissions for consideration - if you take a look online, then you'll see the Resources section is divided to offer things for policymakers, teachers and students - are we missing anything?

The blog is a huge success and thanks to Oli Belas for his tireless development of this – it's really made a big difference to site visits and improved the general interactions between PESGB members.

One final piece of news – the 'other' PESGB (the oil one) are looking to change their name and this means that if they go, our site will be the first Google hit which is very gratifying as we cannot, at present compete with their might. I'll keep you posted.

Thanks to Kim and Steph at SAS for updates and communications and to the Website Steering Group for their support as always - being voluntary means things take time, but we do our best to keep the online face of the Society well polished. ■

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The PESGB Blog



Oli Belas
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The PESGB Blog turned 1 in December 2021. We have had a steady stream of submissions on a range of topics, allowing us to post at a pace of roughly once every two weeks (with winter and summer breaks). Aims for the coming year include: expanding the reach of the Blog and actively encouraging new writer-researchers, particularly from underrepresented groups, to contribute; commissioning series/special interest “strands” in advance; using the Blog to revive the online book reviews.

Contributors do not have to be PESGB members. Submission guidance can be found on the Blog’s landing page (www.philosophy-of-education.org/blog). These will soon be updated to include guidance on submitting online book reviews. For submission of/inquiries about blog posts (up to approximately 800 words), contact Oli Belas; for submission of/inquiries about online book reviews (up to 2500 words), contact Oli Belas and Alexis Gibbs (alexis.gibbs@winchester.ac.uk). ■

The screenshot shows the PESGB Blog website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'About Us', 'Membership', 'Blog', 'Events', 'Publications', and 'Resources', along with a search bar. The main content area is titled 'Blog' and includes a welcome message, publication details, and submission guidelines. On the right side, there is a 'Blog Themes' sidebar with a list of categories such as AI, Exams & Government Policy, and Book Reviews. Below the main text, there are three featured blog post thumbnails: 'The Ukraine Conflict: The Spectre of...', 'Book Review: Richard Pring, Education,...', and 'Philosophy as Dialogue & as Gift...'. The PESGB logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the page.

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Committee on Race and Ethnicity

Aims

CoRE's express aims are:

- the promotion of new philosophical work relating to education and issues of 'race' and ethnicity;
- the recruitment of new members from 'racialised' groups generally underrepresented in the Society; and
- the creation and support of networks of those interested in philosophical work relating to 'race', ethnicity and education.

Most of CORE's work since our last report has been in setting up the mentoring scheme. We were very pleased by the response to our initial invitation to join the scheme and would like to thank the 20+ PESGB colleagues who contacted us to offer to act as mentors for early career researchers.

As reported in March 2021, we have matched 8 ECRs with more experienced academic colleagues, and we have developed an initial set of guidelines to support them. In March, we stated that we hoped to hold an event in September for mentors and mentees, so that ideas and experiences could be shared, and plans for improving the scheme, based on mentee/mentor feedback could be developed. That wasn't possible, and so some way of sharing and capturing feedback as a basis for developing the scheme remains an aim for this year. ■

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Development Committee Activities 2020–22



Ruth Heilbronn
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About us

Many of the developments that have become part of the calendar of the society, such as summer school, pre-conference and the various initiatives and events in teacher education, started out as suggestions from members that the committee has taken forward and established. Current members are Steve Bramall, Ursula Blythe, Richard Davies, Andrea English, Patricia Hannan, Mary Healy, Ruth Heilbronn (Chair), Eri Mountbatten O'Malley, Janet Orchard, Leyla Osman, Doret de Ruyter, Adrian Skilbeck, Judith Suissa, Carrie Winstanley.

Despite Covid restrictions we ran a number of events and continued some of our ongoing initiatives and these we report below.

Teacher Education

Between January and June 2021 Andrea English, PESGB's teacher education coordinator, led a successful seminar series on decolonising the curriculum in HE. This was a collaboration between the University of Edinburgh, the Centre for Education on Racial Equality in Scotland, and the PESGB. The series responded to calls for UK universities to address issues of equality, racism and racial harassment in the wake of the death of George Floyd. It was held virtually due to Covid restrictions and this enabled international participation from philosophers of education and other scholars, gaining an audience of between 40–120 for each interdisciplinary talk. The speakers were:

- **Dr Foluke Adebisi**, University of Bristol – *'Rhodes must fall' or 'Rhodes must read Fanon?'*
- **Prof. Boaventura de Souza Santos**, *'The Epistemologies of the South and the Future of the University'*
- **Dr Rowena Azada-Palacios**, *'Hybridity and the Teaching of National Identity in Schools'*
- **Dr Dominic Griffith**, *'The whitest guy in the room: thoughts on decolonisation and paideia'*
- **Dr Jason Arday**, *'Still a lot to do: Disrupting Racism in the Academy'* ▶ [page 12](#)

- **Prof. Penny Enslin**, '*Decolonizing higher education: the university in the new age of Empire*'
- **Prof. Farid Panjwani**, '*What it might mean to decolonise religious education: The case of teaching and learning about Islam*'.

Videos of the 7 talks are available via our website resources section – [Decolonising the Curriculum in HE \(MHSES\) – Media Hopper Create](#)

A *JOPE* Special Issue on Decolonizing the Curriculum is being prepared for 2023, edited by Andrea English and Ruth Heilbronn.

Janet Orchard recently launched the Rehumanising Teacher Education (RHTE) Website. She drew on her experience between 2014–2017 as the former PESGB teacher education coordinator when she organised PESGB sponsored retreats with Carrie Winstanley and Ruth Heilbronn for student teachers, TE tutors and philosophers of education (P4T). These retreats aimed to facilitate reflection on ethical dilemmas arising from teaching and wider philosophical thinking. (P4T). Janet has since developed this work internationally through Bristol University, initially as an output from a British Academy Small Grant funded project. The project investigated the role of philosophy in teacher education to promote reflection on the relational dimensions of teaching with new and beginning teachers in three culturally distinctive settings. Philosophical perspectives were explored and the findings are now disseminated through this website, which is envisaged as an archive and also as a potential platform for new activity in the same spirit. The title 'Rehumanising Teacher Education' was chosen to promote the relational and personal aspects of being and becoming a teacher and to promote the distinctive approaches to critical reflection by teachers.

The launch took place in October 2021. There are useful mini-mooc resources for teaching educators relating to ethical teacher education. Speakers at the launch represented the strands of the website and the international initiatives being celebrated. (Janet Orchard, Nidia Avilez Nunes, Jez Butler and Lucy Kelly from Bristol University; Nuraan Davids, Stellenbosch University; Ruth Heilbronn, UCL Institute of Education; Carrie Winstanley, Roehampton University; Jo Malone, Independent Consultant; Sally Wan and Suzannie Leung, Chinese University of HK, and Liz Jackson, University of Hong Kong). The website can be found [here](#). ▶ [page 13](#)

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A *JOPE* Special Issue on Decolonizing the Curriculum is being prepared for 2023

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The theme of the preconference for March 2022 is the context and understanding of philosophy of education



Student Pre-conference

Elsewhere in this newsletter there's a report on the PESGB virtual conference held in September 2021 to replace the cancelled March event in Oxford. We usually hold a graduate student pre-conference before the main conference begins. We found that this event didn't fit with the nature of a virtual conference and we replaced it with some advice sessions on topics which regularly come up in discussion in the preconference – a Q and A on the work of the Executive; a session on the mentoring scheme; advice for applying for PESGB grants; another for submitting a paper for the next conference, and one by the Journal editor on submitting to *JOPE*.

The theme of the preconference for March 2022 is the context and understanding of philosophy of education which will explore what philosophy of education looks like in some different jurisdictions and contexts. The speakers are Penny Enslin, Doret de Ruyter and Chris Martin. This would have been the preconference programme at the cancelled face to face Oxford Conference in 2020.

APEN – African Philosophy of Education Network.

We were sad to announce in December 2020 that our colleague [Elli Glevey passed away](#). Elli worked in Ghana, where he founded the APEN website. At present we are supporting a colleague in Kenya with resources in philosophy of education. If anyone has such resources and is able to donate them please contact Ruth Heilbronn (r.heilbronn@ucl.ac.uk)

The website remains archived and can be reanimated. Anyone who would like to do so is invited to contact Richard Davies (rdavies15@uclan.ac.uk).

BERA conference and Philosophy of Education SIG

The Philosophy of Education Special Interest Group was co-convened by Janet Orchard and Kate O'Shaughnessy during 20–21. Janet has now stood down and a co-convenor is sought. Please contact Kate in the first instance if you are a BERA member and are interested (katherine.o'shaughnessy.14@ucl.ac.uk).

In October 2021 the SIG ran a successful online event, 'Emotions and Moral Learning in Early Childhood Education' in collaboration with the Early Childhood and Care SIG. Dr Daniel Vanello and Catriona Card presented on this issue, followed by a Q&A session which led to a rich conversation from attendees. There was much interest in this emerging area and we look forward to more discussions and events around it in the future. ▶ [page 14](#)

The BERA 2020 Conference was cancelled due to the pandemic. The 2021 conference was held virtually from 13–16 September 2021. A smaller number of philosophy of education papers were submitted for this year's conference compared to previous years and in the event just one philosophy of education workshop was in the final programme. This may be due to the cost of the virtual conference, which was high, in comparison with the PESGB conference earlier in the month. A SIG Catch Up was held in October for those presenters unable to give their papers at the conference and this was well received by members and led to some excellent discussion.

Summer School

The 2021 PESGB International Postgraduate Summer School was a virtual event organised by John Tillson at Liverpool Hope University. It was led by Professor Sigal Ben-Porath (University of Pennsylvania) and structured around her work in progress, *Campus Wars and the Struggle for Democracy*, arising from her 2020–21 Fellowship-in-Residence at Harvard's Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics. The other prominent guest speakers were Professor Kevin Vallier, who discussed *Trust in a Polarized Age*; Professor Allen Buchanan on his work, *Our Moral Fate*, and Professor Elizabeth Anderson, whose talk title was 'Can We Talk? Communicating Moral Concern in an era of Polarized Politics'. It was attended by 16 postgraduate students from Universities across the USA, Britain and Canada. Evaluations show that the SS was very well received by the students.

And in the future...

We are now looking forward to another year of events. We invite members of the society to suggest future developments that meet the society's and the committee aims and objectives that might not attract funds under the small grants scheme. We'll discuss the applications at two key points in the year when the committee meet. An application form can be found [here](#). Applications need to further the aims of the society and the Development Committee, which are at the above link. We hope people will get their good ideas into practice and participate with us in another round of fruitful collaborations. ■

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The postgraduate conference was attended by 16 postgraduate students from Universities across the USA, Britain and Canada

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Journal of Philosophy of Education



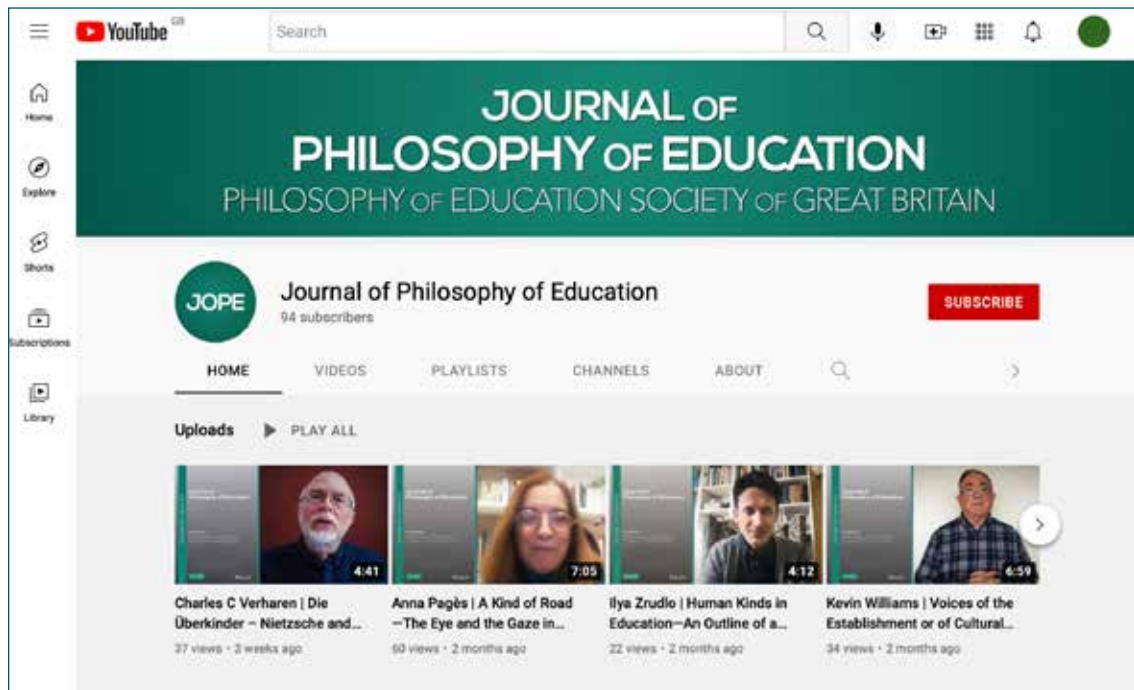
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It is now almost a year since I succeeded Bob Davis as the Executive Editor of the Society's *Journal of Philosophy of Education*. It has been an exciting year for me and for the journal. When *JOPE* was founded, some 56 years ago, it began by publishing six articles a year. Now the journal publishes six issues a year, which in 2021, ran to almost 1200 pages. Volume 55 included two special issues, one on the Educational Importance of Monuments and one on Kant on Education and Improvement, and four regular issues, two combined into a massive double-issue, which included suites of papers on teaching during the pandemic and on René Arcilla's recent book on Wim Wenders. I hope that readers are finding much that is stimulating and enjoyable in this material.

In my view, one of the most attractive aspects of our journal is that we publish a wide range of papers representing many and varied styles of philosophical thought. I was educated in the analytic tradition, but my early forays into Russian philosophy awoke me to the importance of avoiding philosophical parochialism and hasty dismissals of the unfamiliar, so I will do my best to ensure that *JOPE* continues to be a forum for fruitful conversation within and between diverse philosophical approaches. I also enjoy the way our journal features more abstract philosophical reflection on epistemic, metaphysical and ethical questions in education alongside discussions of pressing issues of practice and policy. I think this reflects the fact that education is a topic that is, or ought to be, central to philosophical reflection on the human condition, as well as a matter of immediate practical significance in our lives, and it is vital that our journal reflects this in its pages.

It was an exciting year for *JOPE*, but also a challenging one. Our publisher, Wiley, introduced a number of new systems—in fact almost every aspect of the production process changed. The new systems had 'teething troubles', leading to significant delays, exacerbated by the on-going pandemic. They also necessitated that the journal transition to a new page design, which has not been entirely popular. ▶ [page 16](#)





However, notwithstanding these frustrations, we succeeded in publishing volume 55 and are presently finalising the first issue of volume 56, a special issue on mental health, edited by Emma Williams. Emma is one of the journal's two co-editors, the other being Paul Standish. The three of us meet every fortnight (on Zoom), and our discussions are invaluable. In addition, we have an excellent team of Assistant Editors: David Aldridge, Marianna Papastephanou, Doret de Ruyter and Judith Suissa have recently been joined by new appointees Sheron Fraser-Burgess, Lovisa Bergdahl, Adrian Skillbeck and Koichiro Misawa. Former editors of the journal, Richard Smith and Bob Davis, also bring the benefit of their experience to this team. Finally, Alexis Gibbs has also recently joined the team as *JOPE's* Reviews Editor.

Special Issues, and themed suites of papers in regular issues, are a much valued part of the journal and one of the means through which it can promote sustained discussion of important issues of the day. Some of the topics that will be addressed in upcoming issues are vocational education, sex education, decolonisation, and the legacy of Paul Hirst. We hope you will enjoy them. If you are interested in editing a Special Issue or Suite, you are very welcome to submit a proposal to us: details can be found on the *JOPE* website. And if you have ideas about how the journal might be improved, do please get in touch. You can reach me at bakhurst@queensu.ca. ■

Articles



Paul Standish
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From the President

I was certainly surprised when I was asked if I was prepared to be nominated for the position of President of the Society and surprised again, in March 2021, when I was actually appointed to the position. There had been only two Presidents before: RS Peters, who first conceived of and founded the Society in the early 1960s, and Paul Hirst, who was elected to the position following Peters' death in December 2011. Peters was in the position, in effect, for nearly fifty years; Hirst, who died in October 2020, for less than eight. But the position is more complicated than that suggests. I am not sure of the details of the history, but I believe that at some point in the 1980s, this leading role was divided between an executive position, the Chair of the Society, and a formal one, its President. The latter title made it possible to continue honouring Peters' achievement and foundational importance for the Society. When Peters died, the title passed naturally enough to Paul Hirst, whose different style and in many ways complementary contribution were similarly important for our field, and whose good humour, impeccable manners, and congenial presence are now sadly missed. I was grateful to Naomi Hodgson and Stefan Ramaekers for proposing me and honoured by the way this was received. It is, however, humbling to follow in the steps of these illustrious predecessors. So how do I come to be in this position?

An introduction to the PESGB

I joined the Society in 1979, at the encouragement of Robert Dearden and Ieuan Lloyd, who supervised respectively my Masters and PhD theses. In the several years that followed, I attended only the local West Midlands Branch meetings, but they proved highly stimulating and were an important factor in helping me through the work I was then doing. The MA in Philosophy of Education at Birmingham struck me as the best experience of education I had had—partly, no doubt, because of where psychologically I was then, but also because of the course itself, its substance and the way it was taught: it seemed serious and genuine in a way that I had often felt to be lacking in my earlier educational experience.

My first visit to the Annual Conference was in 1985. As a result of a paper I had given at Gregynog the previous year, on "Humility and Education", I was asked by Terry McLaughlin and Phil Snelders to speak at the opening plenary session. ▶ [page 18](#)

The session did not go exactly as I had expected, but I have vivid memories of the occasion and of the rest of the conference—the formal response from Roger Marples, conversations with Richard Smith and Ray Elliott in the bar, and a walk by the Thames on a bright sunny afternoon with Morwenna Griffiths, Chris Winch, and Victor Quinn. In the ensuing years, I attended the conference, but usually just for the day. Since 1990, however, I have been there throughout, fully committed and fully present.

My involvement in the society

During the late 1980s I gradually took over the running of the West Midlands Branch, including, in 1989, the organisation of the Gregynog Conference, which had been established by Ieuan Lloyd in 1981. I organised the conference by myself for a number of years but from the late 90s shared the role with Mike Smith and subsequently Naomi Hodgson, until she and Mandy Fulford took over in 2018. In the early 1990s I was elected onto the Society's Executive Committee and later in the decade became Treasurer. In this role I produced financial projections that suggested that we could spend some money: in particular, I set out proposals for a system of Grants and Awards, which was soon established, as well as for a series of policy-related pamphlets, *Impact*, which quickly thrived under John White's leadership.

In the early 1990s I was elected to the Executive. Around that time I was also invited to join the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, and subsequently, when the journal expanded from two to four issues per year, I became its first Assistant Editor. In 2001, I succeeded Richard Smith as Editor, a position I held for ten years. During this time, we were courted by a number of publishers, and the contract I negotiated with Wiley-Blackwell increased the Society's journal income from £70k to over £160k. Since 2011, I have continued to serve on the Editorial Board as Associate Editor, and over the last three transitional years as Interim Co-Editor, working under the Executive Editorship initially of Bob Davis and now of David Bakhurst. From 2017-2020, I was Chair of the Society, and during this time, I again led the negotiation of the new contract with Wiley. This further raised our income, increased open access, and dramatically extended opportunities for publishing work of quality in our field.

▶ page 19



I hope that my writings and lectures demonstrate my belief in the crucial importance of asking philosophical questions about education



A rich career in education

For the past 27 years, I have greatly enjoyed working in a series of university posts—at Dundee University (1994–2004), at Sheffield University as Professor of Philosophy of Education (2004-2007), and since 2007 as the holder of the Chair in Philosophy of Education at the Institute of Education (now UCL IOE). Over the last decade I am pleased also to have held the position of Visiting Research Professor at Kyoto University. My earlier career was rather different. Having worked for a while in a number of casual jobs, I decided to train to be a teacher. I then taught for over 20 years in a variety of institutions—middle school, secondary school, a school for “maladjusted” children, a traditional further education college, and then a progressive community college. In the colleges, I was mostly teaching English, especially on A Level and Access courses (for adult-returners), while my administrative responsibilities extended at one time to course organisation for 1500 students. As part of my job, I also worked for a number of years at a psychiatric hospital, in a role intended to provide a bridge to normal life and education.

I began to publish in the early 90s, and since that time have authored, co-authored, or co-edited some twenty books, as well as over 200 articles in journals and books. I have given keynotes in many countries, including Ireland, Spain, Malta, France, Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Poland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, India, China, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, Canada, the United States, Colombia, Brazil, and the UK.

I hope that my writings and lectures demonstrate my belief in the crucial importance of asking philosophical questions about education. My earlier experience as a teacher led me to the view that when problems in education arise, they lead, when pressed hard enough, to questions that are unavoidably philosophical and indeed to questions central to philosophy itself: What is the good life, the good society? What is the nature of knowledge? What is it to be a human being? How should I live? Conversely, as I have pursued these matters philosophically, I have continually asked myself how a change in philosophical view might make a difference on a Monday morning—or, to put this more explicitly, what changes I would make to educational policy and practice, if I had the power. I do have answers and wish I had more power. ▶ [page 20](#)



I have an inclusive conception of the philosophy of education, which celebrates work in different traditions and dialogue between them, and honours the principle of following the argument where it leads. (For a paper that sets out these views more systematically, see my “Rival conceptions of the philosophy of education”, *Ethics and Education*, 2007, 2.2, 159-171, or “Disciplining thought: Between ideology and anything goes”, *European Educational Research Journal*, 2019, 18.5, 546-558.) It is not hard to find those who would disparage our field: there are the hard-headed practitioners and policy-makers (often proudly self-styled), who find us irrelevant to the real business of education; the ideological empiricists who deny us credibility because we have collected no data; the social scientists impatient with philosophical qualms about clarity and precision; influencers with an eye for the strap-line and the sound-bite; and then, from a different angle, there is the condescension from some philosophers of a certain stripe in the mainstream, whose authority comes often from narrowing technical specialism and not from the wider vision that has characterised the work of so many great philosophers in the past. The pursuit of the philosophy of education, necessarily messy, has never been easy, and the institutional challenges that we now contend with can, to the faint-hearted, make it all seem futile. But for my part, my faith in the point of asking philosophical questions about education has never wavered. People may hide from those questions but, as I said above, they are unavoidable, in the institutions of education as in life itself. I am delighted to be part of a Society whose purpose is to face up to those questions. ■

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People may hide from those questions but they are unavoidable

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Articles

Campus Wars and the Struggle for Democracy:

A Report on the Society’s International Postgraduate Summer School (online)



Christina Beaumont
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This year’s PESGB International Postgraduate Summer School, led by Professor Sigal Ben-Porath (University of Pennsylvania), brought together 16 postgraduate students from Universities across the USA, Britain and Canada to discuss the role of higher education in restoring democracy in the context of polarization. It was organized by Dr John Tillson (Liverpool Hope University), and Dr Ben Kotzee, (University of Birmingham) lent his support as a tutor. Three prominent guest speakers joined to discuss recent work; with Professor Kevin Vallier discussing *Trust in a Polarized Age*, Professor Allen Buchanan discussing *Our Moral Fate*, and Professor Elizabeth Anderson discussing a recent paper entitled ‘Can We Talk? Communicating Moral Concern in an era of Polarized Politics’. The Summer School took place online this year due to the pandemic, and was hosted by Professor Ben-Porath in her ZOOM office. ▶ page 22



Sigal Ben-Porath

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Although we were unable to meet in person, the opportunity to work together as sessions leads, the use of breakout rooms and the opportunity for online ‘coffee breaks’ gave a chance for everyone to get to know each other a little better

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Each student had the opportunity to chair one of the sessions in collaboration with one or two of the other delegates. This afforded students an opportunity to meet and work together with some of their peers, to determine the structure of the sessions and the topics to be discussed. Each group collected questions on relevant topics from the other delegates prior to the weekend and used these to focus the direction of the discussion. Although we were unable to meet in person, the opportunity to work together as session leads, the use of breakout rooms and the opportunity for online ‘coffee breaks’ between sessions enabled smaller and more in-depth discussions to take place, and gave a chance for everyone to get to know each other a little better. Each of the coffee breaks were centred around topics that may be of help or interest to the delegates in their future careers. For example, *Journal of Philosophy of Education* assistant editor and *British Educational Research Journal* co-editor, Professor Dave Aldridge (Edge Hill) and *Theory and Research in Education* editor, Ben Kotzee spoke about publishing during one coffee break, and gave students an opportunity to ask questions and share their personal experiences.

The weekend was structured around Professor Ben-Porath’s work-in-progress, *Campus Wars and the Struggle for Democracy* – A work arising from her 2020–21 Fellowship-in-Residence at Harvard’s Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics. This thought-provoking manuscript addressed some of the recent issues arising on college campuses surrounding freedom of speech, which are indicative of the broader struggles taking place in our societies at the present time. ▶ page 23

Campus Wars and the Struggle for Democracy

Ben-Porath highlights increasing polarization and political extremism as threats to the foundations of Western democracy, and suggests that the future resilience of our democracy depends upon our ability to establish shared epistemic foundations and allow a wide variety of voices to be heard within the public domain, whilst simultaneously protecting individuals against the harmful effects of extremist views and 'hate speech'.

One place where this is particularly important is on campus; institutions of higher education are founded on a quest for knowledge. This endeavour requires the ability to consider alternative viewpoints and permit opposition to the status quo. However, colleges and universities are faced with striking a balance between enabling free and open dialogue in the pursuit of knowledge and maintaining a duty of care to their student body to remain open and inclusive to all. This presents a particular conflict of interest with regards to speech that excludes, offends or oppresses.

Professor Ben-Porath suggests that although the boundaries of permissible speech are often difficult to define, it is incumbent on institutions of higher education to tackle the challenge head-on. She suggests that one solution may be for colleges and universities to stand firmly by their institutional values of promoting free and open dialogue by refusing to censor speech, but by simultaneously taking positive steps to actively promote inclusion and a diversity of viewpoints as well as a commitment to seeking truth. ▶ [page 24](#)



Kevin Vallier discussing trust in a polarised world



Allan Buchanan discussing our moral fate

Debating free speech

There was a sentiment amongst some of the summer school delegates, however, that the commitment to truth-seeking and expansion of epistemic boundaries provides insufficient reason for permitting some of the more extreme and discriminatory viewpoints to be heard. There was further debate surrounding the intrinsic value of free-speech as a democratic right that simultaneously has the power to infringe upon the democratic rights of other citizens when that speech is intended to do, or has the effect of causing harm. Similarly, a number of delegates expressed the desire for colleges and universities to adhere to a more strongly inclusive set of values and to take a tougher stance on harmful and divisive speech in response to an increasingly polarized climate.

Two other important aspects of this debate related to young peoples' preparation for exercising their right to free speech during earlier years in compulsory education. The ability to critically consider a variety of different perspectives, formulate arguments and take part in debates are all important and necessary skills required to actively participate in a democratic society. Social reproduction requires more than just learning information and skills – it requires what Ben-Porath refers to as 'deep civic learning', which is something more akin to a disposition comprised of a civic identity, attitudes and values, as well as an understanding of the social institutions of which that society is comprised and the different ways in which one's voice can be heard and listened to. In addition to this, strengthening democracy requires a strengthening of trust (and of trustworthiness), both in one another and also in our social institutions, in order to move forward in more constructive debates. ▶ page 25

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A number of delegates expressed the desire for a more strongly inclusive set of values taking a tougher stance on harmful and divisive speech

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Social and political trust waxes and wanes over time



Trust in a Polarized Age

Trust was a theme explored more deeply in Kevin Vallier's session which explored his recent book, *Trust in a Polarized Age*. Vallier claims that social and political distrust and polarization/partisanship are mutually reinforcing, although neither result from any inherent features of democracy or liberalism. He suggests that in order to break cycles of social/political distrust and partisanship, we must promote trust in our liberal rights and democratic institutions. Public trust in social institutions falls when they are publicly witnessed being used and abused. Similarly, the impartiality and predictability of public officials in the implementation and protection of public policy and law was shown through a wide variety of sociological research to be more important than elections for promoting public trust.

The discussion of Vallier's work centred around the epistemic injustice of those that are justified in their social and political distrust, but are also harmed by that distrust. It was agreed that in order to promote social and political trust, it is necessary to address the trustworthiness of the public institutions upon which that trust depends. Vallier highlighted the ways in which social and political trust differ and can increase or decrease over time; social trust refers to the general expectation that members of society will conform to basic moral rules and standards. Social trust increases as a result of mass compliance with moral rules, and decreases as a result of observed or perceived mass defection from those rules. Political trust is a more specific form of social trust that depends on government officials complying with the moral rules of the institutions which they serve. A failure to comply with those rules often leads to public resentment, condemnation, and a fall in political trust.

Although social and political trust waxes and wanes over time, Vallier believes that the structure of liberal democracy is uniquely positioned to promote and sustain trusting social orders that are able to accommodate a wide variety of differing viewpoints and diversity of people. He highlighted a number of factors within the structure of society, however, which generally lead to higher levels of social trust. For example, Vallier cites studies that demonstrate it is not the level of ethnic diversity within a society that is important as much as the level of integration between diverse groups (greater integration is correlated with greater levels of social trust), and also economic equality (more economically equal countries have higher levels of social trust, although the direction of causation is difficult to discern). Vallier's book was thoroughly well researched, and made for an interesting discussion which identified many of the key social determinants of trust, although the discussion was only able to touch upon the more practical issues of how to strengthen democratic institutions and protect liberal rights against erosion, corruption and abuse. ▶ [page 26](#)

Our moral fate

This issue was taken up from a different angle by Allen Buchanan in the discussion of his book *Our Moral Fate: Evolution and the Escape from Tribalism*. Buchanan explains that tribalism is moralistic, that it makes moral judgements based on an 'us versus them' mentality, often where the in-group is judged to be morally superior and therefore worthy of a higher social status than the out-group. Evolutionary science has led many to believe that humans are inherently tribalistic in nature, but Buchanan suggests a more complex picture, where the kind of morality that gets expressed is largely dependent on an interaction between social pressures and the environment. This means that neither tribalism nor more inclusive moral progress are inevitable, and that progress is possible if we struggle to ensure the right conditions.

Buchanan cites the 'two great expansions of the circle of moral regard' to support this idea of moral progress, which refers to the expansion and recognition of basic human rights that should be accorded to every human being, and the extension of certain moral rights to non-human animals (i.e., animal welfare rights and protections). He suggests that in order to foster further moral progress and to prevent regression back to tribalism, it is necessary to build moral social institutions, which promote and reward co-operative behaviour and inclusion. The opposite of this are social environments which promote tribalistic behaviour by encouraging an us-versus-them mentality, increasing fear and distrust of out-groups and creating false threat cues by manipulating public belief and opinion. It becomes clear that promoting a tribalistic mentality may be of interest to certain groups, as it is congenial to the acquisition and maintenance of power. The problem therefore becomes that moral progress is dependent largely upon those who are in control of the social environment.

The discussion surrounding Buchanan's work focused on rival conceptions of moral progress and on the potentially positive ways in which tribalism might be used to help people work together to meet some of the contemporary challenges we face, such as climate change. There was a consensus that how moral capabilities are exercised is heavily dependent on the environment, and to echo the sentiments in Ben Porath's work, in order to create better epistemic environments, we need reliable access to the facts, institutions that are trustworthy, norms of reciprocity, opportunities for good decision-making and the possibility of re-evaluation and correcting mistakes. Finally, working in opposition to tribalistic tendencies, we need opportunities to develop and exercise empathy and compassion towards one another, and this behaviour should be promoted and socially rewarded to ensure that it becomes the norm. ▶ page 27

Communicating moral concern

In her paper *Can We Talk? Communicating Moral Concern in an Era of Polarized Politics*, Elizabeth Anderson discusses ‘toxic political discourse’ as one of the great contemporary threats to democracy. She deconstructs this discourse into its various components including disinformation (false/misleading claims, propaganda, conspiracy theories), harassment (hate speech, trolling, threats) and mass shaming. When deconstructed in this way, it becomes clear that the propagation of toxic political discourse in recent years is closely related to the expansion of social media in all its forms and the way in which this has altered our public political discourse. Anderson goes on to distinguish between first- and second- order moral claims, whereas a speaker’s first-order moral claims are made to praise good and right actions and condemn wrong and bad actions, second-order moral claims evaluate speakers’ *standing* to praise and blame. She suggests that a common feature of toxic discourse is the un/conscious erasing of first- with second-order moral claims, where the debate descends into name-calling or claims of character assassination, and diverts attention away from what should actually be done. She identifies the emotions most closely associated with toxic discourse as fear, resentment, contempt and pride and centres her arguments for assuaging toxic discourse around these.

Anderson suggests that those hoping to enter into more productive debates should attempt to disarm these emotions in a number of different ways; firstly, fear is felt in response to perceived threats. In order to disarm fear, it is necessary to enter discussions based on common interests and identities, rather than differences, and to keep these at the forefront. Showing respect for the other person’s viewpoints and concerns, and trying to communicate non-judgementally is one way to reduce resentment, and being able to articulate issues in a precise manner whilst avoiding sweeping statements and generalisations is another way to avoid defensive reactions. Certain terms, such as ‘racist’ can be both inflammatory and simultaneously vague. More productive discussions may be had by discussing situational specifics and avoiding language that condemns or engages listeners’ partisan identities. Anderson refers to these practices as demonstrating ‘epistemic humility’, and it is difficult to argue with them as highly reasonable strategies for communication. ▶ [page 28](#)

However, much of the discussion surrounding Anderson's paper focused on questions of when it is appropriate to be conciliatory and diplomatic and when it's more important to take a firm stance against bigotry and injustice. This echoed some of the discussions of Ben-Porath's work which interrogated where to draw the line of permissible speech and the consequences of this for our democratic freedoms. Each of the pieces discussed took a different approach to negotiating the tensions within democracy between maintaining each citizen's right to speak and be heard, whilst simultaneously protecting citizens from discrimination and oppression. This tension could be expressed more simply as that which arises between the equality of all and the freedom of each.

Conclusions

What became apparent over this weekend is that the freedoms which democracy affords us are not absolute. Instead, the limits of individual freedoms must be drawn along the line where those freedoms infringe upon the freedoms of others. This is a matter of constant negotiation – democracy is continually evolving along with society and as the way we communicate changes. For every change, we must learn to adapt. Sometimes the change is slow, sometimes fast. Often, when it is fast, such as the explosion of social media and global communication networks over the past two decades, or the pandemic that brought us all onto Zoom for the first time, we discover that the social norms that once served us well no longer apply, and it is time to negotiate a new set of rules.

This year's PESGB Summer School was an excellent start to that discussion. I am grateful to Professor Ben-Porath for leading the weekend and for her thought-provoking work that formed the basis of the discussion, to the organisers of the event and distinguished guest speakers, and to all the postgraduates who attended, led the sessions and whose input created a lively and thoughtful debate. This weekend provided a unique opportunity to address some of the fundamental beliefs and values that form the basis of our democracy. It also provided an invaluable opportunity for 16 postgraduates at the start of their academic careers to meet with, debate with and question a selection of world-class scholars with a wealth of knowledge and experience in their respective fields. In this way, this year's PESGB Summer School embodied one of the main conclusions reached over the course of the weekend - we all need to start having better conversations, from a position of humility, open-mindedness and willingness to listen, so that we are able to see our shared humanity rather than just the things that set us apart. ■

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The freedoms
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 Articles

PESGB South Coast branch Postgraduate Conference

'Education and the Future'
2 September 2020



Laura Watson
University of Winchester

Sharon Smith
University of Birmingham

We have been asked to provide an account of the conference we organised earlier this year for Postgraduate Students, in conjunction with the South Coast branch of PESGB. As you will read, our ethos for this event was one of collaboration and hearing the ideas and voice of Postgraduate students, so with this in mind we invited some of the students who presented at the conference to also contribute to this article. You will find their words amongst ours, as we explain the rationale for the event and describe how the event far exceeded our own expectations... and we hope has opened the door for future engagement and dialogue.

For a few years now, we have felt that there was a need for a space specifically dedicated to students studying and researching in the field of Philosophy of Education to be able to share their work, to enable feedback and critique on their developing philosophical theories. Whilst we recognised that students are obviously welcome to both attend and submit abstracts for posters or papers at a range of conferences, for instance the PESGB conference, we know that some students feel that they lack the experience, knowledge and/or confidence to present at these major conferences. We also have been keen to find ways to help more postgraduate students in the field to meet others studying at different institutions. Due to Covid-19, many of the opportunities that were open to us as postgraduate students were cancelled. For instance, we were no longer able to go for coffee or dinner with our friends which previously had offered us often an informal space to share our ideas. Campuses and libraries were widely closed, and conferences we had booked on were being postponed or cancelled. During the summer we were starting to feel a little bit isolated. ▶ [page 30](#)

Whilst we were gaining new knowledge about learning online, we decided to take advantage of the opportunity that the virtual world might offer. We realised we could organise something with no cost – all it needed was our time and enthusiasm. So, we decided to set ourselves a project and set about organising the virtual conference. And luckily, the PESGB South Coast Branch and the Centre for Philosophy of Education at Winchester allowed us to collaborate with them. We are grateful for their moral support and also their assistance with Chairing sessions on the day.

I was midway through my PhD when the pandemic hit. Just days before we went into lockdown, I passed my progression viva and I was feeling rather pleased with how things were going. It didn't take too long for that feeling to fade. I found myself dealing with a number of other challenges; home schooling, general Covid worry – just as many others did at this time. The PhD simply wasn't a priority for some weeks and months and valuable time was slipping away. What I missed most, was the unplanned conversations about research with colleagues. I missed listening to the deliberations of others. I missed the space and time to think deeply. I missed the conferences. And there were many lined up! I saw a conference on Twitter targeted at PGRs and decided to put an abstract in. Despite all the uncertainty, I knew that I would be able to commit to it as it was set to be a virtual conference – even if the children were not back at school, I could have made it work.

Victoria Jamieson, Edge Hill University

We wanted to leave the theme of the conference fairly open so that we could have a wide range of voices expressed. 'Education and the Future' is something that most people can relate to, and we thought it could encompass a range of philosophical theories and approaches to education. Additionally, from the outset, we were keen to make sure that the conference was as inclusive as possible, and that the ethos of the day was based on the idea of support and collaboration, with everyone learning together and from each other. ▶ page 31

As two individuals who did not grow up learning philosophy, our deep desire to continually seek and learn it drew us towards the PESGB conference. Right from the very first email exchanges with Laura and Sharon, we felt a warmth and sensitivity that was a clear reflection of their intent to create a safe and accessible space to bring people from across the world, together. We've been deeply moved by the attention that was paid to making this accessible for the heterogeneous nature of our population. It enabled us to understand the invisibility that we were unintentionally practicing with respect to taking into consideration the needs of persons with disabilities.

Neha Nair & Keerthana P., Azim Premji University

Critique would be a necessary and welcome part of the conference, of course, but within an encouraging and friendly environment. We also were learning, along with our conference participants and attendees, as we had never organised a conference before, and did not have anything other than our own experience to guide us. As such, we too needed it to be a friendly and supportive environment.

We were really surprised by the amount of interest we received from other students, and we were thrilled with the quality of papers that came through. We had not anticipated the event appealing to students outside of the UK but were absolutely delighted to start receiving abstracts from across the world. ▶ page 32

As the conference neared, momentum picked up. People were retweeting and advertising the event and encouraging people to attend as delegates. Keynote speakers were lined up. At first, this felt a little daunting. My project was steering in a new direction and I hadn't presented anything that I would describe as 'philosophical'. What I had anticipated to be a small event, seemed to be receiving a fair bit of attention and I wasn't sure how the virtual space and dynamics would work. The space which was created by the organisers, was so timely, valuable, and welcome.

Victoria Jamieson, Edge Hill University

Writing this paper gave us a chance to fathom our inclination towards moral education and the probable role that art could play in nurturing it. Through the process of ideating, discussing and formulating our thoughts; we've also been able to recognise the vast potential that team work has in bringing a wholeness to any experience... The conference wasn't just a place for us to meet individuals with similar burning questions and interests with respect to education, morality and peace; but also one for us to explore our identity as global citizens and examine the issues troubling the world around us.

Neha Nair and Keerthana P, Azim Premji University

We were also delighted with the support from academics working in the field, who not only helped us share details of the conference but also attended throughout the day, joining in the discussions that took place after each talk.

Taking part in the PESGB doctoral conference afforded a valuable opportunity to listen. I saw this manifest in three particular ways. In preparing for the presentation there was the time to listen to my own ideas, to hear them as an audience would, and my work is better for it. In listening to other doctoral students present there is so much to hear. Where does their interest lie? How do they think about their concerns, and communicate that thinking? Listening as community creates a space of consideration before response which I consider to be really valuable. Doctoral conferences can suffer from an atmosphere of waiting to speak, avoided here through attendance of members of the wider PESGB community. I felt the value of that community as I presented my own work. Questions and comments from the audience brought me to think about what they had heard and that which I had wished to communicate but did not come through. To be attended to in this way is invaluable, drawing my thinking out, and illuminating my own assumptions or unspoken thoughts.

Elizabeth O'Brien, University College Dublin

It became clear after the conference when we had a virtual drink that many of us felt like this was a much needed opportunity to share our ideas, have discussions and have a general chat. It was lovely to talk to people in the same situation. Completing a PhD can be lonely enough, let alone when you have been required to isolate further due to a pandemic. Even weeks after the conference, many of us are still in touch, following each other on social media and there are further plans for sharing our research, including through PESGB platforms such as the virtual seminar series or branch events, and hopefully finding a way to get the papers published in some format. ▶ page 33

The space which was created by the organisers, was so timely, valuable, and welcome. It was a safe, yet challenging space to try out ideas, and to listen to others. The dynamics of the virtual platform took very little away from the conference experience. There was the space for informal conversations in the private chat function, questions were posed in the chat (even if there was not time to address them, it was something to think about), and the dialogue ran throughout the day, into the informal drinks session in the evening – even spilling over onto Twitter. The organisers brought a community together, which couldn't have come at a better time. It was brilliantly executed.

Victoria Jamieson. Edge Hill University

We've walked away with notes to further our inquiry into the world of women philosophers, the role that parents play in mass education and addressing violence in a classroom amidst several other themes. A fortnight after the conference, one of us participated in an online reading circle organized by Victoria Jamieson and Elizabeth O'Brien, who we met at the conference. This introduced us to another relatively new learning experience. As mentioned earlier, the safe and collegiate space at the conference has given us an impetus to go beyond our inhibitions; and explore spaces that enable us to continue our engagement with global questions on philosophy of education.

Neha Nair & Keerthana P Azim Premji University

As well as discussions about the event taking place on Twitter, Gary Walsh wrote about the conference afterwards on his blog. We would like to close this report on the event using his closing comments (reproduced on the following page, with his permission): ▶ page 34

Arguably, the future has rarely been more uncertain, owing to the combination of global shocks such as the climate crisis, the pandemic, economic recession and unprecedented global migration. Millions of displaced people are seeking refuge and sanctuary, many of whom are simply being ignored, in what is surely one of the greatest humanitarian challenges of our time, soon to be made infinitely worse by climate change and the possibilities of further political unrest. We live in an age unlike any other, characterised by multiple crises. Education has to step up to play a vital part in this situation. During the conference I was struck by two implicit themes. Firstly, there is an important role for the philosophy of education. To put it simply – we need ideas and we need them now. The philosophy of education can and should be providing an outlet for the kind of radical, interventionist thinking that we need to traverse this period of crisis. Secondly, and somewhat frustratingly, postgraduate researchers in the field of philosophy of education are at the vanguard of such ideas, while simultaneously facing our own challenges of precarity in an increasingly volatile jobs market. Perhaps events such as the excellent [‘Education and the Future’](#) conference provide the opportunity to find our professional community, yes, but with the longer-term aim of changing education in ways that allow it to become the radical force for social justice and transformation that it needs to be.

Gary Walsh, University of Glasgow, School of Education

We feel that the conference is just the start and look forward to being involved in future opportunities and spaces for Postgraduates to come together.

We would like to thank Victoria Jamieson, Neha Nair, Keerthana P, Elizabeth O’Brien and Gary Walsh for their contributions to this newsletter. ■



Articles

What are you reading?



Elizabeth O'Brien
University College Dublin

Victoria Jamieson
Edge Hill University

In July 2020 Elizabeth O'Brien and Victoria Jamieson, PhD students at University College Dublin and Edge Hill University respectively, cofounded the Philosophy of Education Reading Network. Here they write about their experience so far, the significance the Network has come to hold, and their vision for the future.

E: A simple question sparked a rich and interesting conversation between Vicky and I last summer. It transpired that the work of certain philosophers central to my research were of peripheral interest to her, and vice versa. I shared my struggle of trying to read Iris Murdoch's *The Sovereignty of Good* by myself, of wishing I had someone who knew more to discuss it with.

V: As PhD students, we missed the special interactions that come from encounters with others along the research journey, so we were keen to find ways to connect with others and share our reading interests more widely, as well as creating a sense of accountability which would encourage us to read during periods of isolation and uncertainty. ▶ page 36

E: It has been an extraordinary time, in its intensity if nothing else. Our homes were now also schools and universities. In this educational pressure-cooker the push to innovate, quickly, had kept us busy in our bubbles and pods. The incessant busyness made it difficult, in a number of ways, to carve out time for ourselves which was not directed towards a specific purpose, like finishing a chapter or a conference presentation. And yet, this was the scholarship we loved and valued. We wondered could we find a way to go about reading together, apart, and whether anyone else might be interested too.

V: It is strange to think that Elizabeth and I have never actually met in person, though it is likely that we would have met at The PESGB Annual Conference, had it gone ahead. It was this current crisis that brought us together and gave us some impetus to create The Philosophy of Education Reading Network, which has brought individuals together across the globe: the online presence certainly has its advantages.

E: Initially we started a Twitter account, sent out an invitation to anyone interested in reading *The Sovereignty of Good* and coming together to discuss it, via Zoom. Twenty one people attended that first meeting last August! Many expressed the same idea – as we are now settling in to the long haul of engaging online and researching alone it was time to find new ways to be together. We had figured out the routines and the necessary shifts and pivots to keep on keeping on, and had come to a point where we realised what we missed. Conversation, company, new ideas and fresh perspectives.

V: When the pandemic forced many of us into isolation, we had no idea how long we would find ourselves adapting to the 'new normal' for, or what the months ahead looked like. We now find ourselves some 10 months into the pandemic, having experienced some tough restrictions, particularly socially. For many, reading is an escape and keeps the mind active, yet during the pandemic the most severe Covid-19 restrictions saw the closure of independent book shops, classifying them as 'non-essential'. Perhaps many of us would feel that books have been essential during this time. We now find ourselves fortunate enough to have just shared our sixth text as a group (Hannah Arendt's *Between Past and Future*). Each month we ask the Reading Network's community to make suggestions for texts we should cover, as we are keen to explore the wide range of interests which the group has to offer. We meet via Zoom on the third Tuesday of the month and we invite someone who is familiar with the text to open the session, giving a brief overview and then posing some questions and provocations for the group to discuss. ▶ page 37

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Conversation, company,
new ideas and fresh
perspectives

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We are keen to build on the rich diversity of the network, and welcome any new members to join us

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E: Looking to the future, the community aspect, the Network part of Reading Network, is something we are keen to preserve and to build on. We believe in the integrity of an open space, inviting in and drawing out the contributions of the learned and the novice. From the outset we asked that the session be opened by posing questions, and recently we have ended on a question too. The meetings are also a space to come and be a part of something without the pressure of taking part actively. The experience, we hope, is one which is both enjoyable and scholarly. It is lovely to see people appreciate each other, to see ideas bring out smiles!

V&E: We are grateful to everyone who has joined us, made suggestions of texts, posed questions, engaged in discussions on Twitter, and generally helped make the group what it has become. The Philosophy of Education Reading Network has certainly kept our philosophy of education spirits alive and our brains active, while allowing us to make friends along the way. While what we have built is by no means representative of all the wonderful things that go on in the various philosophy of education networks, the reading group has created an opportunity to connect people from across the globe to share their philosophy of education reading interests as part of a community. We are keen to build upon the rich diversity of the network, and welcome any new members to join us.

Details on how to join in, books we have read previously and the questions which have been raised during their discussion, as well as the books which have been suggested for future reading are available at philofed.com. There is a community blog which we hope to build into another forum to share the books we read and the experience of the Reading Network. We also keep in touch and continue discussions via Twitter [@philofed](https://twitter.com/philofed). ■

RSE Conference 2021



Relationships and Sex Education: Philosophical and Historical Perspectives

Articles

'Relationships and Sex Education: Philosophical and Historical Perspectives'

PESGB Conference, June 2021



Danielle Diver
University of Birmingham

This conference took place in direct response to the updated relationships and sex education (RSE) guidance, the guidance was updated in 2019, but this conference was delayed due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic, the conference took place online from the 4–5th June 2021 and showcased prestigious keynote speakers such as: David Archard; Lauren Bialystok and Lisa Anderson; Cris Mayo; and Jonathan Zimmerman, alongside an impressive line-up of parallel sessions. The conference was organised by Michael Hand and Stephen Parker. ▶ page 39



The RSE guidance was updated (some might say *improved*) to include a much wider variety of relationships, as well as updated guidance on consent and the inclusion of LGBT issues in a timely and appropriate manner. However, there were a number of protests in direct response to the inclusion of LGBT issues, in particular, regarding the vagueness of the guidance and defining *when* in a child’s education would be the appropriate time to discuss it. The topics covered throughout the conference were far-reaching and diverse. Topics such as: consent (the correct definition and the consequences of such definitions); inclusivity; the role of parents in relation to sex education; morality; religion; the place of philosophy within sex education; sexuality; gender identity; feminism; and many more. There were also two fascinating symposia, one which discussed ethical sex in terms of mutuality and consent, with Sharon Lamb, Sam Gable, Michael Hand and Michael Reiss; and the other discussed the history of RSE, learning from past RSE to influence the future, with Hannah Elizabeth, Lutz Sauerteig and Glyn Davis.

As mentioned, the conference took place online which is something that everyone has been having to adapt to over the past year and a bit. However, when I think back to the conference, it is easy to forget that I was sitting in front of my laptop in a room on my own rather than in a big room full of people. I think this is primarily because the speakers and attendees were so enthusiastic. The online format for this conference was also made smoother by the specially made conference homepage which made navigating between rooms quick and easy as well as providing an opportunity to chat with colleagues and fellow attendees via the chat box included. ▶ [page 40](#)



The conference was a roaring success



On the evening of the 4th, there was a public forum where attendees were invited to pick the brains of Lucy Emmerson, Kirsty Liddiard, Andrew Moffat, Cris Mayo, Jonathan Zimmerman and Michael Reiss. The discussion predominantly centred on inclusivity in RSE. In particular it was intriguing and illuminating to hear the context of the Parkfield protests from Andrew Moffat, the man at the forefront of the 'No Outsiders' movement. Interestingly, Moffat described how there had been wide acceptance of the movement within the Muslim community for a few years previous to the protests. He recounted his coming out as a homosexual man to the parents and students at a predominantly Muslim school and he was met with no ill feeling or lack of tolerance. Moffat maintains that the protests were ignited by misinformation that had been spread online amongst the parents, such as falsehoods that their children were being shown inappropriate materials. This new context sparked debate around the coexistence of religion and sexuality in RSE which permeated the rest of the conference in various incarnations.

Some conclusions based on such discussions were that we, as academics, tend to have more or less a uniformly liberal perspective on political matters. In regard to the Parkfield protests, I think it was Jonathan Zimmerman and others that raised the important point that there was no-one from the protests in attendance at the conference to present or defend their viewpoint.

If there were, what kind of dynamic would this add? Would we change their minds by presenting our ideas to the very people that need to hear it? Rather than simply expressing our views and research to other academics who already agree that LGBT issues ought to be taught in schools and are typically not preoccupied with religious viewpoints to the contrary. It may be cruel to invite protestors to a conference of high-end academics with well-researched opinions and put their views under academic scrutiny, since, they potentially do not have the same level of education. It may well be interpreted as a brutal annihilation of their views rather than a civil discussion and therefore make their views even stronger. That said, it seems important to try and resolve this issue so that we do not become trapped in an epistemic bubble of our own making. Perhaps there should be conferences which are more open access and include a balance of academic and non-academic discussion, as an added alternative to allow for broader discussion and wider impact.

Overall, I would say the conference was a roaring success: it was well organised; engaging and covered many perspectives on the topic of RSE from a diverse range of speakers. It was an incredibly intellectually stimulating event and I think I speak for all the attendees and speakers when I say that we all ended the conference scratching our heads and re-evaluating our previous ideas. ■



Articles

The PESGB Annual Conference goes online



John White
UCL Institute of Education

The first online PESGB Annual Conference took place on 3–5 September 2021. Given its success, I am sure it won't be the last. It attracted 242 participants from 32 countries. Its platform – fashioned by our talented administrators, SAS, with input from our Conference Committee – enabled attendees to hear or read papers beforehand, to spend nearly all the conference time engaged in discussion – ie without a presentation preceding it, to message or have video meetings with fellow participants, to network in larger groups, and to participate in workshops as well as sessions to do with research in progress, committee work and special interests.

Should online conferences replace or alternate with the traditional face-to-face ones at New College Oxford? They have several advantages. For one thing, they can accommodate more participants, New College's limit being about 200. ▶ [page 42](#)

For another, they are incomparably cheaper. This conference was priced at between £30 for full-time employed PESGB members and as little as £5 for first-time conference attenders with one year of PESGB membership included. This compares with standard face-to-face conference fees – ignoring concessions and bursaries – now approaching £400. The low price benefits the many people across the globe who cannot afford the Oxford conference fee plus travel and other costs.

Online meetings cut out the hassles of getting to Oxford, whether by car from London or by air from USA or Japan. They suit, among others, people with health conditions that prevent them from travelling. They are also likely to generate more high-quality papers from across the world. This is because face-to-face ones can only attract contributions from those able and willing to travel to them, whereas there is no such condition attached to online conferences.

The latter also seem to be attractive to educational policymakers in search of philosophical perspectives on their work. Among attendees at the 2021 one were the Assistant General Secretary, Education policy and research, of NEU – the UK's largest teaching union – the CEO of the Australian Council for Education Research UK, the General Manager of a Cambodian Institute of Banking, as well as senior figures in schools and the inspectorate.

So much for the advantages. There are other considerations. Some of those who come to Oxford prize the experience of staying in an ancient college in one of the world's most famous universities, perhaps combining the conference with a short holiday. They enjoy eating in Hall and appreciate the excellent food and wine New College provides. Inseparably from this, they value meeting old and new friends face-to-face on both formal and informal occasions.

The 2021 online conference focussed on intensive intellectual interchange at a low price. It has enabled us to see conferences at New College in a new light – as accessible only to those who are well-off themselves or are generously funded. We are also better able to detach the conference's intellectual concerns from, for example, the prestigiousness of the location.

I leave unanswered how far our future conferences should be wholly, as distinct from partially, online; and whether face-to-face conferences – if they still occur and are not eclipsed by face-to-face meetings of other kinds – should take place in an Oxbridge college or in a site less dazzling in its celebrity and more affordable. ■

Ruth Cigman
in front of the
R.S. Peters library
in its new home
at Liverpool Hope
University



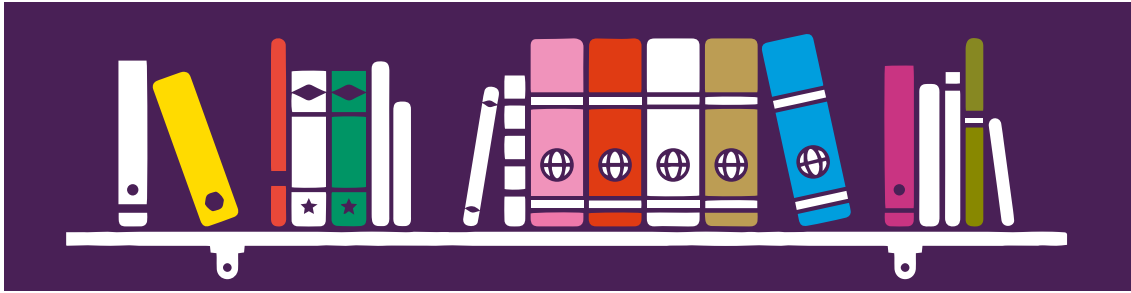
Articles

The R.S. Peters Library: A New Hope

John Tillson
Liverpool Hope University
Ruth Cigman
University College London

In the Summer of 2021, Liverpool Hope University became home to Richard Stanley Peters' personal library. The collection includes preparation for a book on Wordsworth, draft papers on Psychoanalysis, twelve handwritten notebooks, including notes on the justification of education, audio recordings of Peters' lectures, scholarly and personal correspondence, around 1000 books, and a medal from the National Academy of Education 1965. It also houses several inscribed first edition volumes presented to Peters by, among others, Michael Oakeshott, Israel Scheffler and Paul Hirst.

As well as containing works written or edited by Peters, including his personal first edition hardback copy of *Ethics and Education*, the collection reflects Peters' scholarship and diverse interests. There is a substantial collection of ancient Greek, modern, and 20th century (especially analytical) philosophy. There are also many books on the philosophy, psychology, and practice of education, including books by Peters himself, in several languages. The library represents Peters' wide interests in general philosophy – philosophy of mind, ethics, science, politics etc. – as well as his particular passions for religion, psychology, and literature. ▶ page 44



When Peters moved to a nursing home in his eighties, he donated his books to the PESGB. His neighbour, Dr Ruth Cigman (UCL), agreed to house as much of his library as she could – roughly 1000 books – on behalf of the Society. The collection was launched in 2006 with Richard Peters himself in attendance. Helen Killick, Richard’s stepdaughter and carer (also a neighbour), was there, as well as Mike Degenhardt, Paul Hirst, John and Patricia White, Judith Suissa, Jane Green and others from PESGB. Ruth prepared a traditional English tea, including the macarons and cucumber sandwiches without crusts of which Peters was famously fond. Patricia White wrote a piece about it in the 2006 PESGB Newsletter. In the intervening years, a catalogue of the collection was compiled. Stefan Cuypers, Jane Green and other scholars borrowed books from the collection.

When Ruth moved to a smaller house in 2021, the library was in need of a new home of its own and John Tillson arranged for Liverpool Hope to receive the collection. Shortly afterwards, Helen Killick donated a further trove of correspondence and photographs to the collection. The arrival of the R.S. Peters Library to Liverpool Hope constitutes a significant contribution to the resources available to both undergraduate and postgraduate students and scholars alike. The material in A&SC will be of interest to visiting researchers in the fields of both philosophy and history of education, and all will be more readily and easily available to visitors and current students.

Together with Liverpool Hope’s library team, including Karen Backhouse, Philippa Williams and Susan Murray, John Tillson successfully applied for match funding of £4,206 from Liverpool Hope University and the PESGB to have the Library catalogued, archived and partly digitized. The cassette tapes have now been digitised by North West Sound Heritage, and Helen Kavanagh, an experienced archivist, has been appointed on part time basis to catalogue, and archive letters, notebooks and other documents.

In the time ahead Liverpool Hope will be excited to make podcasts of Peters’ lectures available online! It also plans to hold an event to launch the collection. Peters’ library is available for access by appointment; please contact the [Special Collections Librarian](#), to arrange a visit. Once catalogued and archived, the contents list will be made public and interested parties will be able to request scans of its contents (subject to data protection and copyright restrictions) from the Special Collections Librarian.

Peters’ notebooks, lecture recordings, and inscribed gifts are housed in Hope’s Archives & Special Collections (A&SC). The main book collection will be kept as a discreet collection, accessible to all, in the Silent Study Space in the Sheppard-Worlock Library. They are currently shelved next to the Talbot Library at the far end of The Sheppard-Worlock Library. [A blurb about the collection](#) can be read on Liverpool Hope University’s Special Collections webpage under ‘Archives: M-W tab’, and [a list of content housed in the A&SC](#) is available under ‘Finding Aids’. [A list of books in the collection](#) is also available. ■

Creative writing

This section of the Newsletter was new last year for PESGB members who write pieces other than in academic register or who engage in other creative pursuits.

If you have an idea for a short story or poem, or have photos or drawings you would like to share, please get in touch through: steph@sasevents.co.uk

Contributions should be linked to philosophy and/or education in some respect, but the parameters of these areas are set relatively broadly, so as to include as much of your creative work as possible.

Friday

John White

I'd got to King's Cross just in time for the York train. If this kind of teaching produces the goods, I thought, I'll think hard about the uni job. They work you to death these days – and for peanuts. Two of these sessions a week and I'd net half my EEU salary. Four, and I could pack the job in.

I picked up a cab at York Station. So many people! It was as bad as Venice, worse than Barcelona. The place itself might be a treasure but the Shambles, I thought to myself with a smile, must be as rammed as the Ramblas.

A church. The *Angel* inn. A garden shop with trugs outside it. James's village.

It was a long way to come for a ninety-minute lesson, but who was I to whinge? Before they put me in touch with him, I didn't know this sort of thing existed. Doctors with private clients are everywhere. But no one I knew in philosophy had any. It was a plus that travel time was covered as well. I'd already clocked up £200 - most of it half asleep in my First Class carriage.

James and I would have to hit it off personally, of course. I didn't know much about him, except he was in his fifties, rolling

in it, and looking for something to do in his free time. – Which for him, as far as I could see, was twenty-four seven.

The cab passed a huge cedar along the drive and stopped by a Mercedes in front of the big house. A tall man in a grey suit and with grey curly hair strode up across the lawn. I'd seen him in the sunlight near the gate digging dandelions out of the grass.

'Good journey?' he asked, shaking hands. He was smiling, but looked sad.

'Great,' I said. 'My goodness, though, your York's a busy place. So crowded. The Shambles is as rammed as the Ramblas.'

The same despondent smile. He took me into the house.

Dirty dishes and wine glasses on the kitchen top by the sink. The room was dark, north-facing. Part of the wallpaper by the French window was torn.

'What'll you have?' he said. He flooded the gloomier end of the room with light as he opened a huge refrigerator. A mausoleum of wine bottles was stacked up to the ceiling.

We went into a dining room.

'It's like this,' he said. 'Look.'



All the time he was drinking he'd been staring at a photo on the table. When he turned it in my direction, I saw a young woman in her thirties.

'She's lovely,' I said.

'Isn't she?' he replied, taking it back and continuing to stare.

She's called Alice, he told me. A researcher in musicology at Bradford. They'd been dating for two years, and for a long time it was perfect. Whatever she wanted, he'd arrange it. They'd seen Darwin's finches in the Galapagos, flown by private jet to the northern lights, sunbathed in the Seychelles...

He tried to pour me more of the Chambertin, but I said no. I'd come for a philosophy session, but he was in no hurry to get round to it. We'd been talking about Alice and their

relationship for a good half hour. Ninety minutes' work was the deal and the train back was at five thirty. Did this chit-chat count towards my fee?

I reminded him why I was there.

A look of resignation crossed his face.

'Right,' he said. 'OK then. Go ahead.'

I asked him what experience of philosophy he'd had. What sort of things would he like to discuss?

As I'd thought, he'd never tangled with the subject. He asked me what I'd suggest.

I reeled out a list of things to see if any hit the spot: is there a God?, the mind-body relationship, personal happiness, liberal democracy...

He put his head in his hands.

'I don't know,' he lamented.

Then it came out.

It was Alice. She'd texted him last week that she wanted to break things off.

He showed me what she said. She loved the fun they've had together. It wasn't enough, though. She'd had dreams of a long-term relationship, but for that she needed more than a playmate. They both liked travelling, sunshine, sex, parties, and that was great. But she had heaps of other things she liked doing, too, and wanted to spend more time on them. Over the time they'd been together, she'd come to see that he, James, had no other interests whatsoever. Not one.

I saw his replies, too. – About how he'd been stuck in the same groove all his life and couldn't change now. He said he couldn't bear it if she left him, asked her for one more chance...

He took the phone back.

'You don't want to see any more of that,' he said. 'It's only more of the same.'

For hundreds of pounds, the man had got me up all the way from Basildon to talk about his love-life. I was confused.

He told me he wanted Alice to see how hard he was trying to meet her wishes. He'd show her, he said, he wasn't the playboy she took him for. If he told her he was into something everyone knew was as difficult as hell, it might get her to change her decision. He'd do anything to win her back.

I got the picture. It was a tough call. Prodding undergraduates who have only one thing on their mind into a glimmering of what the predicate calculus is about is hard enough, but at least they have exams to face and have to get their heads down. But what could I do with James? He was only interested in making an impression on Alice. He could have gone for palaeontology, nuclear physics or anything else that seemed abstruse. For some reason he'd decided on philosophy. God knows why.

Coming up in the train, I knew it was going to be hard going, but at least I'd imagined I could build on something that came from *him*. People don't throw around that kind of money unless they know what they're getting in return. But James left me no clue about how I might help him.

What was I to do? It was a huge challenge, but for that money for an hour-and-a-half session I had to think of something.

Then it came to me.

Love...

That's it! I'd get him going on the idea of love. If anything was to grab him, that must be the best bet.

I decided to start from his own experience. 'Tell me more about Alice,' I said, taking the liberty, with his permission, of pouring us both another glass of wine. 'She sounds a really interesting person – as well as amazing to look at, needless to say. Was it love at first sight in your case? Or was it some time before you realised she was the one?'

I'd made the wrong move. The more I went on, the more defensive he became. 'Why d'you want to know all this?' he growled. 'If you think I'm paying you a fat fee to probe

into my private life, you've got the wrong person.'

I apologised.

He went out to disinter another bottle from the fridge.

While he was gone, I wondered about a more direct approach. A long shot, I knew, but what else could I do?

'Would you like to discuss the concept of love?' I asked.

'What d'you mean?' he said suspiciously.

'The philosophy of love goes back millennia,' I told him. 'The greatest philosopher of all, Plato, wrote a treatise on it in the fourth century BC. He went into deep waters and still today some of the most respected philosophers at places like Oxford and Harvard are poring over what he said and trying to sort out further complexities.'

'Go on,' he said.

My gut feeling was right. This was the sort of stuff he reckoned would weigh with her.

'There are profound issues at the bottom of all this,' I said. 'The best way of getting down to them is beginning with a particular case.'

'OK,' he said.

I made up a story about an old girlfriend of mine and how much she wanted to have a baby by me. 'It came to nothing,' I went on, 'but it set me thinking. Did Rita love me in the same way as the child she might have had?'

'It broke up, you say,' he replied. 'So who made the move, you or her?'

God, this was hard.

'It was a bit of both,' I flannelled. 'But going back to the baby that never was, it struck me later there seem to be different kinds of loves. Loving a child isn't being romantically involved with it, is it? It's not like wanting to have sex with it, for instance.'

He looked into his glass.

'Unless you're a paedophile,' he said.

At least it was an opening. 'That's right!' I said. 'But mums who love their kids aren't paedophiles, are they? They love them in a different way from the way a woman loves a man.'

He was still peering into an empty glass. Minutes later he was also still staring. I kicked myself for going down this dead-end road.

'Let's look at it this way,' I said. It was my last shot. 'Little children are vulner...'

He looked at me very straight, eyes shining. He brought his right palm hard down on the table.

' "Cherishing" is the word, isn't it?,' he said. 'You know, looking after your child, making sure it has everything it needs. That's what 'love' is here, isn't it?'

He got up, walked to the window and looked out over the terrace towards a weed-choked lake. Still looking away, he said

'It's not the same, you're right. It's like, sexual love is something... I was going to say 'something different', but...

'Go on," I said.

'I don't want to make a fool of myself,' he turned round, glowering. 'It's your bread and butter, but for me it's bloody difficult. I was going to say that sexual love is different from loving a child....But it's more complicated than that. I mean, I look after Alice, see she wants for nothing...'

He picked up his glass, walked past me towards the door and called back 'Let's just leave it. It's doing my head in.'

'Don't stop now!' I cried, following him into the kitchen. 'You were saying it's complicated... How, exactly?'

He turned to face me.

'OK,' he said. ' It's like ...that kind of love – caring for someone, looking after them – is the thing that's always there in love... in all types of it... With Alice, though, there's something more – a sort of ... what's the word...superstructure.'

I'd always imagined this assignment would be a drag. Now I had to steel myself not to show my surprise. Unlike most of my students at East Essex, here was someone with a philosophical mind.

'...Or is it?' he continued. 'It's not like icing on the cake, after all. Not like that at all. It's more like the centre of everything but hold on... caring is at the heart of things, too... '

He came back to the table, sat down and looked at me very straight.

'I love Alice,' he said. 'I want her to have everything she could ever wish for. I want her to be happy. But I'd say the same about my mother. You see what I mean,' he said, leaning closer. 'I adore Alice. I want to be with her every moment.'

'Right,' I said. 'That's good. The example of your mother brings out the contrast well. So we've got two concepts of love at play here...'

'You're not with me,' he said. 'She *can't* leave me. If she knew how unhappy she's making me, I'm sure she'd.... Tell me,' he went on, bringing his face close to mine, 'What do you think it's best for me to do? I'll try *anything!*'

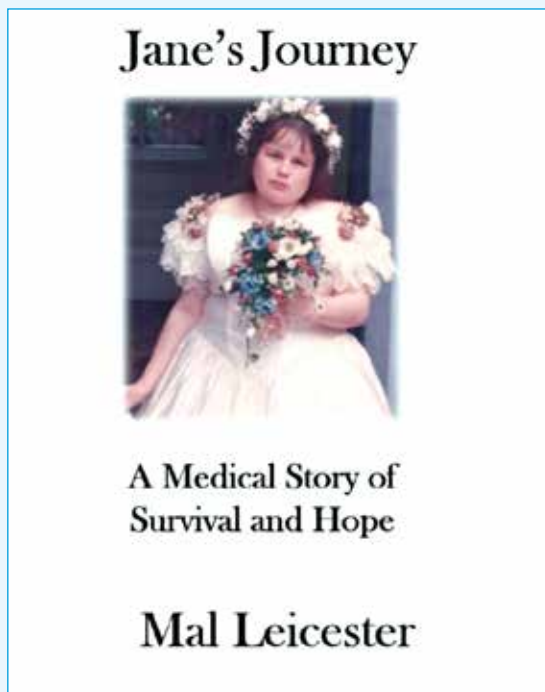
On the train back, I wondered if I'd chosen the right topic. True, we'd got some way with it. But after that setback about Alice, I should have thought twice before steering him away from love between persons and on to love of nature. It seemed sensible at the time. But all it did was bring back memories of their first holiday in British Columbia – that 'magical afternoon', as he called it, by the shore of Lake Louise, when she'd said she wanted to be with him for ever.

Given his ability, I reckon we'd have got further if I'd gone for something else and left love alone – in retrospect, it was asking for trouble. The logical structure of negation might have been better.

When I'm back with him next Friday, I'll see if that does the trick. ■

Jane's Journey: A medical journey of survival and hope

Mal Leicester, University of Nottingham



As a long-standing member of PESGB and a retired academic, I think that my previous students in philosophy of education and old colleagues in the society may be interested in my recent book about my amazing daughter's medically remarkable life and death. She died three years ago but I took the lockdown opportunity to salute her courage and kindness.

Jane's Journey tells how from the time of Jane's infant medulloblastoma to her death 50 years later, despite physical and learning disabilities from the infant tumour, she lived a full and relatively long life against the odds. There is also an appendix about nursing adults with learning difficulties which might be of interest to the many members of the society interested in inclusion and social justice. The back cover carries an endorsement by Dr David Walker, Professor of Paediatric Oncology, Children's Brain Tumour Research Centre.

'Jane's journey lasted over 50 years after her brain tumour diagnosis as an infant where she underwent pioneering treatment with brain surgery and radiotherapy, which had not been done for someone so young before. Writing as a children's brain tumour specialist, Jane's journey is an historical timeline of paediatric oncology. What it really is, however, it's a story of a mother's love to share Jane's journey, beat the odds of her illness with technology and tenacity and shared and shaped her eventful life, letting her grow and explore the world, get married, have her children whilst ensuring she was never alone. Help those who are caring for Jane to understand what it is like for a woman to have a physical and learning disability and a serious health condition.

This story is clearly written, touching and instructive. Jane's medical history was a first which has now been copied many times it is offered as a hopeful story for those who have to pass along the same path.

Jane left her mark on the world, her family will never forget her and for those who are interested, lessons are there to be learned. A mother's love is a powerful force and deserves our respect.'

The book has received glowing reviews and is available from [Amazon](#) (£8.99, ebook £3.99).

Though this is not a philosophy book, that the author is interested in philosophy is discernible. For instance, near the beginning, when sitting for countless hours by my baby daughter's hospital cot, I ponder the problem of evil and at the end recognise the moral dilemma in deciding whether Jane has the right to know her terminal diagnosis or the right to be protected by her mother and her son from knowledge which would frighten her and thus deprive her, in her final few months, of her amazing state of contentment. ■



Remembering

Recollections of Paul Hirst

Paul Hirst was a pivotal figure in philosophy of education and teacher education more generally, and his work has been a major source of influence from the early 1960s to the present day. As a close colleague of Richard Peters, he co-founded PESGB in 1964 and later became its Chair and, from 2012, its President.

In what follows we bring together some recollections of Paul from members of the Society. Further contributions are welcome.

David Bridges

Professor Paul Hirst first came to Cambridge just after the Second World War to read Mathematics at Trinity. In a 'Conversation' piece for the Cambridge Journal of Education (issue 1:3) published on his return in 1971 as Professor of Education and Head of the Department of Education he recalled the University as 'an intensely serious and earnest place.... From a social point of view life was pretty uninteresting, as it was a time of severe restrictions on food, clothing and facilities in general.' ▶ page 51

He attended Russell's immensely popular lectures and lived in the same court as Wittgenstein, but it was Russell who fanned the flames of his interest in philosophy. From Cambridge for seven years he went into 'schoolmastering' (his term), first at William Holme's School in Manchester and then at Eastbourne College, and then to the Oxford Department of Education to lecture on the teaching of Mathematics, though he gradually got drawn into the wider theoretical issues. He found the existing philosophy of education courses rather frustrating because of their heavy historical emphasis, but gathered round him students from the Oxford PPE programme who brought contemporary analytic philosophy to bear on educational topics.

In 1959 Paul Hirst moved, at the invitation of Louis Arnaud Reid, to the London Institute of Education, and soon after that he was joined by Richard Peters, who succeeded Louis Arnaud Reid to the Chair in philosophy of education. The Hirst and Peters partnership, which continued after Hirst moved to a Chair at Kings College London in 1965, became a significant driving force for the development not just of philosophy of education but for wider approaches to educational theory and practice in the period that followed. This was carried through in part because the development of degree level awards for trainee teachers required more academic approaches to educational theory in the colleges and departments of education and hence a new generation of teacher educators equipped to teach these programmes.

Hirst's own contribution to the philosophical literature was provocative and influential in its time. His writing on knowledge and the curriculum, notably his paper on liberal education and the nature of knowledge, first published in 1965 but reissued in several subsequent publications, was a seminal work in philosophy of education, though it also provoked considerable controversy in the philosophy of education community and among proponents of the newly fashionable sociology of knowledge.

Paul Hirst returned to Cambridge in 1971 to become Professor of Education and Head of the University of Cambridge Department of Education. He also accepted a Professorial Fellowship at Wolfson College. In doing so he joined what he described at the time as 'a group of people in the colleges of education and the Institute who are beginning to contribute significantly to work in the philosophy of education' which included Charles Bailey, David Bridges, (at Homerton) and John Elliott, Richard Pring and Hugh Sockett (at the Institute of Education). They were soon joined by Terry McLaughlin at the Department and Peter Scrimshaw at Homerton – and this group enjoyed stimulating and productive seminars together both in Paul Hirst's rooms at Wolfson (oiled by some excellent claret) and in each other's homes. ▶ page 52

Paul Hirst really came into his own as a teacher. His lectures to a large cohort of BEd students (assembled, for some reason, in the Chemistry lecture theatre in Cambridge) were enormously popular, not just because of the intellectual challenge that they provided but because of his sometimes hilarious performative style. No-one who attended can look at an innocent cat sitting on a mat without recalling his vivid demonstrations of the correspondence theory of truth!

So Paul Hirst was a breath of fresh air in the Department of Education and, despite his sometimes austere outward manner, an enormously supportive colleague and teacher – always ready with shrewd advice as a number of us advanced our own careers.

But other responsibilities awaited him in Cambridge (at some cost to his academic productivity) – building bridges between the Department and other parts of the University and working out the future relationship of the University with the Institute of Education and with Homerton College. His predecessor at the Department, Professor Arnold Lloyd, had been no friend to either, but Paul Hirst had the vision to see the strength that might lie in bringing these three institutions close together, as well as enough insight into Cambridge processes to realise that this was not going to happen overnight. He worked closely with the Principal of Homerton, Alison Shrubsole, on a revised version of the BED degree (with a 2 plus 2 structure that brought students more closely into the University) and Homerton's bid for Approved Society Status, which would enable the College to matriculate its own students. His support was pivotal in securing a resounding majority vote of support by the University's Regent House in December 1976, thus setting Cambridge on a course that would lead later, and under his successors, to the establishment of a Faculty of Education that in the end drew its strength from the Department, the Institute and Homerton College and in 2010 to the granting to Homerton of a Royal Charter as a full college of the University of Cambridge.

Happily he lived long enough to see these outcomes of his early strenuous efforts. Sadly he is no longer with us to enjoy the latest Cambridge gossip (which he insisted on hearing when we met each year at Oxford). ▶ page 53



Blessing Chapfika

To say that Professor Paul H. Hirst was, together with Professor Richard S. Peters, a leading figure in Philosophy of Education is an understatement. He was one of the canons and most influential authorities in the discipline worldwide. I first came into contact with his work during my undergraduate studies at the University of Zimbabwe in the late 1990s. By then, the work of Professor Hirst had already influenced the study of education for decades. I vividly remember that the works of Peters and Hirst featured prominently in lectures, tutorials, and on recommended reading lists in Philosophy of Education courses in universities and colleges. When I became a postgraduate student and later junior lecturer, I became aware of the extent of the influence of their work in Africa. Following the analytic method, Peters and Hirst believe that philosophy is concerned with two types of questions: a) questions about the analysis of concepts; and b) questions about grounds of knowledge, belief and activities. They pioneered and popularised the philosophic analysis, particularly conceptual analysis, in the study of education. The analytic trajectory of Paul Hirst, together with Richard Peters, will continue to shape the education debates internationally for many years to come. He indeed left an enduring legacy in the study of philosophy and education. ▶ page 54



Don Cochrane

The death of someone you have respected and admired always sharpens the memory. Two anecdotes involving Paul came immediately to mind. The first is drawn from one of the Wednesday night sessions in the Academic Diploma program in 1965 at London Institute of Education. In front of a group of thirty or forty students and faculty, Jim Gribble challenged Paul about the application of truth conditions to 'aesthetic objects'—paintings, poems, sonatas, and the like. Jim's position was that such works were immune from any general truth tests, but he also claimed that such objects produce knowledge of some kind. Paul argued that some general standard of appraisal (roughly a *sui generis* distinctive 'truth condition') was needed for a work to be seen as 'saying something about the world.' The discussion was as vigorous as it was inconclusive. As a recent arrival from Canada, I remember thinking that philosophers in London were very serious about what they were doing!

An Academic Diploma lecture is the source of my second anecdote. In those early days, we were much preoccupied with establishing the conditions of teaching and its relationship to learning. Paul wanted to demonstrate that intentionality was a necessary element in explicating any action, and so, 'teaching'. He raised his arm straight above his head and waved his fingers ... and then asked us what he was doing. We had to assume that he was 'doing' something and that this gesture was not just some involuntary muscular twitch ('a piece of behaviour'). ▶ page 55

Of course, several explanations were proffered. He might have been waving to someone at the back of the classroom. He might have been simply stretching. Or he might have been trying to make a philosophical point! Or... That 'demonstration' has stayed with me for more than fifty years and has been useful in a variety of contexts!

In addition to being an incisive thinker, Paul was an energetic teacher, supportive mentor, and caring human being. He was a model for all of us. I hope that in my own professional life I have been able to keep alive his gifts to us.

J. Mark Halstead

I first met Paul Hirst in 1984 when I went to Cambridge to study for the newly established MPhil course in Curriculum Design and Organisation. By this stage he had already been professor of education and head of the Department of Education there for 13 years, but he was as bright and fresh and passionately enthusiastic about his subject as ever. Always generous with his time, he was heavily involved in the teaching of the course, and for me, it was a great privilege to be taught by the originator of the forms of knowledge thesis which had formed the backbone of my earlier BEd. It was also a bit intimidating. His immaculate sense of dress, his accent and his masterful intellect were far removed from the realities of the inner-city comprehensive school in the heart of Bradford's red-light district where I had taught for the previous twelve years.

Paul's central concern was to teach his students to think clearly and argue effectively. The penetrating questions he asked served to get to the heart of an argument, to identify and correct any weaknesses and inconsistencies and to highlight examples of confused or ambiguous thinking. His powers of memory and concentration enabled him to provide an accurate and detailed summary of the main discussions and arguments at the end of a session. His teaching was a model of clarity, good judgment and meticulous attention to detail – qualities which also served him well in the increasing amount of administration and committee work he was required to do as Head of Department. I remember him saying – more as a simple fact than as a complaint – that he served on 43 committees at Cambridge. As a lecturer, he was, like his father, 'an accomplished and highly regarded speaker' (Hirst, 1960, p.160), and perhaps this suggests that he owed more to his father than he was inclined to admit. ▶ page 56

Paul enjoyed company, but at the same time was a very private man who did not like to talk overmuch about his own family life, religious upbringing or sexuality, at least until he was quite old. Perhaps his self-perceived isolation both in and out of school and failure to feel love and affection within his own family left him anxious to avoid any appearance of vulnerability. In fact, his secondary school, Huddersfield College, whose best known pupil was the prime minister H. H. Asquith, had been established as a bastion of openness, religious tolerance and academic excellence, intended to provide 'a sound and liberal education for the rising generation'. Quite apart from the 'brilliant' teacher of mathematics who took him under his wing, the school seems to have provided fertile ground for an interest in analytical philosophy and liberal education to germinate. His home life, though narrow in outlook in comparison to his school, seems to me very typical of life in a fundamentalist, non-conformist family at that time (and I speak as one whose mother and father, like Paul's, were brought up as Christadelphians and considered themselves as 'in the world but not of it'). Indeed, Paul's family seemed more open than many.

When I sought Paul's advice about a topic for my PhD, he pointed me in the direction of the education of Muslims in the UK, which he said was the biggest issue facing British education today. He was very aware, for example, of the demographic changes in the Birkby district of Huddersfield, where he grew up and which he continued to celebrate (to many people's bewilderment) in his email address. There are now four mosques in Birkby and several supplementary Islamic schools, and in Birkby Junior School (which I attended) some 80 per cent of the pupils are now from Muslim backgrounds. Paul became very involved in academic and institutional responses to the country's growing religious and ethnic diversity, writing the first drafts of several chapters in the Swann Report, and co-sponsoring events and conferences with the Islamic Academy in Cambridge in an attempt to improve cross-cultural understanding. He understood much about fundamentalist faith from his own upbringing as a member of the local Glanton (Plymouth Brethren) meeting, but when (as he put it) 'philosophy got me out of all religious affiliations in my 30s', he rejected what he now called primitive faith-based indoctrination in favour of the more sophisticated educational pursuit of rational autonomy and rationally justified knowledge. More than anything else, his life was devoted to elucidating the centrality of the development of reason and knowledge and of justifiable personal, social and institutional values in all worthwhile education. ▶ page 57

Kevin Harris

One unfortunate ramification of ‘the tyranny of distance’ has been that, while many Philosophers of Education from Australasia have frequently made the long journey to Britain, very rarely has one of our British colleagues undertaken the respective voyage south. Thankfully, Paul Hirst was one who did; and on every visit we very much enjoyed, even treasured, having him with us.

Paul always brought with him, along with his philosophical acumen, his delicate wit, his delightful humour and his enduring charm; and on one occasion just a little bit extra, having inadvertently partaken of tap-water during his flight transfer in Bangkok. Paul’s qualities are well known to those reading this Journal, so I will merely focus on three personal incidents which may be unknown to most but which are particularly characteristic of the man as well as being most pertinent to me.

I first met Paul at PESA’s Annual Conference in Auckland in 1976 when he attended my paper ‘Peters on Schooling’ – a savage attack on the work of Richard Peters and, *inter alia*, Paul himself. At the conclusion of the paper he drew me aside and said ‘Kevin; you must get that paper published, no matter what obstructions and rejections they put in your way’. He was certainly right with regard to the obstructions and rejections, so much so that he put immense pressure on Les Brown (then Editor of *EPAT*) who finally relented and put a bowdlerized version into print, and in doing so set my academic career into train.

At a later meeting with Paul at my University in Sydney I cheekily invited him to take one of my two-hour post-graduate classes, and he happily accepted even knowing that the subject was not philosophy and that the students were novice philosophers at best. It was one of the great pleasures in my academic life to watch Paul carefully twist the seminar into a discussion of knowledge and education, and while showing the greatest respect to the fumbling of the students, gently transform it into a serious philosophical examination and discussion, the likes of which the students had not previously experienced. At the end of that class one student asked me if we could keep him: I had to answer that it was sadly not possible. But at least I had witnessed what a great teacher he was.

And finally; I made eight visits to the UK for academic purposes from 1976–1999. I don’t remember Paul ever attending a paper I gave but I do remember that, on each visit, no matter where in the UK, he sought me out and the result was always dinner together, mostly at his College and always at his expense. They were delightful evenings, and made the distance getting to them far less tyrannical. ▶ page 58

Seán Kelly

I cannot leave this opportunity pass without placing on the record the deep influence which Paul Hirst has had on my educational thinking over a period of more than four decades. I first encountered Paul's thought through his article on 'Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge' published in the Archambault collection on 'Philosophical Analysis and Education'. I found this such a powerful, innovative and cogent rationale for the notion of liberal education that subsequently I began to read anything written by him that I could lay my hands on. This led eventually to undertaking a Master's degree in Education in University College, Cork. The thesis which formed the central part of the degree was entitled 'The Theory of Education and its Relation to Practice' and there are, of course, no prizes for guessing where the inspiration for this came from.

It was many years later before I met Paul Hirst in person. It was so delightful to discover that not only was this man a colossus in the field of Philosophy of Education but as a human being he was also unassuming, extremely personable and possessed of a wry and endearing sense of humour. In short he was a thorough gentleman. We enjoyed a few very pleasant chats at the annual conference over a number of years which, for me was one of its highlights, eagerly looked forward to on each occasion, until eventually he ceased attending a few years ago. I will remember him as the greatest of the great, made even more so by his honesty and willingness to change his mind when this was required by developing insights. Above all, he was always prepared to follow the logic of the argument to the end, wherever this might lead.

Roger Marples

In the autumn of 1967 I registered on the Diploma in Education course at the Institute of Education, part of which consisted of weekly sessions in which three speakers, from the disciplines of Psychology, Sociology and Philosophy, would address a specific topic. The first session was on 'Knowledge and Education', and the symposiasts on that occasion were Doris Lee (Psychology), Basil Bernstein (Sociology) and Paul Hirst (Philosophy). I shall never forget the expression of incredulity on Paul's face as he listened (impatiently) to Bernstein on the 'sociology of knowledge'. Once on his feet he sprang into action like a tiger and attempted to denounce the very idea. ▶ page 59

He said that ‘if you eat certain plants, either in London or the Solomon Islands, you will bloody well die because they are poisonous; objective fact!’ That, combined with Bernstein’s bemused and confusing response, was pure theatre, and a thoroughly enjoyable initiation into what became a truly marvellous philosophical education.

On the philosophy of education part of the course, to which Paul made a significant contribution, his dynamism, infectious enthusiasm, kindness and patience which he brought to each and every session was equally memorable, and in consequence of which I was inspired to enrol for a degree in philosophy at Birkbeck College. When I applied for a job in Higher Education, Paul was one of my academic referees for which I owe him a particular debt of gratitude.

Paul’s attendance at the Institute’s Wednesday seminars and the annual conference of the PESGB, provided an opportunity to get to know him, and I remember being deeply moved by his account of his upbringing within the strict and narrow confines of a Brethren family in Yorkshire. It never failed to astonish me that someone raised in such an environment, should turn out to be so full of fun, warmth, good-humour – on hearing a good joke he would crease up and almost explode with laughter – and generosity of spirit; although well into his 80s, he would regularly travel from his home in Brighton to attend to the needs of an ailing friend in Essex.

Along with all who had the privilege of knowing him, I miss him very much. The world is a worse place without him.

Richard Pring

I heard the lectures given by Paul in the mid-1960s when attending the philosophy of education lectures then given to PGCE students at the Institute of Education. Having studied philosophy under A.J. Ayer and Bernard Williams at UCL and having then abandoned the Ministry of Education to take up a teaching career, I was intrigued to see how the tradition of analytic philosophy could contribute to our understanding of educational theory and practice. At that time, the Institute was roughly divided into two: post-graduate teacher training courses, on the one hand, and, on the other, the ‘foundation disciplines’ for higher degree studies, namely, philosophy, psychology, sociology, and history of education – all of which were understood to be helpful for future teachers. ▶ page 60

In his book, *Philosophical Analysis and Education*, published in 1965 (and bought by me at the end of my PGCE course that same year), Reginal Archambault argued that, stimulated by such work as that by Israel Scheffler in the USA, the relevance of analytic philosophy to policy and practical understanding (especially education) should become a central feature of philosophy. And, in many respects, that revolution in Britain was pioneered by the team, under Richard Peters, at the London Institute of Education, prominent amongst whom were Paul Hirst, Patricia and John White, Ray Elliott, and Louis Arnaud Reid. Richard Peters' edited collection of papers in 'The Philosophy of Education' (1973), which included Hirst's 'Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge', and Paul Hirst's collection of his own papers in *Knowledge and Curriculum* (1974) became key texts in influencing educational theory in subsequent decades – and indeed still ought to remain so.

Paul Hirst's particular contributions, namely, 'Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge' and 'Realms of Meaning and Forms of Knowledge', deservedly almost reached the status of biblical texts, and still remain the touch stone for practice and policy in teacher training and in school curriculum policy and practice.

The influence of Paul Hirst lay not simply in the content of his writing but also in the clarity and force of his speaking and writing. Reference remains in deliberations over schools' curriculum, particularly in relation to the place of religious education, and to his powerful advocacy of the different 'forms of knowledge'.

Such clarity and influence were annually displayed in the meetings of the Philosophy of Education Society, always held in the small, cosy and intimate environment of the Beatrice Webb House in Surrey.

Harvey Siegel

I first met Paul when he commented on a presentation of mine at Oxford. It would be an understatement to say that his presence was intimidating, even though he was unfailingly friendly and supportive. In subsequent interactions I grew to enjoy his company enormously. He was full of great stories, often about PESGB eminences, and was very funny; he had a wicked sense of humor and was quite happy to wield it. It goes without saying that his contributions to philosophy of education were enormous. He'll be missed at PESGB conferences, not least by me. ▶ page 61

Hugh Sockett

I first met Paul Hirst in Oxford in 1957 when he was at the Oxford Department of Education and I was an undergraduate at Christ Church. That year we both had digs at Manchester College, then reserved for training Unitarian divines, but he was a member of the College 'high table.'

'Good Lord, what are you doing here?' he asked when we bumped into each other at the Senate House in London in September 1962 where I was taking the PGCE after 3 years teaching. He remembered me no doubt as a somewhat obnoxious undergraduate resident at Manchester College, but thereafter we were friends, especially through my time at Kings from PGCE to Ph.D., when I was Secretary of the Society and later in Cambridge. He nominated me for a Chair in Ulster, though he later expressed serious misgivings.

He was the most self-deprecating of men with an instantly recognizable guffaw of mirth at any piece of individual idiosyncrasy or academic bric-a-brac, but he was deadly serious about education and his contribution to its welfare. Although his voice seemed Queen's English, his Yorkshire roots were recognizable when he delivered a public address with great enthusiasm. He was a man of great wisdom, but a very private man.

He was a guest at my home when he came to the American Philosophy of Education Society to deliver a keynote address. On that visit I invited him to a large meeting of academics and businesspeople where a leading scientist articulated what was recognizable as forms of knowledge which made him smile broadly. One of his delights in coming to America, he said, was to listen in bed to religious radio channels where 'agony aunts' gave prescriptions to those in all manner of domestic and other distress which, by and large, he said were homely but morally sensible.

Paul Standish

I think my first encounter with Paul Hirst was at a lecture he gave to a packed conference room as part of the series provided by London University for students in the various London colleges of education. This would, I think, have been 1972. It wasn't until some time in the early 90s that I came to know him personally, in brief conversations at conferences. He was an excellent speaker, and I remember his witty and heartening after-dinner address at the celebration of the Society's 25th year, held at Froebel College. ▶ page 62

When I presented a paper at the Institute of Education in 1992, on 'Postmodernism and the Idea of the Whole Person', he raised a question about my interpretation of his work, and this led to an interesting and encouraging exchange. In the years that followed our conversations were not frequent, but he was responsive to what I said and incisive in his criticisms, and I usually came away with a clearer sense of what he was about. I admired the way that he retracted aspects of his earlier position, especially as he did this without replacing it with a rival, equally confident later position. This reflected his utterly genuine commitment to enquiry, rather than to the kind of position-seeking that mars so many academic careers. That commitment was of a piece with his continuing desire for clarity and truth. Although there was a certain shyness to his character, he was always cordial and indeed friendly, and, as others have said, there was also about him an endearing, wry, and mildly mischievous sense of humour. All this is missed.

Patricia White

I was privileged to have Paul as an academic colleague when I joined the Institute of Education staff in 1965. He was then at King's College but much of the teaching in educational studies was shared. This is how I first experienced Paul's incredible kindness and generosity at first-hand. I had taught in school for six years but as far as University teaching went, I was a complete novice. When I was asked to be part of the programme of PGCE lectures in the Beveridge Hall of Senate House this was a teaching assignment beyond anything in my previous experience. I didn't want to be a pale copy of my male colleagues or a kind of feminised version of them. I just wanted to give students philosophical perspectives on 'social control in the classroom', my assigned topic, in a way that might stop them reaching for the jobs section of the *Times Educational Supplement* – the lectures were on Friday mornings its day of publication – after the first sentence or so. Paul immediately latched on to the problem – the lack of female academic role models in the 1960s – and came up with a practical answer. He was timetabled to deliver his lecture to the PGCE students at King's later in the morning, so he would come up to Senate House from his home in Lambeth, listen to my lecture, rush down Southampton Way to King's and then send me later, by post, a frank critique. This he did three or four times. Once, he gleefully reported that he couldn't see anyone reading the *TES*. ▶ page 63

My little story of academic mentoring, before we even used the term, will not seem at all surprising to anyone who knew Paul. It will instantly bring to mind many, many examples of his kindness, generosity, his instant grasp of a problem without the need for tedious detailing of all its aspects, and then his immediate leap to do something practical about it. All done with not a hint of a patronising air but rather with the enjoyment of a shared enterprise – in this case, his passion, the practical business of teaching – and usually finding at least a sliver of fun in it.

Christopher Winch

I did not know Paul personally all that well, although he and I were frequently at the same meetings. I did however have the privilege of writing an entry for Paul in the [Biological Dictionary of Twentieth Century Philosophers](#).

This led in 2005 to a long interview with Paul at King's College London in which we discussed his early interest in the Philosophy of Education and the evolution of his ideas over the years. As was his wont, he told this fascinating and important story with great clarity and conveyed a good sense of his own intellectual excitement. Paul's work on the epistemology of the curriculum has long been an inspiration to me and it is to be hoped that it will continue to be to others in the decades to come.

Paul was an incisive and sometimes acerbic debater who gave the Society's meetings a sharper edge than was customary, but they were none the worse for that. His interventions were always without rancour and directed at getting clear about philosophical and educational issues. ■



Remembering

Recollections of Ieuan Lloyd

There follow a series of recollections of Ieuan Lloyd. Ieuan died peacefully in his sleep in the early hours of Tuesday 25 February, 2021, after a battle with illness over a number of years. He was a long-standing member of the Society and, during the 1980s, was Vice-Chair for a period of three years. He ran the West Midlands Branch for many years, and in 1981 he established the Gregynog Philosophy of Education Conference. Over more than five decades, his contribution to the Society and to philosophy of education was powerful and distinctive. He is greatly missed.

Ieuan trained and worked for a time as a primary school teacher and then did a degree in Philosophy at Swansea University. He went on to hold a senior position at Stockwell College of Education in London and, in the 1970s, moved to Birmingham University, where he worked initially with Robert Dearden. In the last years of his career he returned to Swansea to teach in the Philosophy Department.

On 18 March 2021 a memorial service was held at Worcester Baptist Church, and the first three of the recollections that follow are taken from that occasion. ▶ page 65

Marius Felderhof

leuan's philosophical interests ranged far and wide. Apart from education, he took an active interest in religious life. He thought deeply about its sense, and this led to his conversations with diverse philosophers of religion. leuan regularly attended, and contributed to, *Open End*, a group consisting of academic theologians and philosophers in and around Birmingham. It was founded by Profs John Hick and Michael Goulder, both of whom had international reputations.

It would be an understatement to say that Hick and Goulder held positions to which leuan was not naturally sympathetic, philosophically or religiously speaking. But that did not intimidate him or prevent him from attending *Open End* and challenging the "authorities". Unlike his Socratic forebear, who was made to commit suicide by drinking hemlock for his discomfiting interrogations, leuan's creative, sharp questioning was always welcome partly because of his uniquely disarming *humour*. Despite their philosophical differences, Hick and Goulder respected leuan's philosophical acumen and regarded him as a valued intellectual colleague

In leuan's eyes, their approach in the philosophy of religion tended to treat God, somewhat blasphemously, as an aspiring undergraduate whose work had to be marked or examined by them. Given the human experience of evil, Goulder found God's providence wanting and failed Him; as a result, Goulder himself gave up his priesthood in the Anglican Church. Hick, on the other hand, was prepared to give God a moderate pass mark, provided He made up for His current failings in the future and at the end of time. But leuan's position, within the circle of faith, considered it worth asking whether we sit in judgment of God, or whether God sits in judgment of us (Job 1: 20–22).

Hick treated Christianity as a tradition that needed to be corrected and complemented by the teachings and practices of other religions. leuan once asked him whether Jesus, Peter, Paul and the saints, like St Francis of Assisi, were spiritually lacking, or failing in some way, by knowing only one tradition? It was a question to which there was no sensible reply. When others talked casually of human flourishing as the goal of human life, leuan would point out that it depends on what one means by "flourishing". "Were the Christian martyrs burning at the stake, or being thrown to the lions, 'flourishing'?" "Did they fail in the goal of life?", he asked. ▶ page 66



leuan combined his interest in the philosophy of education and philosophy of religion in the practicalities of religious education. He was a colleague of Prof John Hull in the School of Education at the University of Birmingham. Hull had become one of the “gurus” of religious education in Britain, but leuan openly challenged much of John’s thinking and pronouncements whilst sharing the supervision of doctoral students in the field. leuan relied on constructive debate between supervisors as the best way of helping students form an independent line of thought.

In contrast to his critique of Hull, leuan had a good deal of sympathy for the City of Birmingham’s approach to RE, devised some fifteen years ago, that transformed religious education from a form of secularised religious studies into the development of spirituality and character. He supported and worked closely with a group of academics and teachers in devising the related theory and lesson plans that, inter alia, nurtured attitudes of gratitude and compassion, using religious resources. He defended the position that religious education might take different forms, including a more confessional approach, of which so many RE specialists, following Hull, disapproved. He acknowledged that reason alone could not be a sufficient foundation for any subject, let alone for religious education. It was better to know and explore the basic starting points as a “faith seeking understanding” (St Anselm) than to pretend to an “objective neutrality”. ▶ page 67

On a personal level, leuan could be hugely encouraging, helping others to tease out their thinking, and to identify what was important. Many of his friends and colleagues owe him a massive debt of gratitude as a result, for without his friendship and the intellectual stimulus and support he provided, they would not have achieved as much in their own careers. Popularly in universities today, there is much talk of the necessity of “impact”. Without doubt, one can say of leuan that he made “impact”.

Paul Standish

I came to know leuan in the late 1970s, when I enrolled on the MA in Philosophy of Education at Birmingham University. leuan had moved to Birmingham from Stockwell College of Education not long before, and he spent most of two decades there, mostly happy ones I believe. For the first part of this period he worked alongside Robert Dearden: their rather different temperaments and commitments made for an interesting variety in the course we did, and the happily imperfect fit in their approaches helped me to think in new ways. Both were deeply invested in what they were doing, and serious about it in the best sense.

It was in the course of the MA that I met Mike Smith—now, since late 2018, sadly missed—and recollections of him are bound up with memories of leuan at that time, especially as we both went on to do PhDs with him. Mike and I both had serious periods of doubt about whether, alongside our day-jobs (and whether, *even without* our day-jobs!), we had the ability to do this. I wouldn't say that I would *not* have completed without leuan's help, but his encouragement and practical sense of the difficulties were of enormous help. What I *would* emphasize is the way that he restored my sense that it was possible to say what you really thought and that, in fact, this might be what you were supposed to do!

leuan was averse to the parroting of received ideas and inclined quickly to dismiss anything pretentious or merely modish, and these factors were readily evident in his lively, sometimes forthright approach to discussion. You could rely on him to be provocative and insightful, and what he said was rarely predictable. What could be anticipated, though, was the humour in his voice and the twinkle in his eye as he sniped at complacent assumptions or easy arguments. And he knew the need in philosophy for a varied diet of examples. ▶ page 68

I vividly recall an occasion in 1985 when he was giving a formal response to a paper at the Annual Conference of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain. The paper was a respectable enough defence of the idea of a liberal education. This is roughly the idea that education should involve an initiation into *worthwhile pursuits* – that is, those forms of knowledge (ways of enquiring into and understanding the world) that are part of our shared human heritage. Without a liberal education, you remain confined to the valley you have been brought up in. Now leuan was fundamentally sympathetic to much of this, but around this time the fine-tuning of liberal education had become philosophy of education's stock-in-trade. leuan's response was refreshing, in substance and style. Sometimes, he said, he wondered what it would be like to live in a world where everyone had been successfully given a liberal education. He imagined that it would be like a cross between a university library and the Edinburgh Festival.

I realize that university libraries are not quite what they used to be, and it's probably the case that the Festival is associated as much now with its fringe as with its highbrow elements. But I take it that his remark expressed a suspicion of Edinburgh refinement as much as of (let's say) English gentility. leuan mused about the lives of the fishing community down in Leith, just a short distance from Edinburgh's Royal Mile: he evoked a picture of a life there of continuity through generations, of shared knowledge and cultural inheritance, and of practical involvement in ways that might well escape the more bookish products of a liberal education. Were such lives to be disparaged because they were confined to that particular valley, that estuary? The ideal of autonomy seemed to require this. But this could end up in the life-sapping gentility that leuan gently satirized.

There was a poignancy to this that stayed with me, and that I later recalled when, one day, he spoke about the gas-fitter who had been doing some work at his home—someone with obvious satisfaction in his practical know-how and pride in doing things well. The surprising nature of his criticism seemed of a piece with a number of other surprises. Emails from rarebooks@worchester showed that he loved books, yet he wasn't bookish: he read philosophy, yet he wrote about professional wrestling; he read theology, yet he liked to ride (or drive or tinker with) "things with wheels", as he put it. And it seemed to connect also with the discipline in the habit he adopted in later years of going for a bike-ride each morning and stopping at a café, where he would have a cup of tea and read an article from *Philosophy*. ▶ page 69

In the 1980s leuan served as the Vice-Chair of the PESGB, but his contribution to the field was sustained through six decades. Even in the last few months of his life he was writing responses to papers, responses that were much cherished by the recipients. leuan's *Philosophy and the Teacher* (1976) stands out not only for its accessibility and clarity, but for the way it invites the reader to a distinctive kind of thoughtfulness, and this is a quality that extends also through his later writings. It is a pity that he didn't write more. But in the last two years of his life he did produce a paper reflecting on a series of conversations he had in the 1970s with Rush Rhees, Wittgenstein's student and friend, and leuan's former doctoral supervisor. That paper is now published, with the title "Rush Rhees on Education", is now published in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 54.3 (June 2020).

He was modest about his abilities, but this term does not capture a related though significantly different and more important virtue. He was in his life and work under the sway of something larger and this, however one characterizes it in religious terms, was manifested in the care and attention he gave to things, finding the extraordinary in what we ordinarily say and do. This was a kind of humility.

Mario von der Ruhr

leuan believed that, if we are to have a genuine conversation, we have to be honest and truthful, mean what we say and, equally importantly, not pretend to understand when we do not. Indeed, he thought the latter far worse than ignorance and, for this reason, he always made sure that his listeners *had* understood him. This was also, for him, a way of *caring* for his fellow human beings. leuan did this by paying close attention to the other's demeanour and facial expressions, which he could read like open books. "You don't really know what I'm talking about, do you?", he would ask whenever he suspected that my nods concealed embarrassment at not following the argument, rather than a proper grasp of what he had just said. But, with him, such exposures were never gruff or rude, which they would've been if he had simply called me thick or stupid, for example. On the contrary, they were gentle—and highly effective—reminders of the need to remain truthful in our dealings with others, just as leuan himself was faithful to St Paul's exhortation that "a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition." (2 Tim: 23–25) ▶ page 70

Even so, he appreciated that there were circumstances in which a more brazen response to incomprehension might be more appropriate. For example, in the Introduction to his last (2017) publication project – *Art, Morality and Human Nature: Writings by Richard W. Beardsmore*, coedited with John Haldane and intended to make his former colleague's work more widely accessible – he recalls how ...

in discussion with peers, [Dick] could be a formidable opponent, especially when he met with anything stupid or pompous. On one occasion, he pointed out to a postmodernist that he had contradicted himself in his paper. The speaker's defence was that there was nothing wrong with that. Dick's response was, 'In that case, sod off!'. Others might have launched into the nature of contradictions with much less effect.

It is difficult to imagine leuan being as blunt as Dick, even in this kind of context, but I don't think he would have delved into the nature of contradictions, either. One wouldn't have done the speaker any favours by telling him merely that an aspect of his paper was, perhaps, "conceptually unhappy". For that wouldn't have been the truth, nor would it have called the speaker to the kind of seriousness demanded in a genuine debate. Moreover, what leuan goes on to say about Dick Beardsmore's approach to teaching more generally also applied to his own:

Not surprisingly, his courses in philosophy were always popular. As a teacher, he was never condescending, however slow or sceptical the responses to his questions. With the inexperienced, he would be gentle and patient. His teaching was always rich with examples taken from all walks of life, choosing them from the backgrounds of his listeners.

leuan's lectures and philosophical conversations, too, were "rich with examples taken from all walks of life", not only because he sensed that much of contemporary philosophy had become too technical and too abstract to address the ordinary person's puzzles about life, but because he wanted his students to cultivate the same close attention to what we actually say and do (in this or that particular context) that he had learnt from Rush Rhees. It was the latter who, as leuan was fond of recalling, once wrote "E.G." in giant letters on a blackboard, and urged everyone in class never to forget them. ▶ page 71

At philosophy conferences, too, leuan's ability to put overblown theories to the test by means of carefully chosen examples could easily unsettle or bewilder their proponents, frequently leaving them with nothing to say except, "Ah. Hmm. I hadn't thought of that." The fact that leuan *had* thought of the point in question also showed that he was able to see aspects—of a philosophical position, an argument, an incident, or a story—that would easily have eluded others, including myself. To those who knew leuan, it won't come as a surprise to hear that one of these aspects was humour.

One day, as we were having coffee in the *Taliesin Arts Centre* on campus, I told him that, on my way to Gregynog recently, I had stopped at a run-down service station which had a large sign saying, *Delicious Meals Specially Prepared for You*. While I was lamenting the fact that the food was anything but "delicious", leuan briefly reflected on the phrase "*specially prepared for you*" and remarked: "Do you know what you should have said to the people at the restaurant? You should have asked, 'How did you know I was coming?'" His remark had us both in stitches. Stories like this remind me just how important humour was in leuan's life. In fact, he wrote a (fine) paper on the subject, entitled "What's in a Laugh? Humour and its educational significance", which was published in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* in 1985. In it, he observes:

The laughter that occurs in everyday life is a response to what makes us angry, frustrates us, dismays us, disillusions us, and causes us pain. This laughter is, as Wittgenstein says, 'not a mood but a way of looking at the world'.

How right he was. And what difference leuan's sense of humour has made to the lives of those he touched! One only needs to imagine its absence to see why, in the paper I just mentioned, he goes on to say:

A character reference which ends with a final sentence, 'unfortunately Jones lacks a sense of humour', has the effect of casting a shadow over all the qualities and abilities to which the referee has referred. ... The person's deficiency is pervasive, revealing itself in all aspects of his life. In that respect a lack of humour is similar to a lack of warmth. ▶ page 72

leuan clearly had both: the humour *and* the warmth. And he never lost either, even when he was seriously ill. (Margaret Lloyd can testify to his humorous outbursts while he was on the telephone to me in Germany.) One of my former philosophy teachers once said that it was important to try and make a *unity* of one's life, the kind in which thought and action were *one*. leuan's life was such a whole, whether one thinks of him as a philosopher, a teacher, or a friend. And while he was too modest—and far too mindful of *Ecclesiastes* 1:2–11—to think much of his own accomplishments, it is gratifying to know that such notable figures as Rush Rhees and D. Z. Phillips acknowledged leuan's work, as did the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, to whom he recently sent a copy of his last book—a collection of papers by his former colleague Dick Beardsmore, coedited with John Haldane—and who was delighted to receive it.

In his essay on *Friendship*, the American writer Ralph Waldo Emerson notes that “friendship, like the immortality of the soul, is too good to be believed”. My friendship with leuan was, indeed, too good to be true, and yet it was as real as his belief that, one day, we shall all be reunited in Christ's Kingdom. As my thoughts and prayers go out to his family—especially Margaret, Huw and Jill – I hope that *his* trust in the Lord's promise will make their grief at having lost this wonderful husband and father more bearable than it would otherwise be.

Ursula Blythe

I originally met Leuan in 2016 at my first PESGB event at Gregynog Hall in central Wales. He had an immediate impact on me, as he was warm, hospitable, and showed great interest in my late journey into academia. I distinctly remember his rich account of the Gregynog Estate, its association with the University of Wales, and the legacy of the Davies sisters (Gwendoline and Margaret). The estate was trusted to the University of Wales by the Davies sisters in 1960, which helped facilitate off campus philosophy discussions, reading groups, and PESGB conferences.

▶ page 73

leuan welcomed the opportunity to elaborate further on the history of Gregynog with its Montgomery-style architecture, Grade One listed gardens, and the luscious Welsh countryside. He very kindly escorted me to the gift shop, telling me all about the Davies sisters advocacy for art and cultural projects, and the significance of the Gregynog Gutenberg Print Press. I was so taken by the history and impact of these visionary pursuits; I decided to purchase a book for my late mum entitled: *Things of Beauty: What Two Sisters Did for Wales*. Needless to say, my mum found it most compelling, especially the extraordinary images of Welsh arts and crafts.

leuan often reminisced about his connection to Gregynog, the University of Wales, and the expansion of the Philosophy of Education beyond GB. It soon became apparent that he was a respected educationalist, an authority on Wittgenstein, and was originally trained in the analytical tradition. In fact, leuan was a student of the American philosopher Rush Rhees who greatly influenced Wittgenstein's legacy at Swansea University. Wittgenstein often visited his student Rush Rhees who later co-edited his posthumous *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) with G.E.M. Anscombe, which is still considered a masterpiece today. leuan was extremely proud of Wittgenstein's connection to Wales and his continued relevance within the Welsh philosophical scene.

In the subsequent years that I attended Gregynog Hall, I would look forward to meeting the lovely leuan, particularly as he and some other longstanding PESGB members enjoyed discussing the merits of analytical and continental philosophy. On my last visit to Gregynog in July 2019, leuan mentioned that his analytical training gave him a solid foundation for his later engagement in the philosophy of education. On reflection, he was intellectually astute and actively engaged in his surroundings, whilst remaining interested in new perspectives regarding pedagogical theory and praxis. For me, leuan Lloyd was a sage within the PESGB, but more importantly he was a wonderful person who will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

▶ page 74

Alexis Gibbs

I knew leuan as a fixture at the annual gatherings at Gregynog, which he dignified with his mixture of kindness and perspicacious criticism. I was fortunate enough to benefit from this wisdom even from his hospital bed, when he emailed to let me know he'd taken an interest in a paper I delivered at the UCL Institute of Education, but cautioned me to be mindful of the difference between "THE concept of education rather than A concept of education". I owe the subsequent publication of that paper to his assiduousness and generosity, and can think of few better examples of commitment to the cause than that set by leuan.

Michael Hand

In 2002, at the invitation of Terry McLaughlin, I presented a version of what was to become my first published article at a small PESGB conference at St Edmund's College, Cambridge. The respondent to my paper, whom I had not previously met, was leuan Lloyd. leuan was entirely unpersuaded by the argument I made on that occasion – and, I think it is fair to say, by every argument he heard me make over the next two decades. But, while I was left in no doubt about his disagreement, what I remember most about his response that day was its grace, generosity and humour. leuan set for me a standard of civility and collegiality in philosophical debate that I have aspired to meet ever since.

It was, however, not until 2012, when I moved to the University of Birmingham and began hosting monthly meetings of the PESGB Birmingham branch, that I got to know leuan well. Although long retired by that point, leuan was perhaps the most dedicated member of the branch, attending almost every meeting until his health began to fail him. He was usually the first to ask a question, and his questions followed a comfortably familiar format: he would remind the speaker of relevant work by Wittgenstein and at least one member of the Swansea School, then give concrete examples from everyday life designed to show that the speaker's supposedly comprehensive analysis was, in fact, partial, restrictive and misleading. Speakers were sometimes intrigued, sometimes provoked, sometimes nonplussed by these questions – but never offended: leuan's genuine interest and sincere desire to help were too much in evidence for that. For these questions, for his support and friendship, and for his readiness to regale us with stories of philosophers behaving badly in the bar after each meeting, leuan will be fondly remembered and sadly missed by Birmingham branch members. ▶ page 75

Suzy Harris

The first time I attended a Welsh Philosophical Society meeting, at Gregynog in 2014, was also the occasion when I was introduced to leuan. I was a little nervous as I didn't know many of those present, but leuan was very welcoming and proved a fount of knowledge about the WPS. He was extremely charming and good fun—especially over lunch or dinner when he would tell jokes; it was also lovely to watch his obvious delight at finding a new audience for them! leuan was without arrogance and quite disarming in manner; his questions in discussion were often witty, challenging, even sharp, but in his own quiet way. I always looked forward to seeing him at Gregynog and was extremely sad that, because of ill-health, he was unable to talk to the paper he had prepared for the British Wittgenstein Society Conference in 2018, which was based on his recollections of the conversations he had had with Rush Rhees about education. That paper, I'm pleased to say, is now published in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* (54.3), but it would have been really special to have heard him talk about these things in person. What he said and the way he said it was always so original, witty, and insightful.

Ian McPherson

leuan radiated a quietly attractive centeredness, complementing his qualities as a good listener. In conversation one learned how this hospitable centeredness combined with a distinctive sense of tradition and community. S. T. Coleridge launched into his *Aids to Reflection* announcing '... if words are not things, they are living powers, by which the things of most importance to mankind are actuated, combined, and humanized.' To know leuan was—and is—to appreciate this in a distinctive and distinguished light.

Howard Mounce

I well remember the first time I ever saw leuan Lloyd. This was some sixty years ago at a meeting of the Swansea University Philosophical Society. leuan had come to the university as a mature student after spending some years as a teacher. His father was a minister in an evangelical chapel in Morriston, a district in the north of Swansea. leuan retained his father's faith throughout his life, though in a somewhat different form. The last time I saw him we were attending a service held according to the rites of the Church in Wales. The service was held at All Saints Church in Oystermouth in Swansea. This was the church that Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, attended in his youth. ▶ page 76

Ieuan and Dewi Phillips were brought up in the same area in Swansea and were close friends. It may have been Dewi who influenced Ieuan in turning to philosophy. After he graduated, Ieuan took up a post in the philosophy of education. During those years we met most often at meetings of the Welsh Philosophical Society which were held at Gregynog. Ieuan was present at the very first meeting of this society in 1964. He continued to attend these meetings until a year or so before his death. He was also responsible for organizing at Gregynog conferences on the philosophy of education.

Ieuan Lloyd was kind and modest by nature. I think now with gratitude of how often over many years I have had occasion to benefit from that kindness.

Ian Munday

My abiding memories of Ieuan are set in Wales and, more specifically, in Gregynog. Indeed, if there was an institution in Gregynog (not a place or event that has ever felt “institutional”) it was probably him. Prior to the introduction of more inclusive regulations around questioning, there was little doubt as to who would kick things off (or perhaps kick things into touch) when the chair would open the floor—Ieuan was always very quick to put his hand up. His style of questioning kept the spirit of the joust without descending into bullying or hectoring.

Some of my fondest memories of Ieuan involved swapping recollections of the Philosophy Department at Swansea where I had been a student. These would always be touched by sadness. The department closed some years ago, and we shared the loss of something more than a little enchanted. Once every year or so in Wales we would talk of inappropriate banjo playing, Finnish nose flutes and who, out of the many possible candidates at Swansea, got Wittgenstein right. When I return to Gregynog (more than a place or a name?) he'll be remembered there.

Nos da Ieuan. Cwsg mewn hedd.

Harvey Siegel

I didn't know Ieuan well, but had several engaging conversations with him at Oxford conferences over the years, especially concerning his commitment to various Wittgensteinian theses. He was unfailingly friendly, enthusiastic and quick-witted, and often very funny. He revelled in recounting encounters, both amusing and horrifying, with famous British philosophers. He was a PESGB gem. ▶ page 77

Ieuan and
Solveig in
Oxford



Solveig Magnus Reindal

I am very glad that I met Ieuan again in Oxford, Spring 2019. It was the first time I seen Ieuan since my dissertation in Oslo in 1992. He told me he had cancer and I had some contact with him during autumn 2019. I sent him this picture, which he appreciated.

The last time he wrote, he was in the hospital for treatment. He wrote:

Dear SOLVEIG,

Good to hear from you. It was a lovely surprise to see you again after all these years. My visit to Oslo is something I will always treasure. I am having cancer treatment in hospital at the moment but try to keep up with my philosophy.

Very best wishes, Ieuan

I think that this comment—"try to keep up with my philosophy"—captures his very interest in always asking questions and pondering on the big questions in life. What I really appreciated with Ieuan was his deep Christian faith in combination with his honest intellectual curiosity, respect and warmth. Having him as my supervisor for my PhD was really a blessing. He was genuinely what I would call an old-fashion scholar, which is rare nowadays in academia as production and career race are taking over, instead of real, slow, and long academic conversations. Together with him one could think and reflect the long thoughts in philosophical conversation. Ieuan was really an example of a philosopher in the Socratic sense, always seeking the good questions and taking time to reflect and investigate them in genuine dialogue. ▶ page 78

Judith Suissa

I first met Ieuan Lloyd when I attended the Gregynog conference for the first time, as a PhD student. He was charming and friendly, and although I was far too shy to ask any questions myself during the conference sessions, his humorous and down-to-earth comments helped create a less intimidating atmosphere for philosophical discussion. Over the following years, when I met him at Gregynog or at the annual conference in Oxford, he was always happy to chat, and impressed me by taking a genuine interest in my work and remembering what we had spoken about in the past- including both philosophical questions and details about my children's education.

Many years after our first meeting, Ieuan approached me after a conference session to ask me some questions about the paper I had presented. He said there were a few ideas he wanted to follow up on and asked if I could email him my paper. I did so, and received a brief message from him to say that he was glad to have printed out a copy of my paper because he often strolled down to his local café in the morning and liked to have "something philosophical" to read over his coffee. Some days later, this was followed by a lengthy email that, in its tone and content, resembled a combination of a letter from an old friend and a page from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. It had numbered paragraphs, each one of them a gem of insightful reflection on matters both profound and prosaic. He included a link to a documentary about the life of the pianist Lang Lang, and a reference to a little-known publication by a child psychologist from 1960. The book, he added in a subsequent email, was out of print, but he had located his copy and, if I couldn't find a copy in the library, he would happily photocopy it and post it to me as it was only twenty-five pages long.

Emails do not have quite the same sentimental value as letters, but I treasure that email from Ieuan as I treasure my memories of our conversations over the years. He was one of the most erudite people I have known, yet he wore his erudition lightly, and he shared it with the same ease and generosity with which he shared a chat over a cup of tea and a Welsh cake. ▶ page 79

Kevin Williams

This comment of leuan's always stuck in my mind. leuan did not feel obliged to endorse thinkers just because their work was treated with great deference. At a PESGB conference he astringently pointed out that an argument was not made any more valid, cogent, or coherent by 'wheeling out Habermas' to support it. Many members may not like what he said but this is the way he was.

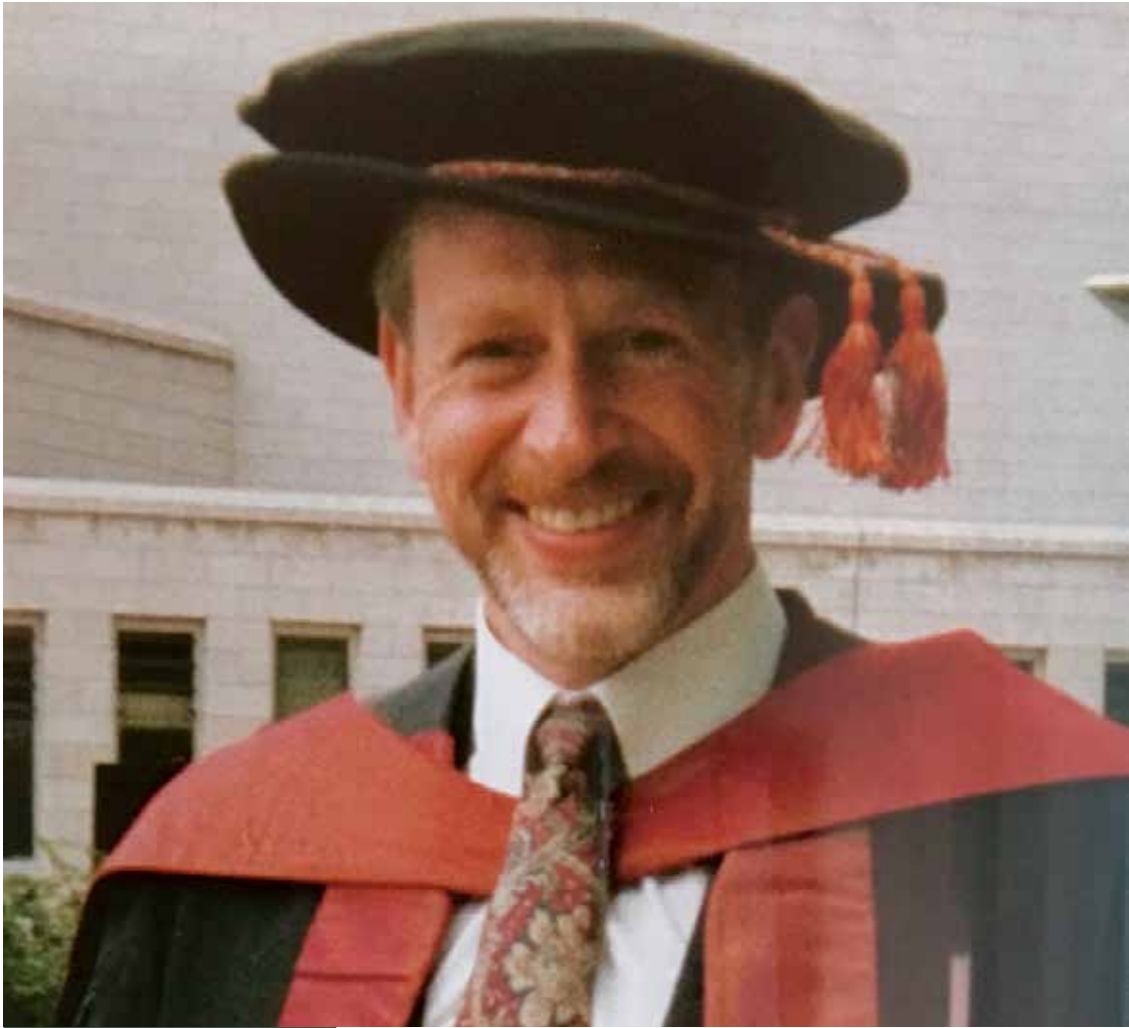
Christopher Winch

leuan Lloyd was my first contact with the PESGB in 1982 and became a much-loved friend. He was a distinctive presence in the Society with a rich background in primary school teaching and the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Rush Rhees. His Christian faith was enhanced with a strong interest in the Philosophy of Religion which he pursued with as much passion as the Philosophy of Education. Indeed, to his mind, the two were very closely linked. leuan, like his supervisor and mentor, Rush Rhees, believed in conversation as the primary mode of philosophical engagement and for decades he was always to be seen at conferences asking the most penetrating questions of speakers and frequently engaging with them afterwards to pursue the discussion further. I should also add that leuan was a regular attender of the Welsh Philosophical Society to whose Wittgensteinian and 'Swansea School' approach to Philosophy he was very much committed.

Like his close friend Dewi Phillips, his background was the distinctive working class culture of South Wales and the lower Swansea Valley in particular, that was still flourishing in the 1940s and 50s. leuan was rightly proud of where he came from and of his Welsh heritage which he always wore lightly. As a Swansea boy myself, leuan and I were able to swap stories about teachers that we had both had at secondary school, albeit at different times.

Although rigorous in his pursuit of philosophical clarity, his charm and grace were effortless and he was a most delightful companion. His interests were wide and took in antique and rare books, which he dealt in as a significant pastime and he was always ready with a rich fund of anecdotes. Although less well known than some of the other founders of the PESGB, leuan was important in its early success and in establishing it as a credible intellectual voice in the discipline.

His contributions to discussions, his rigorous and perceptive observations and his humour, anecdotes and reminiscences will be greatly missed. ■



Remembering

Recollections of Steve Johnson

As many of you will know, our much-valued colleague Steve Johnson died in 2020, on 17 September. He had suffered ill-health for many years, from a condition later diagnosed as Parkinson's disease, and he died in hospital after an operation that resulted in complications, including pneumonia.

Steve was a long-standing member of the PESGB and served as its Secretary (2001–2007) during an important period of the Society's growth and development. Here we bring together some recollections of Steve and his contribution to the philosophy of education. ▶ page 81

Peter Gardner

I had the pleasure of supervising Steve's research during the 1990s and we continued to be very good friends thereafter. I had met him at conferences in the previous decade and I knew he lectured in law at North Warwickshire College, but meeting him frequently when I supervised his research enabled me to appreciate his gentle nature, his intellectual depth and his talents.

It would be true to say that Steve found the world somewhat difficult and unnecessarily complicated, a little like a tax return that one wished would just go away. He was much more at home with his friends, his books and his research. During the '90s Steve was researching thinking skills or, just in case someone makes an unwelcome inference here, Steve would have wanted me to stress that he was actually researching what people who believe there are such things have said about them. His position was: there are no such things as thinking skills, but, just in case there are, they are not very useful.

He was one of the gentlest men I have known. He was also one of the most learned, though he tended to keep his learning to himself, and, from a philosophical perspective, he was one of the most generous. I was trained to find and expose faulty reasoning, an approach that encouraged me to interpret texts with a view to making them vulnerable to philosophic challenge. Steve was much more magnanimous; he would take his time to make sure that arguments were interpreted generously, with their best sides brought into the light.

This is not to say that he was shy when it came to exposing faulty reasoning or that his research lacked tenacity. Despite the fact that he had several periods of poor health in the '90s, he was the most diligent and determined student. My role as supervisor during this time was to make sure that his research was conducted within manageable limits and that tangential academic excursions were kept to a minimum. His thesis, 'A Critical Examination of the Role of Skills in Contemporary Educational Thought', was submitted in December 1996, and in 1997 he was awarded his well-deserved doctorate. He subsequently enjoyed receiving mail addressed to Dr. Johnson.

Steve along with Harvey Siegel went on to write *Teaching Thinking Skills* (Continuum, London, 2010), with a forward and afterword contributed by the book's editor, Christopher Winch, which drew on Steve's doctoral thesis and attracted several encouraging reviews. But, for some reason, perhaps because Steve felt the pressure of meeting deadlines, he was not entirely happy with this project.

▶ page 82

By contrast, I think Steve was much happier with the three papers we wrote together: 'Thinking critically about critical thinking: an unskilled inquiry into Quinn and McPeck', in 1996, 'Some Achilles' heels of thinking skills: A response to Higgins and Baumfield', 1999, and 'Teaching the Pursuit of Assumptions', 2015, all of which appeared in this journal. Writing Philosophy is not something I have ever found easy or, though I try to convince myself otherwise, pleasurable. Yet, writing with Steve was a rewarding experience. How our papers were structured, what they aimed for, and who would write the first draft of a section or paragraph seemed to be matters that were decided quite quickly. Later meetings or telephone calls to discuss those drafts were the ones that took up our time: 'Aren't there two ideas here rather than one?', 'Can we be clearer?', 'That makes the point, but could it be briefer?' and 'What about bringing in the joke you thought of last time?' were the kinds of questions that dominated those meetings and calls. Clarity, brevity and humour were important. We were serious, not sombre, and I cannot recall one harsh word between us. Writing with Steve really was a rewarding experience.

In later years Parkinson's disease took a terrible toll on Steve's health, but he fought it with great spirit and a resilient sense of humour, sustained by the continued support of his caring and dependable friends, Lynda and Christine.

Let me close by recollecting former times: for several years many of my meetings with Steve took place in my Resident Tutor's Flat on Warwick University's Campus. I looked forward to those meetings. Steve was always well prepared with some new idea to explore or a new draft to read, though we frequently began by talking about Tommy Cooper or Ken Dodd. They were two of Steve's heroes. Tea and biscuits would then intervene. That was the way to start a Philosophy tutorial.

Steve will be sadly missed. I miss him already.

Harvey Siegel

I didn't know Steve well, but enjoyed working with him on *Teaching Thinking Skills*. Steve was unfailingly friendly and respectful, despite some deep differences in our treatments. PESGB has lost an important voice and a welcome friend and colleague. ▶ page 83

Richard Smith

For many years for me one of the pleasures of the Annual PESGB Conference was to meet up again with Steve Johnson and his partner, Chris Hutchins. Steve was the most modest of men: such a contrast to the ‘bigging up’ and self-advertisement which academics are now encouraged to cultivate. His professional career embraced primary, secondary and sixth-form teaching and finally took him into Further Education, where he lectured in Law. As a teacher and philosopher with legal training he was formidably well equipped to offer critique of such developments as the demand that teachers should help students to discover their individual ‘learning style’ and devote themselves to enhancing young people’s ‘self-esteem’. In particular he could be entertainingly caustic about the managerial absurdities that these fashions brought with them. Drawing further on his legal training he became one of the last surviving defenders of the old ‘Silver Book’ contract in Further Education, which stipulated among other things reasonable working hours per week and stood in the way of the increasing casualisation of staff. Steve showed a lot of courage in this struggle in the face of its effect on his professional life. He did not talk of this; others however did, with admiration.

Steve’s insights into the educational follies and fashions of our age are very readable and timelessly relevant. His shrewd criticisms of the idea of general and critical thinking skills can be found in many articles in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* and elsewhere, often co-written with Peter Gardner. With Harvey Siegel he wrote *Teaching Thinking Skills* (Bloomsbury, 2010), a book which questions whether such skills exist at all, and what the implications of this are for professional and vocational education. But his legacy lies equally in the kind of man he was: gentle, astute and unassuming.

Paul Standish

For about three decades, from some time in the 1980s, Steve Johnson was a familiar figure at PESGB gatherings. Like me, he had begun to get involved when he was studying at Birmingham University, and he was soon a regular participant at Gregynog and at the Society’s national conference, as well as the Cambridge conferences organized in the 90s by Terry McLaughlin. He would typically take a seat fairly well forward in the audience, and he was unusually attentive to the speaker, regardless, so it seemed, of the topic. There was a certain reserve about him, but this did not stop him asking questions, and these were unfailingly astute and well-considered. ▶ page 84

These same qualities were evident in what he wrote. He was not prolific, but everything he produced displayed a careful eye for detail and meticulous concern both with clarity and fairness of consideration of conflicting arguments. In writing about skills and competences, he was not alone, but he was onto something important: in the 1980s, skill-talk had become compulsory amongst the managerial class in further education (the community college sector, as this is known in North America), ideologically reconstituting what counted as knowledge. By the 90s this had inveigled its way into the 'new' universities, and thence, given a few years, into the 'old'. It is depressing to see the OECD now promoting skills and competence as if it were something new! But Steve's critique – which he refined in various ways, through his discussions with Harvey Siegel of critical thinking, for example – remains formidable and powerfully apt.

Steve had come into this work via a somewhat circuitous route: he had taught for a number of years in schools and further education, having done a variety of jobs before his first degree. One of those jobs that lasted rather longer was as a manager at the Corinthians Health and Fitness Club in Birmingham town centre, where he worked for a number of years. But he decided he really wanted to teach and so enrolled at night school to get his initial qualifications. Steve was an inspirational teacher in all of the institutions at which he worked, including comprehensive schools and colleges of further education. He taught History, Law, Psychology, and Sociology, as well as remedial classes in a variety of subjects; in addition he played an important role as a pastoral tutor. At North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, he took a leading role in the development of the '2+2 Pathway' to a degree course in Law – an initiative designed in collaboration with Warwick University to provide an alternative route through further and higher education, especially for older or 'non-standard' students.

In these various institutions, Steve was generous in his involvement in extra-curricular activities: he ran a football team, a chess club, and a karate club. Very few members of the Society would have had any inkling of these things, or of his own abilities in these respects: he was a Black Belt in karate and played chess at County level.

He was also generous in the time and energy he devoted to both local politics and trades union activity. He was for many years a member of Local Executive of the Birmingham Association of the NASUWT, the largest teachers' union at that time, and was elected its President in 1998. ▶ page 85

Steve had worked incredibly hard to achieve these things. He had studied for his A Levels while he was working full-time, as was the case with his MEd and PhD, not to mention the publications that he went on to produce. He gained these qualifications in spite of the fact that his own schooling had been seriously impeded by dyslexia, a condition that was largely unknown and rarely diagnosed at the time. In fact, in spite of this unpromising start, his intellectual curiosity seemed to have developed by itself and to know no bounds. His interests were eclectic: he loved poetry, good food and wine, walking in the countryside, political and religious debate, and (obviously) philosophy; and in his spare time he was teaching himself Greek.

Steve was certainly friendly and sociable, but he was not one to talk much about himself. So how do I know all this? At the meetings of the Society, he was usually accompanied by his friend, Chris Hutchins, and I am very grateful to her for making me more aware of these intriguing aspects of Steve's life. Conversations with Steve were time well-spent, and I wish there had been time and occasion to get to know him more.

What I do know is that Steve was an excellent Secretary of the Society (2001 – 2007), at a time of its rapid growth and development. This was a role he carried out in an unassuming and impeccable manner, with an eye for detail and a steady sense of the larger changes the Society was going through. There is no doubt that he could have gone on to take other leading roles in the Society, and he would have been an excellent ambassador for the subject. Yet throughout this time, and in fact over several decades, he was coping with serious health difficulties. Health concerns probably made him more reserved in his behaviour than he would have liked to be, but he did not allow his problems to get him down, and the Parkinson's diagnosis did not inhibit his interests. He is a great loss to the Society and to our field, and he is sadly missed. ▶ page 86

Chris Winch

I knew Steve for many years as a key member of the West Midlands Philosophy of Education Society and later as Secretary of the PESGB. Cheerful, unpretentious and scholarly with a dry sense of humour he was a great companion.

Steve made a distinctive contribution to the philosophy of education in Britain through his resolute and articulate pursuit of the case against the teaching of general thinking skills. This resulted in an Impact pamphlet in 2001 which attracted a lot of interest and a fiery and was accompanied by a very well attended launch in Birmingham which Steve handled with his customary grace and level-headedness despite some hostility to his thesis both from the chair and the floor. This event was an object lesson on how the Philosophy of Education can contribute to debates on matters of contemporary philosophical interest and contribute to ongoing debates with carefully argued and well-written pamphlet length publications.

This work later developed into a short book length exchange between Harvey Siegel and Steve published in 2010 that remains a valuable reference point for all those interested in this issue. Steve and Harvey had a debate on the issue based on the book at the annual PESGB conference in 2011 that remains a model of its kind: concerning a substantial difference of opinion, but courteous, erudite and above all enlightening. ■

To better times

Photos from the Annual PESGB Conference held at New College, Oxford 25–27 March 2022.









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