



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



# Philosophy *in* Schools *with* Students Conference

University of Leeds, July 30<sup>th</sup> 2015

# Welcome

This one-day conference explores current philosophical enquiry practice in schools, along with the theory and research that underpins it. The event brings together those who are new to the field with those who are more experienced. We are delighted to welcome to the University of Leeds, undergraduate and postgraduate students, teacher trainees, teachers, teaching assistants, lecturers, researchers as well as others with an interest in education and philosophy from across the UK and further afield.

The conference is held at an exciting time for philosophy in schools. Many of you will have followed the widespread press coverage of the results of the recent Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF) Study on Philosophy with Children, which found that the more disadvantaged pupils participating in the trial made modest gains in reading, writing and maths. Evidence such as this raises the profile of philosophy in schools and enriches discussions about the nature, purpose and value of this work. Among the many teachers, academics, organisations, charities and institutions that support philosophical enquiry with children, students of both philosophy and education are among the most recent contributors to this community of enquiry. This is in part thanks to schemes like Leeds Philosophy Exchange, our programme here at Leeds, which brings students, teachers and children together in weekly philosophy classes. We anticipate a wide exchange on matters of practicality, pedagogy, and policy at this conference but we are also keen to celebrate the contribution of the many students engaged in this work and we hope you will join us in discussing where this work may lead.

We are grateful to all those whose contribution to the programme promises an interesting and enjoyable day and we'd like to thank you for coming.

## **Sponsorship**

We wish to acknowledge the generous financial support the School of PRHS and Leeds Arts Educations Engagement has given the conference, without which the event would not be possible.

## **Conference Organisers**

Grace Robinson, Teaching Fellow, School of Philosophy, Religion and the History of Science, University of Leeds

Elizabeth Watkins, MA by Research candidate (Philosophy), School of Philosophy, Religion and the History of Science, University of Leeds

# Schedule

TIME	EVENT/ROOM	PRESENTER + INSTITUTION
09:30 - 09:45	<b>Arrival and coffees (B.10)</b>	
09:45 - 10:00	<b>Welcome (1.08)</b>	Grace Robinson, University of Leeds/Thinking Space
10:00 - 10:40	<b>Keynote (1.08)</b>	Peter Worley, The Philosophy Foundation <i>Why Philosophy?</i>
10:45 - 11:45	<b>Talks (1.08)</b>	Carola Huebler, Johannes Gutenberg Universität, Germany <i>The Teacher as Storyteller</i>
		Charlotte Blease, Research Fellow, UCD <i>The evidence for P4C and its relevance for children and adults</i>
	<b>Session 2 (B.08)</b>	Ezgi Emel, Istanbul Utopya Schools, Turkey <i>A Poststructuralist Reconstruction of P4C: A Continental Approach to Philosophy and Children</i>
		Kath Jones, Blooming Minds Founder and Project Leader <i>A Question of Method</i>
	<b>Session 3 (B.09)</b>	Michael Lacewing, Director of Research, Heythrop College <i>Philosophy, academic philosophy and philosophy for children</i>
		Ori Freiman, Bar-Ilan University, Israel <i>Teaching Philosophy in a Bi-cultural Class</i>
11:45 - 12:00	<b>Break</b>	Tea and coffee (B.10)
12:00 - - 13:00	<b>Workshops (1.08)</b>	Peter Worley, The Philosophy Foundation <i>How to facilitate a philosophical conversation</i>
	<b>(B.08)</b>	Steve Bramall, Independent Practitioner <i>How to help develop concepts of significance</i>

13:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch and stalls</b>	Lunch (B.10)  Stalls (B.09)
14:00 - 14:40	<b>Keynote (B.08)</b>	Lizzy Lewis, Development Manager, SAPERE, and Fufy Demissie, Senior Lecturer, Sheffield Hallam University <i>Philosophical enquiry in teacher training - university partnerships</i>
14:45 - 15:45	<b>Project Overviews (B.08)</b>	Blooming Minds  Philosophy Exchange Bristol
	<b>Session 2 (B.09)</b>	Philosophy in the City  Menu Philosophical  Philosophy Exchange Leeds
15:45 - 16:00	<b>Break</b>	Tea and coffee (B.10)
16:00 - 16:40	<b>Demonstrations (B.08)</b>	Isabelle Millon, Institute of Philosophical Practice, France <i>The Evaluation of Arguments</i>
	<b>Session 2 (B.09)</b>	Arabella Carter, Repton School, Derbyshire <i>Beyond the Textbook: Implementing Philosophy in the RE classroom</i>
16:45 - 17:45	<b>Invited Panel Discussion (1.08)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lizzy Lewis</li> <li>• Darren Chetty</li> <li>• Steve Bramall</li> <li>• Kath Jones</li> <li>• Charlotte Blease</li> <li>• Grace Robinson</li> <li>• Peter Worley</li> </ul>
17:45 - 18:00	<b>Closing Words</b>	Liz Watkins, University of Leeds/Thinking Space
18:30 -	<b>Drinks and food</b>	Veritas Ale and Wine bar, 43 – 47 Great George St, Leeds City Centre, LS1 3BB (not paid for by conference)

# Abstracts

## Keynote Addresses

**Peter Worley, CEO and co-founder, The Philosophy Foundation  
President, SOPHIA, Visiting Research Associate, KCL**

[peter@philosophy-foundation.org](mailto:peter@philosophy-foundation.org)

Peter read philosophy at University College London and Birkbeck College, completing his MA in 2004. He has been working with children in education since 1993 and has been doing philosophy with children since 2002. Peter developed the method of Philosophical Enquiry (PhiE) that is at the heart of The Philosophy Foundation's work. As CEO he represents the charity worldwide, trains specialist philosophy teachers and classroom teachers. He also runs workshops in primary and secondary schools.

**Lizzy Lewis, Development Manager, SAPERE**

[lizzylewis@sapere.org.uk](mailto:lizzylewis@sapere.org.uk)

After completing a Philosophy and English degree at York Lizzy taught in primary schools for 12 years and has practised Philosophy for Children (P4C) since 1994. She was awarded a Best Practice Research Scholarship for one year to research P4C in 2001, and for her Masters Degree in Education (Distinction) in 2006 she focused on P4C and children's emotional development. Lizzy began working for SAPERE in 2003 and now works part-time as Development Manager.

**Fufy Demissie, Senior Lecturer, The Department of Teacher  
Education, Sheffield Hallam University**

[F.a.demissie@shu.ac.uk](mailto:F.a.demissie@shu.ac.uk)

I have worked in Sheffield Hallam since 2000. I was course leader until 2010 on the full time and part-time early years QTS courses. I have been involved in two projects: a TDA project to enhance the quality of early years mentoring in schools in 2004. In 2009, I led a cross-area CETL project on using a community of enquiry methodology to enhance student engagement. I set up an elective module entitled 'philosophy for young children' on the BA primary and early years courses. In June 2012, I co-organised a conference on 'P4C in the curriculum' that was attended by school children, school teachers, trainers and SHU students.

# Talks

**Carola Huebler, Master's Candidate (Philosophy), Johannes Gutenberg Universität, Germany**

chuebler@students.uni-mainz.de

## *The Teacher as Storyteller*

Learning to think critically, learning to resist, is one of the core aims when teaching philosophy in class. Nevertheless not grounding our judgement on established moral rules, but relying solely on one's personal critical judgement, has to be practiced with the students. Since today's society is lacking a guiding Tradition, which means that all actions are heterogeneous and ask for permanent reflection and justification, students have to be introduced to the faculty of Judgement.

I would like to propose a method that might be realized in class. It deals with the teacher's role as a storyteller, so that the focus lies on a "passive" story-listening rather than on an auto-biographical story-writing. The method is inspired by Walter Benjamin's work and his concept of *pearl diving*, is still more important. The guideline for any reflective judgement is an extraordinary event, the exemplarity of an action, since "the general shines through the particular" in an example. Thus the example should, in a post-traditional society, become the center of interest. Examples which are – according to Benjamin – fragments of the past purged of their historical or social contexts, bring about the hope for some orientation; yet without falling back to obeying established rules. To follow examples does not imply any objective validity. On the contrary, we have to ask ourselves whether fellow citizens would also use this example as a guiding element in judgement, so that validity is only established through dialogue or representative thinking.

Thus a teacher who is temporally turning into a storyteller raises the chance of practicing the faculty of judgement. Moreover, this method introduces the students to the world while they protect the world itself from a non-critical revolutionary spirit of the new generation at the same time. In other words, the method helps to "renew our common world" (Hannah Arendt).

**Dr Charlotte Blease, Research Fellow, School of Philosophy,  
University College Dublin**

charlotte.blease@ucd.ie

*Philosophy is a Right*

I argue that Philosophy is a right: every school child has the right to learn how to think philosophically. If we value a thoughtful citizenry and a democratic society then we should value philosophy. However, I argue that philosophy has an image problem – one that is not helped by philosophers. Philosophy is not just ‘cosa nostra’ (or ‘our thing’): philosophy is for all. In this talk I argue that non-academic philosophers can inform academic philosophers how to behave more philosophically. I present a range of recent findings on the effectiveness of philosophy for children including techniques that (I propose) would improve the conduct of philosophers.

**Ezgi Emel, Philosophy for Children conductor and co-ordinator,  
Istanbul Utopya Primary and Secondary Schools, Turkey**

ezgieemel@gmail.com

*Deconstruction, reconstruction and P4C*

In this paper, I shall first offer a brief analysis of the current P4C practices, targeting models from the Anglo-Saxon traditions, to evaluate its presumptions about the nature of childhood and demonstrate its focus on critical thinking as the main objective of P4C programs.

I will scrutinize the instrumental and pragmatic shift in P4C that these types of programs have generated in order to justify (and perhaps market) the program and the inevitable paradox that this shift has and will bring forth through reducing philosophy as a means to acquire the correct set of critical thinking skills for an “appropriate” kind of human objectivity. I will identify the dichotomies that the humanist ideologies together with the pragmatism of the American tradition have produced: that between mature/immature and the rational animal/the sentimental animal; and the belief that philosophy for/with children programs might help a child acquire the necessary skills set to become more rational, more mature, more critical.

However, although this is depicted as a legitimate goal of philosophy by the pragmatist traditions, it consequently undermines the very essence of what

philosophy and education are or should be. One of the questions that I will bear in mind is whether the fundamental role of education is to generate a “proper”, pre-defined identity or human existence. I will argue for the contrary through reconfiguring Friedrich Schiller’s idea that human beings (and thus children) are both sensuous and reasonable beings and these two phenomena do not have to be mutually exclusive. We can postulate the human existence as both emotional and rational, both sensuous and reasonable if we reject the classical idea of reason as a type of power that opposes sensation and emotion.

I will finally suggest an alternative approach to reason and human nature inspired from Schiller’s idea of play and an alternative to the format of critical thinking that is currently taking place in P4C programs, one that holds a Deleuzian view of philosophy as an art of creating concepts.

**Dr. Kath R. Jones, Senior lecturer in Philosophy, University of Greenwich, Blooming Minds founder and project leader**

K.Jones@greenwich.ac.uk

### *A Question of Method*

Does the practice of engaging children in philosophical discussion and inquiry have a methodology? Most practitioners readily claim that their approach is founded on Socratic Method (and I have done so myself in connection with the Blooming Minds project). In this paper however I want to examine not only the labelling of the practice as Socratic, but the alignment of the practice with any philosophical methodology. Two interrelated issues arise. Firstly, is it accurate to describe the practice of philosophy with children, when it is effective, as following a method? Secondly, would the introduction of a methodology help to promote the effectivity of the practice?

This paper will pose and examine the possibility that saddling the practice with a method is problematic on at least two counts. First is the concern that the teleological requirement implicit in the notion of method stands at odds with the attempt to build a community of inquiry in the classroom. Second is that the transformative power of the practice may be undermined by the strictures demanded by a methodological approach.

The consequences of eschewing methodological approaches is of course itself problematic. Staking a claim to a methodology would seem to be a pre-condition of



philosophy's becoming a mainstream subject in schools, and without method, we struggle for credibility in the eyes of both academic philosophy and education. It may be however that by forcing philosophical engagement with children into a methodological straightjacket we deprive it of its status in the eyes of participants and its power to transform lives for the better.

**Dr Michael Lacewing, Director of Research, Heythrop College**

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*Philosophy, academic philosophy and philosophy for children*

What is philosophy? And what good is it for? How are these questions related to what is studied in philosophy courses at university? I argue that doing philosophy - philosophizing - is both the origin and the heart of what philosophy is. As a result, the methodology involved in Philosophy for Children (P4C) counts as philosophy, and shares important similarities with what academic philosophers do. I go on to argue that doing philosophy aims at achieving truth, understanding and a good life, aims shared by P4C but not always by philosophy courses. I conclude by reflecting on what studying philosophy can and could achieve.

**Ori Freiman, PhD. Candidate, (Graduate Program in Science, Technology and Society), Bar-Ilan University, Israel**

freimano@post.bgu.ac.il

*Didactical and Political Insights from Teaching Philosophy in a Bi-cultural Class*

This talk shares insights from teaching introduction to philosophy to a class of Muslim and Jewish tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade students from various schools in the periphery areas of Israel's southern region. The first section presents the special program that enabled this philosophy class. The second and third sections shares insights regarding the structure of each class and the ultimate benefits of a program that brings teenagers from unique and diverse backgrounds to discuss philosophy. I end with my own perspective of challenges, benefits, and success.

The program that funds and supervises the course, Advancing Youth into Higher

Education, brings 850 10-12 graders from 21 periphery schools, once a week, to Ben-Gurion University in Beer-Sheva. Students who participate in the program enroll to 2 courses from a variety of 50, over the course of a semester. The participants of my class are ethnically diverse: 55% (12) are Jewish, 45% (10) are Muslims - mostly Bedouins. This mix not only brings language barriers to the class, but also a variety of cultural views and sometimes even ethnic tension.

The second section of this talk presents the structure of each philosophy class, as well as general insights I have gained as a philosophy teacher in this program. I open each lesson with weekly insights (discussed later), and end it with the dynamic syllabus - a democratic and informed discussion in which students choose the topic of the next class. The dynamic syllabus requires the students to research the topics we choose after class, and sometimes to discuss certain philosophical issues and topics with others. This leads to the development of their own knowledge and curiosity in their free time.

This talk ends by presenting a political insight from teaching teenagers from two cultures. Discussions help participants better understand each other by creating a space for them to reflect upon what they have in common, but also the differences in their world views. Part of my challenge is to create a space for a bi-cultural class which discusses philosophy. Success is not only the gain of curriculum knowledge, but also mutual appreciation and unexpected friendships - which even transcend the classroom. These friendships represent what is missing from the Israeli public political reality: tolerance, co-existence, and curiosity for the other's points of view.

# Workshops

**Peter Worley, CEO and co-founder, The Philosophy Foundation  
President, SOPHIA, Visiting Research Associate, KCL**

[peter@philosophy-foundation.org](mailto:peter@philosophy-foundation.org)

## *How to facilitate a philosophical conversation*

In his interactive and practical workshop Peter will introduce attendees to his PhiE method - a guided, structured philosophical conversation - of doing philosophical enquiry in the classroom by first of all running a session in which attendees will act as both participants and observers. Following the session, Peter will take questions, during which time he will explain what he did, say why he did what he did and, along the way, share a few practical strategies and techniques. Attendees will receive a detailed, written explanation of some of the central techniques for facilitating a PhiE as well as a list of resources.

**Dr Steve Bramall, Steve Bramall Associates, SAPERE P4C Registered  
Trainer, Project Manager, Lead Trainer, Practitioner**

[steve@philosophyineducation.com](mailto:steve@philosophyineducation.com)

## *How to help develop concepts of significance*

Practical social philosophy help people re-think important concepts. This re-thinking gives us power to change: - our experiences of our world, our relationships, our actions. This hands-on workshop focuses on developing some simple strategies and techniques for helping participants in a philosophical community of enquiry to develop concept literacy and power through a five step model:

1. identifying concepts of significance
2. exploring value
3. challenging meaning and developing criteria
4. articulating changes to thinking and action
5. reflecting on the enquiry process

# Demonstrations

**Isabelle Millon, Teacher and Trainer in P4C, Institute of Philosophical Practice, France,**

millon.isabelle22@gmail.com

## *The Evaluation of Arguments*

A philosophical discussion is a demanding activity that we work with children or adults; it implies that one has to work on himself, like in any worthwhile practice. Our training focuses first on philosophical attitudes: settle down, astonishment, openness to others, confrontation to others, authenticity, etc. Second, it focuses on philosophical competencies: argumentation, deepening of the thinking, problematization or critique, and conceptualization. The main point is to move from exchanges based on opinions to meta-level analysis.

The technique I use is inspired by Plato's maïeutics, and is based on the work of Oscar Brenifier (French-Canadian Philosopher) with whom I have been working for more than 20 years. The competencies that I will use during this workshop are: identification (searching for presuppositions, argumentation...), problematization and conceptualization. To evaluate the arguments, we use internal critic (idea used in Hegel's dialectics: difference from internal to external critic). External critic is more subjective, it belongs to another bias, to different premises while internal critic is more objective: we must criticize, dig a thought from the inside, by confronting it with itself; it obliges to decenter from oneself, to leave behind its own opinions in order to enter a scheme which is other than ours.

Workshop: I will read a short quote from an author or from a book.

- 1) Individual work: In one sentence, you interpret this sentence. You justify your interpretation by one clear argument.
- 2) Group work: Comparison between the sentences: find problems – work on stakes between two ideas (analysis and conceptualization).
- 3) At the end, find the best sentence, the one that captures the essence of the sentence. Group work: discussion.
- 4) Meta-analysis of the workshop.

## **Arabella V E Carter, Teacher of Ethical and Religious Studies, Repton School**

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### *Beyond the Textbook: Implementing Philosophy in the RE classroom*

Generally speaking, if you are to find Philosophy learning in a Secondary School it is likely to be in the Religious Education department. One of the issues I have found teaching Philosophy within the framework of Secondary Religious Education is that textbooks often over-simplify material.

This demonstration aims to show how as teachers we can extend existing Religious Education GCSE curricula to include more complex philosophical ideas and terminology in a manner which remains accessible (and interesting!) to pupils of a range of different abilities. This demonstration will put the conference delegates back behind the school desk as they take the role of pupils. They will experience sections from genuine lessons, which I taught to mixed-ability Year 11 pupils who are currently studying for their GCSE1 examination. It has been designed to include a variety of different learning activities and gives delegates the opportunity to consider them from the perspective of teenage learners.

The format of the lesson introduces pupils to three different types of 'proof' as set out by the course textbook<sup>2</sup> (personal experience, reliable evidence, logic) using the case study of the Loch Ness Monster. It requires them to state their religious belief if they wish (atheist, agnostic, theist) and reflect on which of these 'proofs' they would most readily accept for the existence of God and why. The lesson then moves on to the 'beyond the textbook' element. It develops the GCSE specification by extending what is meant by 'logic': introducing pupils to basic arguments (two premises and a conclusion) and the two broad types of philosophical proof (a priori deductive; a posteriori inductive). Finally, we examine a case study of an a posteriori inductive argument. This section of the lesson uses Play-Doh and discussion to illicit understanding from pupils.

In the exploratory session, delegates will reflect upon and discuss techniques used in the lesson from the perspective of pupils and teachers. We will also consider how Secondary Religious Education lessons might better accommodate Philosophy, especially in light of the recent GCSE and A Level reform as proposed by the Department for Education.

# Getting Here

## Getting to the University of Leeds

**Walking:** From the city centre, it is a 20 minute walk to the university campus. Follow Albion Street past the St John's shopping centre (on right) and Morrisons supermarket (on right). This will become Woodhouse Lane and you will pass several Leeds Beckett buildings on either side of you. Aim for the large white building at the top of the hill with the clock tower. This is the Parkinson Building.

**Buses:** The number 1 will take you from outside the station to the Parkinson Building/University of Leeds campus in 10 minutes. Any bus from stop J3 on Albion Street for Headingley or Hyde Park will also take you to the Parkinson Building/University of Leeds Campus in 5 minutes.



**By car:** If you are using satnav, the our address for the main entrance to our site is: University of Leeds, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, LS2 9JT, (street listing can appear as Cavendish Road in some systems). Leeds is linked to the M1 and M62.

Parking on campus is limited, and available on a first-come, first-serve basis. You can book parking [here](#). Free parking for disabled "blue badge" holders is available on campus for visitors. If you are a blue badge holder you are advised to enter the campus via the main barrier on Woodhouse Lane to show your badge. You can then be directed to the nearest available disabled parking bay to the area you are visiting.

## Getting to the Rooms

The four rooms used for the conference are on two different floors in the Parkinson Building, the first floor (room 1.08) and the basement (rooms B.08, B.09 and B.10). To find the conference rooms you turn right at the information desk in the main entrance and take the steps at the far end of the building, just past the Costa coffee stand. Take the stairs up to room 1.08, following the first landing round to the left. Take the stairs down to rooms B.08, B.09 and B.10, turning left at the bottom of the stairs and following the corridor. The three basement rooms are next to one another on your left.

For accessible routes, take the entrance into the Parkinson building to the right of the clocktower (if you are facing it) into the Chemistry department. Following the corridor along to the left will bring you into Parkinson Court by the Costa stand, where you can take the lift down to the basement rooms or up to room 1.08.

## Useful Numbers

University of Leeds switchboard: 0113 243 1751  
Liz's mobile number (for emergencies): 07960 897692  
Veritas Ale and Wine bar: 0113 242 8094

### Taxis

Ace Cars: 0113 2304499  
Amber Cabs: 0113 202 2117  
Speedline Taxis: 0113 244 1444

### Hotels/Hostels

[YHA Leeds Opal](#): 0113 812 8555  
[YHA Leeds Kirkstall Brewery](#): 0113 812 8555  
[YHA Leeds Carnegie Village](#): 0113 812 8555  
[Russell Scott Backpackers](#): 0113 245 9046  
[IBIS Budget Hotel](#): 0113 245 0725

# Resources

ICPIC: <http://icpic.org/>

SOPHIA: <http://www.sophianetwork.eu/>

SAPERE: <http://www.sapere.org.uk/>

The Philosophy Foundation: <http://www.philosophy-foundation.org/home>

Thinking Space: <http://thinkingspace.org.uk/>

Blooming Minds: <http://bloomingminds.co.uk/>

Philosophy in the City: <http://pinc.group.shef.ac.uk/>

A selection of articles on the EEF-funded findings on P4C in schools:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/index.php/projects/pilosophy-for-children>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-33464258>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/leaders/article4493249.ece>



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