

25 June 2009

Board of Officers  
American Philosophical Association  
31 Amstel Avenue  
Newark, DE 19716-4797

Members of the Board:

On behalf of the editorial board of *Questions: Philosophy for Young People*, I am writing to request a continuation of the APA's partial underwriting of our journal. *Questions* was first published nine years ago following a project request from the APA's Committee on Pre-College Instruction in Philosophy. The initial issue was completely funded by the APA; subsequent issues have been subsidized by annual grants of \$500. We would like to request that this funding level continue for the next year as well.

### **Project Purpose and Benefits to Profession**

*Questions* is an annual journal dedicated to providing a medium for young people to contribute their philosophical reflections while also giving them and their teachers resources for engaging in philosophy in the pre-college environment. The variety of work that we publish is fairly broad within those parameters. For example, the 2008 issue included a philosophically oriented poem on the nature of beauty written by a student in Hong Kong, samples of work produced by students in Long Beach, California, and reflective essays on the changes that practitioners of pre-college philosophy found in their own approach to philosophy. The issue also continued our now long-standing relationship with the Kids Philosophy Slam by including the winning student entries at the various grade levels. We also printed reviews of three books aimed at pre-college philosophers, a short description of Putnam's "brain in a vat" thought experiment, and several pedagogically oriented pieces. I have enclosed a reprint copy of 2008's issue for you to examine. (The 2009 issue is currently being finalized.)

Since Alison Reiheld and myself took over the primary editing of the journal four years ago we have been working systematically toward improving the quality and perception of *Questions*. Our eventual goal is to develop *Questions* into a semi-annual publication recognized as a valuable resource to the profession. Our moves to include reviews and balancing work oriented toward instructors with work produced by students, we believe are indicative of our approach to remain true to the mission of the journal while growing it in size, reputation, and readership.

Over the last eight issues (and the forthcoming ninth), *Questions* has been serving the profession of philosophy by providing an outlet for philosophers who do pre-college instruction to display and discuss their work. In addition, by providing a mechanism for children to display their ability to do philosophical work we believe that *Questions* is an appropriate entry point for young philosophers to engage in proto-professional work. In the recent (2007) UNESCO report "Philosophy: A School of Freedom", *Questions* was included as one of five journals doing work in the area. Of the five, one of the journals stopped publication in 2000 and three are focused on

work in Europe and Australasia. *Thinking*, published by Montclair State University, is the only other peer resource to *Questions*. In contrast to our aim to balance work by professional philosophers and young people, *Thinking* tends to focus on scholarly articles on cognitive development, the history of philosophy with children, and empirical research on outcomes of pre-college instruction. Recognizing that we serve different missions, the editors of *Thinking* and ourselves have entered into an informal agreement to refer authors to each other for submissions which are a “better fit” for each journal.

### **Timeline of project**

*Questions* is published annually over the summer months. The activities associated with the journal can be broken down into programmatic and production oriented tasks.

#### *Programmatic tasks*

Throughout the year members of the editorial board seek out potential submissions to the journal. The bulk of this work is understandably done by Alison Reiheld and myself in our roles as co-editors of the journal. Some of this outreach is through scholarly conferences. For example, while attending last summer’s AAPT conference I spoke with each presenter who was doing work on pre-college philosophy. Similarly, at the APA-East this last December I spoke with several attendees of the session arranged by the Committee on Pre-College Instruction in Philosophy. In addition to these sorts of direct outreach steps, we are always looking out for potential contributors, reviewable resources, and programs for pre-college philosophy. While Jana Mohr Lone (the prior chief editor), and the larger editorial board had done much to raise awareness of the journal in the early years of its publication, over the last several years Alison and I have reached out to many individuals who have published work in journals which do not specialize in philosophy for children or people who otherwise come to our attention for their current work. We view these sorts of tasks as program building, in that a contact in one year may result in submissions in later years.

#### *Production oriented tasks*

Since its inception *Questions* has been published in the summer. While the initial deadline for submissions was earlier, we have shifted the deadline to the end of March. This is for two reasons. First, the prior (December 31) deadline apparently was often overlooked in the flurry of activities at end of a term and year. Submissions would routinely be sought out in the spring for the upcoming issue, resulting in larger scramble for content. In addition, we have a working relationship with the Kids Philosophy Slam to publish their winning entries. Since their selection of winning students does not occur until mid-May, and page layout could not occur until their entries were received, it made more sense to time the deadline nearer to their submissions and the actual publication.

As submissions roll in throughout the course of the year, and certainly following the deadline, Alison and myself are in contact with those who have sent in work to keep them apprised of the status of their work. We also at this point do some preliminary editing work and guide the authors in improvements to their articles. In late spring/early summer we distribute to all members of the editorial board a rubric for article selection along with blind-review copies of all submissions that appear on target. Over a period of several weeks the entire board is in email

discussion about the articles, and provides feedback regarding which pieces seem best suited for publication. Alison and I then collate the comments, selecting the individual pieces that eventually run in the journal. Because of the pre-editing process we have little need for additional editing and re-writes at this point. All authors are contacted to let them know the status of their pieces.

Once the accepted articles are known, Alison and I begin the process of determining in which order the pieces will run, and sketch out a preliminary layout. All of the content and our ordering of pieces is sent to our publisher, the Philosophy Documentation Center, for initial layout. We both go over the proof copies, make corrections, and when done approve the printing. Our goal is to go to press in July so that the issue will be mailed in August and on hand at the beginning of the academic year.

### **Budget and Finances**

No member of the board, including the co-editors, is compensated for time on the journal. The incidental costs associated with the gathering of submissions and review copies has thus far been absorbed by our institutions. As such, the only costs for the project are those associated with typesetting, printing, and mailing. For this reason, the Philosophy Documentation Center retains funds for the journal. We receive quarterly updates related to financial matters.

To put it plainly, *Questions* would not exist without the continued past involvement of the APA. The APA underwrote completely the first issue, and starting with the second issue has contributed \$500 annually. Beginning in 2003 in honor of the death of Lori Fells, an editorial board member and associate director of the PDC, the PDC has “matched” the APA’s contribution to the journal. (Their contribution comes as a credit to our account; in essence they write off a portion of the production costs of the journal.)

Subscription rates were low for the early years, partially because the journal was easily available for free at APA conferences. The numbers have been improving more recently, but it remains the case that *Questions* is financed through contributions, not subscriptions. In part because of the early low subscription rates, the Northwest Center for Philosophy for Children at University of Washington (the home of Jana Mohr Lone) covered shortfalls. In one case the shortfall was \$872.

The current funding commitments we have are \$500 annually from York College of Pennsylvania (home to Rory Kraft) and \$200 annually from the Northwest Center for Philosophy for Children. In addition, as mentioned above, the PDC has committed to matching the \$500 contribution from the APA.

Without the APA’s funding (and thus, without the PDC match), we have commitments for \$700 annually. The total production cost for the last issue was \$891.33. This amount was lower than the prior year’s \$1525.64 because of a shift in the printing format as well as a move toward printing on-demand rather than printing a full run. (\$1,500 is a pretty accurate average of the costs for the prior issues.) As our subscriber base increases, the costs will again rise. We hope to return to the approximately \$1,200 level within two years as our content continues to expand and the printing costs increase with additional subscriptions.

Over the last three years we have been seeing an increase in subscriptions and with the upcoming inclusion of *Questions* as part of *POIESIS*, we are hopeful that trend will continue to grow. Additionally, over the last few years as a member of the APA’s Pre-College Instruction in Philosophy subcommittee I have been able to see ways to more fully integrate *Questions* into the ongoing discussions about how to best raise the profile of pre-college philosophy. (While

*Questions* began as a project of the PCIP subcommittee for some time now *Questions* has operated independently of the committee.) I am hopeful that these connections will better serve the committee, the journal, and profession. To the extent that these goals are met, there should be an accompanying increase in subscriptions and financial health.

### **Steering Committee**

Attached are CVs for the academic members of the project steering committee/editorial board. The board is:

John Davis, Founder, Kids Philosophy Slam  
Betsy Newell Decyk, University Ombuds, California State University, Long Beach  
Sara Goering, Asst. Professor of Philosophy, University of Washington  
Ashraya Gupta, student, Columbia University  
David Heise, Asst. Professor of Philosophy, Humboldt State University  
Rory E. Kraft, Jr., Asst. Professor of Philosophy, York College of Pennsylvania  
Jana Mohr Lone, Director, Northwest Center for Philosophy for Children  
Megan Mustain, Asst. Professor of Philosophy, St. Mary's University  
Michael S. Pritchard, Willard A. Brown Professor of Philosophy, Western Michigan University  
Alison Reiheld, Ph.D. Candidate in Philosophy, Michigan State University  
David Shapiro, Faculty Member, Cascadia Community College  
Hugh Taft-Morales, Teacher, Edmund Burke High School, Washington, DC  
Wendy Turgeon, Asst. Professor of Philosophy, St. Joseph's College

### **Summary of Request**

*Questions: Philosophy for Young People* is requesting that the APA provide funding of \$500, as it has in years past, for the continued publication of the journal. We believe that we provide a valuable service to current professional philosophers and are an outreach mechanism to attract future philosophers. The impact of the APA's contribution is effectively doubled through the PDC's matching of APA funding. We are thankful for the past support from the APA and hope that continued funding will enable us to continue to grow and serve as an outlet for an underserved area of philosophy.

If you have questions or desire clarifications, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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York College of Pennsylvania  
Co-editor, *Questions*  
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