Call for Papers: “The Philosophical Novel for Children: History, Theory, and Prospects”

2012 American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Annual Meeting
December 27-30, 2012, at the Marriott Atlanta Marquis, Atlanta, GA
Special Symposium of the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children

Overview: 2010 saw the passing of the two greatest pioneers in the Philosophy for Children (P4C) movement, Ann Margaret Sharp and Matthew Lipman. In appraising their monumental work and legacy, scholars have tended to focus solely on the impact Sharp and Lipman had on educational philosophy and pedagogical theory. In addition to these areas of scholarly contribution, however, Sharp and Lipman also devoted considerable effort to the construction and reconstruction of the philosophical curriculum. In this regard, Sharp and Lipman pioneered the use of the philosophical novel for children as a way of both initiating and teaching children to do philosophy. But important questions remain about the philosophical novel for children, not only with regard to its function as the curricular centerpiece of P4C, but about the theory and practice of narrative in both education and philosophy, the location of the novel within the history of philosophy, and the future of the philosophical novel and curriculum in pre-college philosophy.

Lipman saw his own philosophical novels for children as “models of doing philosophy that are clear, practical, and specific.” In this sense, teaching philosophy requires more than exposing students to its logical form—that is, it’s most distinctive and essential qualities—but also to its function and the circumstances of its emergence and practice. Thus philosophical novels are a way of “dramatizing philosophy” that allow students to both recognize and assimilate its praxis. This Lipmanian understanding of the philosophical novel and its role in education has been celebrated and championed by some scholars (eg., De Marzio, Kennedy, et. al), while criticized and tempered by others (eg. Murris, Hand, et. al). Given the diversity of current perspectives on the philosophical novel, the time is ripe for furthering the conversation on the history, theory, and prospect of this highly significant and contested area of philosophical and educational inquiry.

The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) is calling for papers that explore the theoretical and pedagogical significance of the philosophical novel for children, to be presented at the IAPC group session of the 2012 American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Annual Meeting, December 27-30, in Atlanta, GA. Presented papers will also be considered for publication in a special issue of Childhood & Philosophy, the official journal of the International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC).

Possible Topics Include:

• Theories and forms of narrative and narrativity that support and/or challenge the theory and practice of children’s philosophy;
• The construction and/or reconstruction of the history of philosophy via the philosophical novel;
• The relationship between philosophical argument and philosophical narrative;
• The question of whether philosophical novels are sufficient for the teaching of philosophy;
• The philosophical novel as model of/for philosophical praxis;
• Qualitative and/or quantitative research studies of philosophical novels;

Submissions: Electronic submissions are required and should be sent to Joe Oyler at oylerj@mail.montclair.edu. Papers must be in MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf). Papers may not exceed 3,000 words in length. Submissions should include a word count and 150 word abstract (not counted in total word count) on the title page. Papers should not contain any information identifying the author of the submission. In a separate title page document, please submit the following: title of the paper, abstract of the paper, author’s name, affiliation, e-mail address and phone number. Submission deadline: Papers must be received by Monday, October 8, 2012.

Notification and Presentation: Authors of accepted papers will be notified by Monday, November 5, 2012. As requested by the APA, all papers will be posted on the IAPC website prior to the conference (www.montclair.edu/iapc). Presenters will be required to pay the conference registration fee, and APA members are encouraged to maintain their APA memberships. APA members are also encouraged to submit papers to the main program, in addition to participating in this group session. At the group session, a laptop and projector will be provided. Presenters who wish to use PowerPoint slides must submit them to oylerj@mail.montclair.edu no later than December 5, 2012.

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REFERENCES


