



Philosophers in the Schools

So far this fall our [Philosophers in the Schools](#) program involves over 30 philosophy classes in Seattle public school classrooms in eight elementary schools, as well as several philosophy classes in the [UW's Robinson Center Saturday Program](#), led by faculty, graduate students, and volunteers, and also involving students enrolled in our fall UW classes.

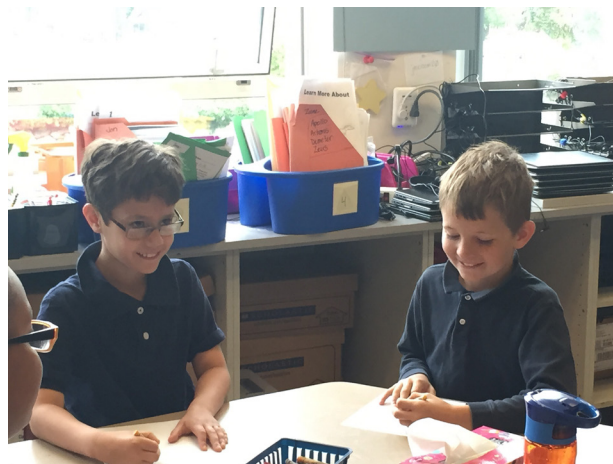
We are in the seventh year of the philosopher-in-residence program at [John Muir Elementary School](#), and very fortunate to have Karen Emmerman (Ph.D. philosophy, 2012) continuing to serve in this role. We greatly appreciate the support of the [Squire Family Foundation](#), which has funded this position since the beginning. Philosophy is now one of the programs highlighted by the school and most teachers have some philosophy in their classrooms. We see many students finishing fifth grade who have had philosophy every year since kindergarten.

We are also in the second year of the philosopher-in-residence program at [Thurgood Marshall Elementary School](#), thanks to the support of a donor who has made a three-year commitment to this new program. We are thrilled that Debi Talukdar, Ph.D. Candidate in the UW College of Education and former Philosophy for Children Graduate Fellow, is serving in this role for the second year. Thurgood Marshall, like John Muir, is a racially and ethnically diverse Title I school in south Seattle, and the two schools feed into the same middle school. This is the Center's fifth year running philosophy sessions at Thurgood Marshall and we are very excited that our presence at the school continues to grow, with many classrooms now holding regular philosophy sessions.

Placing philosophers-in-residence in schools fosters strong and sustainable philosophy programs by providing ongoing models for teachers of philosophical engagement, regular support and training, and outreach to the school's parents and community. Rather than occasional philosophy sessions in classrooms, these projects cultivate a philosophical culture and empower teachers to think about ways to teach all subjects more philosophically.

In the Newsletter

Philosophers in the Schools ...	1
For Parents	2
Spring Philosophy in	
Schools Workshop	2
From the Director	3
In the Press	3
Professional Monthly	
Learning Community	4
High School Ethics Bowl	4
Focus on the Classroom	5
New Book	6
Graduate Fellows	6
PLATO Conference	7
Advisory Board & Staff	7
Supporting the Center	8



For Parents

As part of the Center's ongoing commitment to engaging with the broader Seattle community, we host parent events in the fall and spring. These events are an opportunity for families to learn about our work in the schools and how to integrate philosophical discussion into life at home.

With an eye towards inclusivity and accessibility, we aim for our first event this year to take place at one of our two south-end Seattle public schools where we have a philosopher-in-residence (Thurgood Marshall Elementary or John Muir Elementary). The hope is that by coordinating with the schools' PTA's we can put together an event that is easy for families to attend. This would enable the families of the students we work with to experience what we do in philosophy sessions with their children.

For the spring, we are coordinating with the UW Robinson Center on an event that would coincide with their Saturday philosophy program. This will be simple for families to attend as they will already be coming to campus to drop off and pick up their children from the Robinson Center.

Keep an eye out for an invitation to our parent events this year. We hope to see you there!

Spring Philosophy in Schools Workshop

Since its founding, the Center has run dozens of workshops in Seattle and around the country for teachers, parents, and other adults interested in facilitating philosophical dialogues with young people. Center staff often travel to other areas of the region and country to provide intensive training for schools, which might include, for example, a week of demonstration philosophy classes, after-school workshops with teachers, programs for parents, and follow-up support over the succeeding year.

Our annual three-day workshop on Philosophy in Schools at the University of Washington will be held June 23-25.

The workshop is open to teachers and others interested in exploring how introducing philosophy can enrich student learning. Participants learn about the history and methods of pre-college philosophy, and engage in philosophical discussions on topics such as: "What can we know? What makes something right or wrong? Are we free? What is a mind? How do we define happiness?" The workshop is generally approved for 16 clock hours for Washington State teachers.

The registration fee for the workshop is \$200 for general registration, \$150 for preschool through high school classroom teachers, and \$100 for graduate and undergraduate students.

Space is limited. Once we have 25 participants, registration will be closed. [See our website for more information.](#)

Questions? Please contact Jana Mohr Lone at mohrlone@uw.edu



From the Director



We started this school year with ten philosophy instructors working in eight elementary schools, leading regular philosophy sessions with hundreds of children. In addition, the monthly seminar that we run at UW for teachers, which began again last month, reminds me that dozens of classroom teachers throughout the state lead regular philosophy sessions or classes with students, with training and/or support from the Center. More and more children have the opportunity to reflect in open and inclusive conversations about some of the big questions of life, and to experience the joys of wondering and thinking with their peers about issues that matter to them. Our impact is growing.

Fall also brought us three Graduate Philosophy for Children Fellows, one a returning philosophy graduate student, and the other two both new fellows: one from philosophy and one from the College of Education. This is the seventh year of the graduate fellowship program, and during that time fifteen graduate students in philosophy or education have served as fellows, seven of them for two years. The fellowship program has allowed us to broaden our reach and expand our programs, and fellows serve as mentors to the undergraduate students who take our courses and participate in the Philosophers in the Schools program.

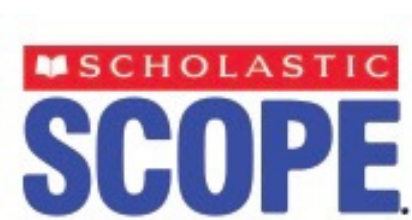
We anticipate several visitors this year from around the country and internationally. The first group, from Colorado College in Colorado Springs, were here this month, spending several days with us observing our classes in the schools and at UW, participating in our monthly philosophy seminar for teachers, and talking with faculty, graduate students, teachers, and undergraduates about our programs and future plans. We are looking forward to deepening our collaboration with Colorado College and helping to support new programs around the country.

I am also excited about my new book, *Seen and Not Heard*, which is almost finished. I anticipate sending the manuscript to the publisher in the next few months. The publication of the book should occur in the next summer!

In The Press



Center Philosophy Instructor (and former Graduate Fellow) Debi Talukdar gave a TEDx UofW talk this spring on "[Philosophy is for Everyone.](#)"



Director Jana Mohr Lone was interviewed by the magazine *Scholastic Scope* about moral dilemmas, in an article entitled, "[What Would You DO?](#)"

Monthly Professional Learning Community

For the third year this year the Center is hosting a monthly workshop on philosophical inquiry in classrooms at the University of Washington. The workshop is approved for up to 13.5 clock hours, and includes teachers and others interested in exploring how introducing philosophy can enrich student learning. We held our first session in October, with about 20 participants exploring issues such as the nature of childhood and the purpose of education.



Sponsored by the UW Center for Philosophy for Children and the Department of Philosophy, the workshop is free, including materials and refreshments. For more information, contact [Debi Talukdar](#).

High School Ethics Bowl

The [2020 Washington State High School Ethics Bowl](#) will be held on February 29, 2020, at the University of Washington School of Law. The Ethics Bowl is a collaborative yet competitive event in which teams analyze a series of wide-ranging ethical dilemmas. Over 100 high school students and teachers and 40 judges, lawyers, UW faculty and other educators participated last year, and we expect as many or more participants for the 2020 event.



Unlike debate, Ethics Bowls do not involve teams forced to take adversarial positions or hold fast to assigned perspectives. Instead, students have a forum in which to engage in dialogue, and they are judged on the quality of their analysis – how well they reason through the issues, organize and present arguments, analyze a case's morally relevant features, and respond to commentary and questions – and the degree to which they engage in a thoughtful, civil exchange.

We invite Washington State high schools to participate.

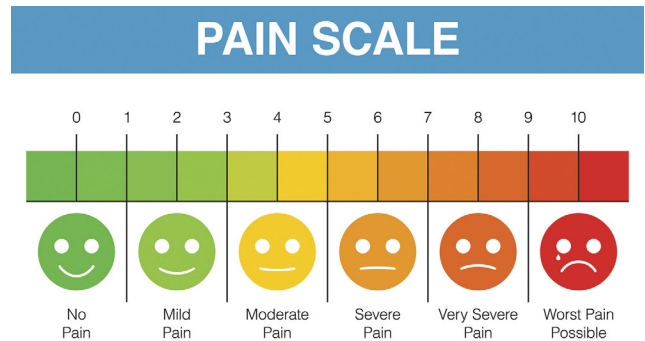
High school teams typically include three to five students (and can also include a couple of alternates) and a coach (ideally, a high school teacher). We will assign a graduate or undergraduate philosophy student as a resource for each interested school. Each school may enter up to two teams in the competition. [Schools can register here](#). The deadline for registration is December 13, 2019.

This year we have decided, after discussions with many of our past coaches, that the Washington State High School Ethics Bowl will not participate in the National High School Ethics Bowl. We are experimenting instead with hosting a stand-alone regional event that is focused on dialogue and inclusion, and decided to see what the event would be like if it was not constrained by involvement in the national competition.

Focus on the Classroom

What is Pain? Lessons from the Fourth Grade Classroom

Each time I'm working with a class, I'm always surprised by how interested students are in the phenomenology of pain. After hearing this interest from the students in one of my classes last year, I searched for a picture book and was disappointed not to be able to find something that approached the topic as directly as it seemed the students would like. Rather than giving up on the topic, I created a worksheet that includes the following questions:



1. How would you describe pain? Are there different types of pain?
2. How do you know if you are in pain? How do you know if someone else is in pain?
3. Is pain ever good? Why or why not?
4. Do you think you can have pleasure without pain? (Or happiness without sadness?)

Students can answer in whatever form they prefer—written out in sentences, in lists, or as drawings. Initially, I ask them to complete the worksheet on their own, silently, and then to discuss it with a couple of students around them. At this point, I go around to each group to see what their thoughts are and help them think through any difficulties they might be having. After about 5-10 minutes, students tend to be ready to move on to a discussion with the entire class.

I've done this worksheet with three different classes now (two 4th grade classes and a 3rd/4th grade split class) at different points throughout the year, and while I was initially concerned that students would be bored by a worksheet (as compared to a story), if done early, it has provided a good structure for classes that are still struggling to respect the norms of a productive community of philosophical inquiry (e.g., raising hands to share, not interrupting one another, staying on topic, etc.). Breaking the discussion into four smaller discussions, each based on one of the questions, helps provide checkpoints to bring them back in when they start going off-topic.

While this worksheet has elicited a good discussion from each class I've brought it to, I'm particularly proud of the class I've presented it in most recently: Jackie Osborn's 4th grade class at John Rogers Elementary. In response to the first question on the worksheet, many of us may initially think of. However, Ms. Osborn's class detailed a third type of pain, social pain, as well as positing other types such as memory pain and personal pain. Social pain, they claimed, can include behavior such as spreading rumors or bragging. While social pain might seem like it could fall under physical and emotional or mental pain, the students gave reasons why social pain should constitute a separate type of pain (e.g., even though social pain involves two or more individuals experiencing emotional or mental pain, it occurs in the space between individuals and can spread to those who were not initially involved in the experience that first caused the pain).

With such a rich discussion, I can't wait to try it with the other two 4th grade classes I'm in this year!

-Nic Jones, Department of Philosophy Graduate Student and Center Graduate Fellow

New Book

Next year will see the publication of director Jana Mohr Lone's new book *Seen and Not Heard*. The book analyzes how might society change if adults recognized children as people capable of seeing clearly and contributing in valuable ways to our world, and discusses the ways in which children, and particularly those of elementary school age (5-12), are often not listened to or taken seriously *just because* of their status as children. The book evaluates how children's perspectives on issues such as justice, friendship, childhood, and death have the potential to both enrich children's lives and enlarge our societal thinking about many important topics.

Graduate Fellows

This year the Center has three graduate fellows – one from the College of Education and two from the Department of Philosophy. We are very grateful to alum Dan Gerler (BA, Philosophy and Psychology, 1983) for his generous gift supporting the fellowship program!



Elina Castellano was a first-generation college student and is a first-year Philosophy PhD student. Before attending UW, Elina got her bachelors degree from John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. There she was able to be part of the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program and, because of the help she got from them, she realized the importance of helping minorities and students of color succeed. With this same mindset, Elina wishes to help children, especially children of color, to understand that their questions and opinions matter.



Ari Hock is a second-year PhD student in the College of Education. He is interested in how people learn with digital technologies in informal environments and across settings. Prior to pursuing graduate studies, Ari worked on the digital marketing team at KaBOOM!, a non-profit that builds playspaces in underserved communities. Ari is focused on helping children realize their philosophical proclivities by building skills related to listening, analyzing, and communicating.



Nic Jones is a second-year Philosophy PhD student and a second-year P4C fellow. They have worked as a TA at the UW in introductory philosophy of science and introductory logic courses, as well as through the Robinson Center on campus teaching philosophy to middle and early high schoolers. Before attending UW, they spent four years teaching as an SI leader at the University of Michigan-Dearborn in a variety of subjects including psychology, sociology, economics, and statistics. Nic's greatest joy when teaching is seeing students break out of rote memorization and start to think critically about whatever topic is at hand.

PLATO Conference

PLATO (Philosophy Learning and Teaching Organization) is holding its tenth anniversary on “Ethics in Schools, Communities, and the Public Sphere.” The conference will be held June 26-27 at University of California San Diego, and will focus on ethics – in schools, the university, communities and the public sphere, and across the lifespan. Of all philosophy’s areas of focus, ethics is perhaps one of the most accessible, the way many are introduced to the discipline both in and out of school and at various stages of life. During the conference, we will explore how to incorporate ethical perspectives into discussions that unfold in educational and other public spaces across all age groups. The conference aims to present a diverse set of perspectives on ethics education.



Submissions from PK-12 educators, graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, administrators, and others interested in ethics education are welcome. Submissions on other topics in philosophy in schools and public philosophy will also be considered. We welcome proposals for conference presentations, workshops, and a poster session. Proposals, aside from workshop proposals, will be blind-reviewed. All proposals must be submitted by December 1, 2019. [More information on requirements for proposals can be found here.](#)

Advisory Board and Staff

Thank you to our Advisory Board for their steadfast support and enthusiasm!

Kenneth Clatterbaugh, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at University of Washington

Karen Emmerman, Lecturer, Department of Philosophy & Comparative History of Ideas Program at University of Washington, and Philosopher-in-Residence, John Muir Elementary School, Seattle

Dan Gerler, University of Washington Philosophy Alumnus

Sara Goering, Associate Professor of Philosophy at University of Washington and Center Program Director

Jean Hanson, Community Volunteer and Former Seattle Middle School Teacher

Judith Howard, Divisional Dean of Social Sciences in the College of Arts & Sciences at University of Washington

Polly Hunter, Director of Development at Children's Hospital at University of Virginia

Jana Mohr Lone, Center Director

Terrance McKittrick, Teacher at Nova High School, Seattle

Janice Moskalik, Instructor in Philosophy at Seattle University

David Shapiro, Faculty in Philosophy at Cascadia Community College and Center Education Director

Christine Stickler, Director of the Pipeline Project at University of Washington

Debi Talukdar, Ph.D. Candidate, College of Education at University of Washington and Philosopher-in-Residence, Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, Seattle

Staff

Jana Mohr Lone, Director

Sara Goering, Program Director

David Shapiro, Education Director

Kate Goldyn, Outreach Coordinator

Supporting the Center

Philosophy in schools makes space for children and youth to explore together some of the foundational questions in life that matter most to them. Students often observe that this is one of the few places in school that they feel empowered to ask their own questions and seek their own answers, building their confidence in their own perspectives and ideas.



We need your help!

The Center's work is largely made possible through individual donations.

Gifts from donors help fund our Philosophers in the Schools program, the Philosophy for Children graduate fellowships, the High School Ethics Bowl, our parent programs, and our annual workshop for teachers.

Resources are needed to provide more support and education for teachers and reach more young people interested in philosophy. We are working to build our capacity to keep philosophy in the schools growing! With continuing budget cuts at the University of Washington, your support is more crucial than ever.

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Center!

You can make your donation [here](https://www.philosophyforchildren.org).

You can also send a check to:
Center for Philosophy for Children
University of Washington Box 353350
Seattle, WA 98195-3350

Your gifts make all the difference - thank you!