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Editorial

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Article abstract

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Paideusis, **Volume 18 (2009), No. 1, pp. 1-4.**

Editorial

MICHELLE FORREST, GUEST EDITOR
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This special issue of *Paideusis* contains refereed papers from the Conference on Open-mindedness and the Virtues in Education held in honour of William Hare at Mount Saint Vincent University, October 2-4, 2008, on the occasion of Dr. Hare's retirement from full-time teaching. As with any festschrift, this volume contains articles by Dr. Hare's colleagues, former students, and admirers. Their own writing has been informed by the educational ideals he has articulated and refined over close to forty years of scholarship in philosophy of education.

The career of William Hare can be divided into numerous phases corresponding with the foci of his scholarship and beginning in his graduate-student years with an interest in moral education, specifically the topic of responsibility (1970). Hare's early writings take up the topics of intention and care (1971a), teaching judgement (1971b), educating amid cultural diversity (1972), and human rights and rhetoric (1973a), to name a few. Following the example of other leading philosophers of education, Dr. Hare contributed responses to major government reports on education (1975a, 1971c), demonstrating the critical importance of our discipline to policy-making. As early as 1973 he began to publish on controversy in the classroom, leading to his book on that theme (1985a), and culminating in one of his most widely-read articles, on the notorious case of Jim Keegstra and the challenge it poses for the ideal of open-mindedness (1990a). Controversy in classrooms, science, and courtrooms continues to bring topicality and real-life rigour to William Hare's style of philosophizing, as his article in this issue attests. His first book-length treatment of open-mindedness (1979) provoked great interest and many responses in which other ideals, such as fairness, tolerance, and neutrality, were offered for comparison. As a result of the ensuing debate in the literature, Hare published a book-length defense of open-mindedness (1985b) in which he models a thorough analysis of his critics in the spirit of the very ideal he articulates. Those like me, fortunate enough to have been a student of William Hare, can attest to the fact that this ideal is as alive in his classroom as it is in his scholarship.

Dr. Hare's interest in early 20th century philosophers of education led to an article on Bertrand Russell's contribution to philosophy of education (1987) as well as more specific writings on Russell and critical thinking (2001), one of which was translated into Swedish. His article on the contributions from philosophy of education to reflection on the teacher's tasks (2000) is one that is continually praised by my graduate students for its clarity and welcome overview of the discipline. Teacher educators across the disciplines will be familiar with William Hare's very influential *What Makes a Good Teacher?* (1993), in which he takes up several of the virtues or excellences without which the concept 'teaching' can barely be distinguished from 'instructing.' This work has influenced a generation of teacher educators, as have his important collaborations with colleague, John Portelli, in which the two philosophers have collected introductory articles in philosophy of education for teachers (2001/1996/1988), written and collected case studies from classroom practice (2003/1998/1993), and called upon leading thinkers to succinctly articulate key questions for educators (2007 & 2005). Multiple

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editions of Hare and Portelli's edited works speak to their continued importance in B.Ed. and graduate education worldwide.

Another noteworthy aspect of Dr. Hare's scholarship has been his ongoing interest in making his work available through multiple media. This was demonstrated in his editing of and contribution to an audio cassette (1990b), now on CD, on 20th century philosophers of education. Dr. Hare's support for multiple modes of disseminating scholarship was also demonstrated at the conference with the presentation of a video interview with the honoree initiated by former students and colleagues, Mary Jane Harkins and Sonya Singer. As it turns out, the camera loves this modest philosopher of education, picking up subtleties of expression not evident in the lecture hall.

Having published over 100 articles and chapters in leading journals, 10 books, 32 book reviews; having presented at major conferences in Canada, the UK, the USA, Australia, and Cyprus; and having been awarded our discipline's highest honours, William Hare has had an influence in philosophy of education that has been considerable and will continue to be felt for generations to come. The same can be said for his influence on teacher education. For all of his many years of teaching, he has continued to teach an introductory course in philosophy of education to B.Ed. students. This practice is one philosophers of education would do well to emulate for both the future of the discipline and the good of life in schools.

Although William Hare has retired from full-time teaching, his scholarly output remains undiminished. We are, therefore, fortunate in this festschrift to publish one of the honoree's most recent essays. In the inaugural issue of *Paideusis* in 1987, Cornell Hamm described what a reader can expect from Hare's work: "rigorous conceptual analysis, precise argument, scholarly and thorough treatment of subject matter, relevance to education, clarity – in other words, good philosophy of education" (p. 48). Dr. Hare remains true to form in the opening article of this issue, "Socratic open-mindedness." An interest in Socrates is long-standing in Dr. Hare's career (1981, 1986, 1997), as one might expect from a leading philosopher and teacher who has refined the art of Socratic questioning in his classroom. In this essay, Hare credits Socrates with the emergence in the West of the philosophical conception of open-mindedness, seeing it as part of the Socratic requirements of serious argument and in the nature of human wisdom, and drawing out these points in his trademark style by relating the ideal of open-mindedness to a notorious court case.

In "Open-mindedness, Critical Thinking, and Indoctrination: Homage to William Hare," Harvey Siegel confronts the ideal of open-mindedness head on, commending Hare for his powerful clarification and defense of it, but claiming that, though it is a necessary condition of critical thinking, it is not sufficient and therefore that critical thinking is the more fundamental epistemic ideal for education. Dr. Hare's response to Siegel's presentation at the conference began a lively debate between the two philosophers, perhaps a taste of new work to come.

Scott Johnston examines how teachers are to apply a professional code of ethics. In "Rule Following, Standards of Practice, and Open-mindedness," he applies Hare's insight that open-mindedness must not be lost to slavish rule-following and claims that the Standards are not enough in themselves, but require an open mind in developing supervening rules for their appropriate application. He suggests that Herman's Rules of Moral Salience offer the guide needed in a teacher's daily, moral decision-making.

In "Open-minded Environmental Education in the Science Classroom," David Burns and Stephen Norris take a critical look at the tendentious nature of some approaches to environmental education. They contend that value-endorsing approaches, presenting certain arguments for stewardship and sustainability as non-controversial, fail to offer open-minded science education by not distinguishing ethical from scientific claims.

Chris Higgins analyses open-mindedness in "Open-mindedness in Three Dimensions" by examining it in terms of Dewey's distinction between recognition and perception and the concept of disavowal, by looking at the virtue dialectically through what closed-mindedness reveals, and by applying psychoanalytic group dynamics theories to how open-mindedness plays out on the

interpersonal and social levels. He concludes that, by speaking to the tension and balance in moral life, open-mindedness acts as a meta or organising virtue.

Burns and Norris team up with Colin Piquette in "Virtue, Objectivity, and the Character of the Education Researcher." Following Hare's elaboration of the teacherly virtues in *What Makes a Good Teacher* (1993), they ask 'What makes a good researcher?' Examining the question in light of the Canadian Tri-Council policy on ethical research conduct and Rudner's objective science of ethics, they conclude that the key problems of principle ethics can be avoided if the ethical education researcher is understood to be a certain kind of person.

In "The Teacher as Listener: Educative Listening, Interruptions and Reflective Practice," Andrea English takes up Hare's warning (1975b) not to assume that listening is something people do naturally and she develops the idea of educative listening. English defines the unexpected response from a student as an interruption that serves as an opportunity for learning and, drawing from Dewey in her examination of listening-learning connections, she claims that reflective teaching entails educative listening and suggests how lesson planning in teacher education can become a productive site for developing good listeners.

I examine the issue of controversy in the classroom, in "Sensitive Controversy in Teaching to be Critical," beginning from Hare's point (1985a) that the nature of a controversy hinges upon how it disturbs us, defining what makes a controversy sensitive, and drawing together insights from feminist theory and traditional rationalism in an attempt to elucidate the spirit of criticism needed to teach across difference.

William Hare's career as a scholar, teacher and colleague has been exemplary in countless ways, not least because of his devotion to the educational ideals he articulates in writing and embodies in teaching. As he reminds us (Hare 1993), "sometimes, in attempting to satisfy our ideals, we manage to achieve what would otherwise have been impossible. Such attempts can give us a new sense of what is possible" (p. 2). For renewing our sense of the possible, Dr. Hare deserves our gratitude. May he forgive us the selfish hope that his insights in retirement will continue to inform our work in education.

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Credits & Acknowledgements

The caricature of William Hare that graces the cover of this issue is the work of Dr. Hare's son, Antony Hare, a professional illustrator whose work appears regularly in *The National Post*, *BC Business*, *Esquire UK*, and *Maisonneuve*. Readers of William Hare's books may note Antony Hare's cover designs on several of these publications.

The Open-mindedness and the Virtues in Education Conference and, consequently, this special issue would not have been possible without the work of my co-chairs for the conference, Robert Bérard, Cornelia Schneider, and Eva Knoll; the support of MSVU Dean of Education, Jim Sharpe; and the invaluable administrative assistance of Stephanie Mills.

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