

Looking Outward: Doing Better Philosophy of Education in Public

Winston C. Thompson

The Ohio State University

It is, perhaps, quite an understatement to claim that recent months have asked for a degree of flexibility of us all. From unexpected transitions to remote learning, to indefinite work-from-home arrangements, to updated masking/vaccination requirements, precious few of us have avoided needing to shift away from a familiar *status quo* towards a considerable amount of uncertainty. But these transitions have also been an opportunity for reconfiguration. In many cases, we have been asked to locate the essence of our activities and rediscover them in new formats. Though not without difficulty, in some cases, this has led to real improvements in accessibility and agency. For example, in comparison to their traditional form, many virtual conferences have seen growing numbers of international participants' (i.e., unencumbered by travel costs) and working parents' (i.e., more able to move between care and professional labor) engagement. Flexibility has found us facing new options and finding opportunities.

As this journal transitions from the end of the current volume to the beginning of another, I am excited about the new possibilities ahead. Philosophy of education is very much a field in flux and, by remaining thoughtfully flexible, we might steadily iterate towards desirable redefinitions. The current issue (i.e., Issue 4) demonstrates elements of that drive towards thoughtful flexibility in a few ways. By more directly engaging with the outstanding work carried out across the regional societies within our field, the journal might become more representative of the breadth of work undertaken in philosophy of education each year. By widening the scope of languages published, the journal might less often miss out on the cutting-edge scholarship and exciting discussions occurring beyond the *status quo* of simply defaulting to English. By more directly challenging various status quo assumptions in education and the narratives around it, the journal might continue to serve as a venue for asking meaningful and consequential questions about identity, power, and potential. The articles

and responses in the pages ahead suggest a field very much looking outward in an attempt to better engage public matters in the philosophy of education.

Heather Greenhalgh-Spencer provides a terrifically thoughtful analysis of online learning, focusing on online doctoral programs and the special dimensions of that space that deserve thoughtful attention as many institutions reconceive of themselves and their offerings. In this, Greenhalgh-Spencer analyzes “scholarly dispositions,” carefully considering how these might be pursued within virtual locations. Henry Lara-Steidel responds to Greenhalgh-Spencer by extending the range of considerations to be foregrounded in thoughtfully designing online doctoral programs. Lara-Steidel points to elements of self-identity and community as educational outcomes worthy of pursuit.

Across a suite of articles and a response, Uzma Jamil, Shaireen Rasheed, and Shilpi Sinha invite the reader into an ongoing conversation about race, identity, and the core definitions of our academic spaces. Jamil asks probing questions of racialized systems of power in university spaces, asking the reader to consider how status quo expectations of academic work often perpetuate white norms—even if they do not explicitly invoke them. Rasheed investigates the trend of opposition to critical studies of race in educational contexts, asking how educators might ethically respond to these challenges without underserving the students and teachers already facing a silencing form of oppression. In response, Sinha ties these two articles together by demonstrating how both seek to push against the claims of objectivity and impartiality that mask forms of racialized power, privileging whiteness in educational spaces and practices. Drawing on DuBois and others, Sinha links these analyses of education to a broader analysis of the public political context.

From the Southeast Philosophy of Education Society, Austin Pickup asks the reader to engage with the fierce urgency of now in philosophy of education. By invoking these powerful words as drawn from Martin Luther King Jr., Pickup aims to reorient aspects of our field towards better engaging with the demands of justice and democracy that have emerged in ongoing public conversations. John Petrovic responds to this call with a patient exploration of

the nature of ideology and the limited potential for change that exists under those circumstances. Petrovic's response might be read to ask what possibilities remain for urgency in philosophy of education, given the deeply embedded ideological commitments he has identified.

From the North Eastern Philosophy of Education Society, Rashad R. Moore reframes long held narratives regarding tensions in Black educational history in the US. Rather than engaging a narrative of rivalry between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, Moore focuses attention on the friendship made visible in historical study of Morehouse College president John Hope. In this analysis, Moore begins to sketch a vision of Black education built on friendship, belonging, and community. Campbell F. Scribner responds to Moore by highlighting the significance of interdisciplinary (i.e., history and philosophy) scholarship on education, extending Moore's analyses by posing Aristotelian questions of the rich conceptual work found in the article.

As the journal proudly publishes its first Spanish language article (presented in its original and translated English forms), Sebastián Aragon Castellanos and José María Taramona Trigo draw attention to Peruvian philosopher and educator Augusto Salazar Bondy. Through Bondy's work, they study the very relationship between the school and community, asking that we reconsider the essence of that intersection. Samuel D. Rocha responds to Castellanos and Trigo by invoking scholars and educators Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich, suggesting that they might serve as useful intellectual entry points for a deepened understanding of Bondy's work and significance.

These articles constitute a tangible example of the journal's potential for flexibility in reaching beyond the *status quo* expectations that might have defined previous incarnations. As I complete my editorial role in relation to Volume 77, I am excited about the new possibilities ahead. From wonderfully thoughtful colleagues coming on to shape the next volume's focus, to a field that, possibly now more than ever, stands ready to do philosophy of education in response to public concerns, the transitions ahead surely contain very much promise and potential.