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The 2009 Sir Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation
Ethics in Leadership Fellowship
to study:

*Methods to improve the quality and rigour
of secondary education in the area of
Philosophy and Ethics, with a particular
focus on US Ethics Bowls.*

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Signed: Matthew Wills  Dated: 17 January 2010



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Commonly Used Abbreviations

American Philosophical Association	APA
ASIA Pacific Advanced Network	APAN
Association for Philosophy in Schools	APIS
Association for Practical and Professional	APPE
Community of Inquiry	COI
Dialogue Australasian Network	DAN
Ethics Bowl	EB
Federal Association for Philosophy in	FAPSA
Germantown Academy	GA
Hawaii International Conference on	HICE
High School	HS
Illinois Institute of Technology	IIT
Indiana University	IU
Intensive Freshman Seminars	IFS
Philosophy and Ethics	P & E
Philosophy for Children movement	P4C

It should be noted that this paper is;

- a representation of only very small proportion of all my recorded notes;
- it is not inclusive of all the books, research papers, CDs, promotional materials, annual reports, and other resources that my contacts were kind enough to supply in order to aid the research.



Introduction

The Winston Churchill Fellowship programme is a wonderful opportunity for an individual to compare and contrast their area of specialisation with others outside of Australia. The following is a compilation of notes derived from interviews and text resources collected over a period of seven weeks whilst meeting with people involved in the US Ethics Bowl Competition and specialists in teaching Philosophy and Ethics. Over these seven weeks I visited and attended many US Universities, High Schools, Primary Schools, Para-Educational Organisations and Conferences. The list of people and places I visited was by no means exhaustive but the aim was to gather as much information and resources as was possible, which would be useful for the ongoing success of Philosophy and Ethics with a particular focus on the development of our Philosothon competition.

Ever since we started the Hale School Philosothon in 2007, I have wanted to learn more about US Ethics Bowls and how this event and its success can inform our own competition. I have also been eager to find out more about the way in which Philosophy and Ethics is taught in the US because the COI model that we use extensively originates there. I have been very fortunate to be given the opportunity to undertake this Fellowship so that I can benchmark our programs and initiatives against other similar organisations. It also gave me the opportunity to gather resources and make contacts with people in other educational institutions. I hope that this fellowship will be useful in the ongoing success of the competition and help develop excellence and depth in the provision of this important subject area in Australian schools.

Without the support and assistance of many people this Fellowship would not have happened. I want to particularly express my gratitude to the Sir Vincent Fairfax Ethics in Leadership Foundation for supporting this project.



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- Binu Jayawardena
- Qantas Assistant- Sue Crockett
- Students- My 2009 Year 11 & 12 Philosophy and Ethics classes.
- My Family- Kathryn, Lachlan and Alexander



Executive Summary

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This executive summary outlines the findings and recommendations of the research compiled whilst in the USA. There I attended meetings, conferences, visited schools, colleges and universities in the United States *seeking to discover and explore methods to improve the quality and rigour of secondary education in the area of philosophy and ethics, with a particular focus on observing and researching US Ethics Bowls*. The reason for this focus is to inform and shape the development of our new Philosophy and Ethics program here in Western Australia and the development of our own Philosothon into a national competition.

Highlights

- Speaking at the International Education Conference in Honolulu on the findings of this Fellowship.
- Attending the California Ethics Bowl on Dec 5th 2009.
- Visiting five schools in Florida which were involved in High School based Ethics Bowls and speaking to coaches, students and teachers involved.
- Hearing Year Two school students in the Massachusetts say such things as; “I love Philosophy because I can disagree with my friends and still be friends.” & “I love Philosophy because it is my best friend”
- Speaking with Professor Rob Ladenson who started the Ethics Bowl competition in the US twelve years ago and then oversaw its growth into an important national event.
- Observing a Bioethics class at Germantown Academy in Philadelphia.
- Attending the Eastern Division American Philosophical Associations conference in New York with 3000 other delegates.



Major Findings:

The research highlights similarities and divergences between the Ethics Bowl competition and the Philosothon. It also identifies helpful resources and establishes useful contacts for the ongoing development of Philosophy and Ethics.

1. The US Ethics Bowl competition is a wonderful national success story and there are many lessons to be learnt from this success. An Ethics Bowl is, nevertheless, fundamentally different to the Philosothon in nature and focus e.g. it is primarily a University based initiative. The involvement of High Schools in US Ethics Bowls is an exciting new development. The Ethics Bowl in general appears to have had a similar growth story to our Philosothon. Basically students from both continents enjoy philosophical and ethical discourse.
2. The Australian education system has embraced Philosophy and Ethics as a legitimate and rigorous subject in High Schools more so than US High Schools. If US schools do teach Philosophy and Ethics at this level they generally do it in the context of Applied Ethics courses or Social Studies courses but more often they do not teach it as a standalone or even an embedded subject. I had some indications that some thought it an 'Adults Only' area. Philosophy and Ethics as a separate subject area flourishes at University and College level in the US and at an Elementary/Primary level there are some exciting initiatives such as those identified in this report.



Recommendations:

The research puts forward the following recommendations for consideration and action.

1. A National Philosothon Competition is something we should work towards for the future, perhaps for 2011. This fellowship has provided a useful set of parameters for the development of a National Competition. The possibility of inviting interested teams from various Australian states to an inaugural national Philosothon Competition seems feasible. It may be easier to organize this in Perth, however, it would be more accessible in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra or Brisbane. The involvement of organizations like APIS, FAPSA and DAN would be vital.
2. On the basis of my observations I think Australia has a great deal to offer the US in terms of Senior Secondary Philosophy and Ethics Curriculum. I would recommend the P & E Course and related resources in Western Australia (other Australian states have similar P&E courses) to educators in the USA as an excellent curriculum model to introduce critical thinking skills and ethical thinking to students, a vitally important area in the curriculum. I have included links to this curriculum model in the bibliography.
3. The creation of a Foundation or Institute at Hale. This organization would seek to attract funding from philanthropic families and organizations. It would promote best practice in the teaching of Philosophy and Ethics in Australian Schools. The organization would be based on the Squire Foundation model and would work with philosophers and educators (specifically targeting new teachers of Philosophy and ethics) to foster rigor and excitement about the subject area.
4. A review of Philosothon procedures- While there has always been a formal procedure for review from the Philosothon judges which has been instrumental to the success and growth of the competition there is a need to consider some of the findings of this report. I suggest that we invite submissions from interested individuals and groups who would like to contribute to a review. Issues raised in this report include the development of the national competition, the use of non-specialist judges, developing more prescriptive score sheets, role clarifications, charging a fee for entry, the use of sponsors and the involvement of para-educational organisations.



5. Explore ways of developing a discourse between students in the USA and Australia (and other countries.) There has been some work done here already by Craig Merlow but I recommend we take up his invitation. Basically utilizing modern technologies to open up new possibilities for online AGORAS (forums) to foster dialogue on important ethical issues. If other schools are interested in this then please contact me and I will pass on your information to Craig Merow in Philadelphia.
6. I would like to see students in Senior Year levels have the opportunity to implement the model I saw demonstrated by Dr Tom Wartenburg. Thereby senior secondary students would work with some Junior school students using children's literature to teach important philosophical ideas...please refer to my report from Massachusetts- (page 19) I would recommend a trial series early in Term two.

Dissemination of findings:

- Conference Presentation at International Conference on Education
- Various Online Newsletters e.g. the editor of the APA Journal has invited to write an article for late in 2010
- School Subject Area Networks and Mailing lists
- Various websites I have initiated will also carry information about this Fellowship.
- Conferences
- Winston Churchill Fellowship News



Winston Churchill Trust Fellowship Programme

3rd December – 6th December 2009, San Francisco, California, USA

Attend a Regional Ethics Bowl

- Attended the California Ethics Bowl-California State University Chico Campus

6th December – 8th December 2009, Tampa, Florida, USA

Research High School Ethics Bowls

- Visited Gibbs St High School, St Petersburg High School and Tarpon Springs High School
- Visited St Petersburg College & Countryside High School

9th December – 12th December 2009, Boston Massachusetts, USA

Meetings with people involved in teaching Philosophy to primary school students.

- Visited Mt Holyoke College to meet with Dr Tom Wartenburg and observe his students taking Year 2 Philosophy classes using children's literature at Martin Luther King Primary School in Springfield Massachusetts
- Observed Mt Holyoke College students taking Year 3 Philosophy classes using children's literature at the Chinese Immersion school at Hadley Massachusetts.
- Visited Harvard to meet with Hale scholarship student Binu Jayawardena

13th December – 16th December 2009, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Visiting people involved in the winning 2009 National Ethics Bowl team.

- Visited people involved in the Poynter Centre for Ethics. Professor Rich Miller, Dr Brian Scragg, Luke Phillips
- Met with Philosophy and Ethics lecturers at Indiana State University Dr Leah Savion, Dr Marcia Baron

16th December – 18th December 2009, Philadelphia, New Jersey, USA

Visited Germantown Academy and Centre for Bio Ethics University of Pennsylvania

- Observed Craig Merlows classes and Philosophy Club at Germantown Academy
- Met with Dr Dominic Sisti at the Centre for Bio Ethics University of Pennsylvania
- Because of Snow storm my meeting with Professor Art Caplan University of Pennsylvania was cancelled

19th December – 29th December 2009, New York, New York State, USA

Attended the American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Conference and various meetings

- Attended many sessions at the APA Conference in Times Square
- Met with the Director of the Squire Foundation- Roberta Israeloff
- Met with Professor John Kleinig, ANU and City University of New York

29th December – 6th January 2010, Los Angeles, California, USA

Meet with the founder of the US Ethics Bowl.

- Met with Professor Rod Ladenson

6th January 2010- 15th January 2010, Honolulu Hawaii, USA

Present some of my findings at an international conference.

- Attended many sessions at the Hawaii International Conference on Education. (HICE)
- Presented a paper at HICE



Winston Churchill Trust Fellowship Report

Regional Ethics Bowls- California- I have taken a selection from my diary as it will help people who are unfamiliar with an Ethics Bowl become familiar with what happens.

I arrived at Chico State University on Saturday 5th December for the California Ethics Bowl. My host, Dr Becky White, was busily organizing the last minute details for the event and it reminded me of the hectic last minute organisation for the Philosothon. Dr White took me to a pre Ethics Bowl meeting of judges and moderators and introduced me to the assembled group as Dr Wills visiting from Australia and then each person the opportunity to introduce themselves. This gave me the opportunity to correct the record. Following introductions and a brief outline of the format and guidelines we went downstairs where Dean of the University formally welcomed the teams, judges, moderators and spectators and me. He encouraged the students to enjoy the day, despite their nerves. Following this we went to meeting rooms for the first round of discussions. The first

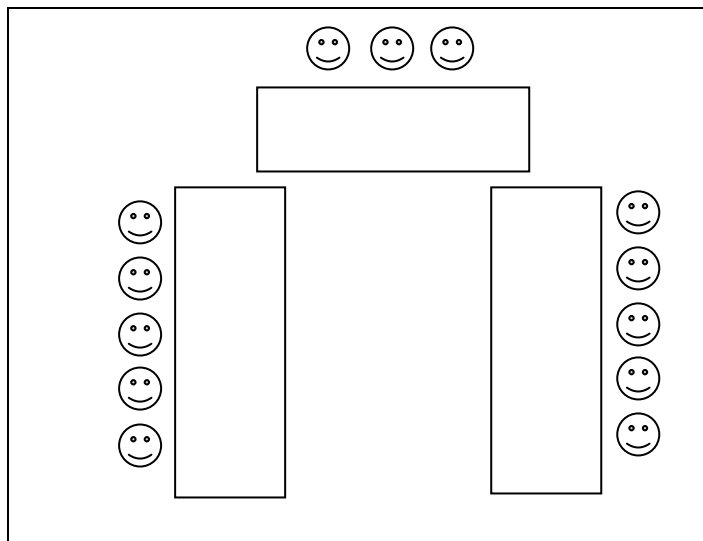
Ethics Bowl heat I sat in was Santa Cruz University vs The National Hispanic University. Five boys vs five girls. The question was;



“Is it an invasion of privacy for employers to control what an employee does in their own time or on cyberspace?” This question related to Case #7 or 13 cases. (See Appendix 1) In summary the discussion revolved around a case of a student teacher who did not get her teacher qualification because she was barred from her school placementdue to information on her MySpace page. Definitions were initially discussed and the first thing that struck me was how structured the event was. Each contribution was strictly timed to the point that students would stop speaking half way through a sentence if the timer went off.



The two teams sat opposite each other, with the three judges on the adjoining desks (see diagram below)



Seating Plan

The first heat started with introductions during which time four of the five San Jose university students indicated that they were doing Philosophy majors whereas none of the students from the Hispanic University were doing any formal study in Philosophy. This became obvious in the ensuing discussion whereby the San Jose team referred to various ethical theories, 'consequentialism' and 'duty based' approaches to the topic. While it was not necessary for teams to be studying Philosophy or Ethics it was apparent that there was a definite advantage in studying Philosophy leading up to an Ethics Bowl.

Other topics I attended included;

- Should doctors prescribe cognitive enhancing drugs at a patient's request?
- Is it morally justifiable to deceive someone in the process of seeing how 'good' they are as a part of research?
- Is it morally justifiable for a medical professional to be involved in treating people involved in torture?



- Is it morally justifiable to charge woman more for health care premiums because they use more health benefits than men?
- Is it morally justifiable to charge someone more if they are obese and take up two seats on a flight?
- And a question related to “Sexting” which I have included below because it is interesting. (See Appendix 2)
- During the finals two ethical issues were discussed. One related to the removal of Kenyan tribesman from their land and the other related to the degradation of the environment by mining companies in West Papua.

A couple of interesting features of the Ethics Bowls are noted below.

Firstly the fact that multiple judges are used meant that judges could discuss with each other the weaknesses and strengths of the case presented before asking questions of the participants. In this the judges were more involved than in our Australian Philosothon. Another interesting feature was the fact that the judges included prominent people from the community. Two of the judges in each discussion were university professors, usually, but not always in Philosophy, but the third judge was either, a psychologist, a medical doctor or a politician. This raised interesting possibilities for the Philosothon.

Another interesting feature of the Ethics Bowl was the way in which teams conferred with each other before responding to questions either from the opposing team or from the judges. This meant that they were able to decide



among themselves which was the best possible way to address the question and that other members of the team could contribute points and

issues to the a designated responder. If there was time left a speaker would defer to another member of the team so they would use as much of the time as possible. (Having said this it was not unusual for a team to conclude without using all their allotted time. Nevertheless there was throughout the



Ethics Bowl a strong sense of 'the team', rather than the individual competing.

There was throughout the Ethics Bowl a strong sense that the teams had been well prepared with varying degrees of effectiveness. Teams would swap seats depending on the topic presented (Teams did not know beforehand what topics they would be confronted with in each session) They would decide which person would respond to the topic well beforehand by dividing the topics up evenly among themselves. This meant that those teams that had 5 members would each take two/three cases and those teams that had 3 members would each deal with four/five cases. (Some teams had 6 members with a reserve taking the place of someone during the session as only a max. of 5 could sit at the table) Team members would feed pieces of paper to the speaker with information/questions on a slip of paper.

It should be noted that speakers did not have access to their notes during the ethics Bowl and this was strictly enforced. The first speaker had up to 10 minutes to present their case and he/she had to remember the arguments and the team's line of argument from their earlier preparation. There were several cases where this was done particularly well, others rambled and lacked cogency and many were somewhere in between. Nevertheless that these cases were presented without reference to notes and in front of an audience was in itself an achievement. Any notes scribbled on during the first discussion/case were collected by the moderator before the next discussion. This is again in contrast to our Philosothon where we encourage participants not to present pre-prepared arguments but to argue on their feet so to speak.

The moderator had little involvement in the discussion. Their role was to time the participants and generally to make for the smooth running of the event. This is quite different to the Philosothon where our moderators have a fundamental involvement in the discussion. The role for each judge and moderator was clearly stated in documents handed to each participant as was the role of all those involved. Having said this it was obvious that Dr Becky White was pivotal to the organisation and success of the event. An area that we can tighten up on in our Philosothon is the clarification of roles. The roles of each person need to be more clearly outlined and handed out



well beforehand. The score sheets at the Ethics Bowl were extensive and easy for each judge to fill in and this can also be worked on in our event.

At the end of each session the scores were read out by each of the judges and then collated on a white board at the front of the room. e.g In the first session;

National Hispanic University Team 2	UC Santa Cruz Team 1
30	37
37	40
36	42
103	109

Round One Score

There was seldom any contention in the heats as the sessions I observed had an obvious winner. However, the final between University of California Team two and University of Santa Cruz Team one was different with both teams being much closer in experience and skill. At the end of a fascinating presentation and responses the first two judges had exactly the same total score for each team (although the opposite individual scores Judge 1-39/42 & Judge 2-42/39). It came down to the final judge who interestingly was a lecturer at California State University but gave the Ethics bowl to Uni of Santa Cruz. It was in the end a fair result as I had observed both teams on several occasions and the Santa Cruz team seemed the stronger overall.

I was struck initially by how intense the competition was as teams were obviously tense and uptight at the outset. I was also impressed by the way in which participants at times agreed with the opposing team and tried to add to their argument. While the Ethics Bowl is adversarial by its nature which is obvious by its seating plan (and so very different to our Philsothon) it was



interesting to see the way in which teams did not always debate the topic at hand.

There did seem to be the same gender issues involved in the Ethics Bowl as has been observed in the Philosothon. Both teams in the finals were all male and while this was fair from what I observed it did seem to reflect the fact that Philosophy and Ethics is an area dominated by the male gender at University level in the US. It was interesting to note that in the mixed team I observed, and I only observed one such team, the one female on the team did seem to defer to the males on the team. This may, however, have been because it was not her chosen topic. There was an all female team as mentioned but there was a broad range of ability within the team.

Following the Ethics Bowl some of the organisers, judges, coaches and students returned to a restaurant for a meal and an informal opportunity to reflect on the day's events. I gather this is a regular feature of Ethics Bowls and is usually a formal opportunity for organisers and coaches to look at any problems or issues which are then fed back to the national committee. It had been incredibly long day and so many decided not to attend this meeting/dinner but it seemed like a good idea. This was also an opportunity for spouses to attend. It was a casual affair and a good opportunity for me to present Dr White with a gift, one of the plates commissioned for the Fellowship.

High School Ethics Bowls – Florida – My days had been carefully and thoughtfully structured around a series of visits to high schools involved in a High School Ethics Bowl Competition. I met with Valarie Sherman Gibbs Street High School. We were on time for our meeting with Nick Wright who was the Ethics Bowl Coach for the Gibbs High School team. Nick met us in the foyer and walked us back to his office where we sat and spoke about his team. Apparently Gibbs Street High had entered one team in the previous year and despite not gaining a place felt chuffed to even be involved in the event. There was no explicit course in Philosophy and Ethics at Gibbs Street but this was the case for all schools involved. Nick was not teaching having been given an administrative role and



he was running the Ethics Bowl Preparation meetings as an after school co-curricular activity. He had found a problem attracting students as there is a strong co-curricular sports program at the school which takes students away from extra after school commitments. I indicated that we meet our students at lunch time which he was interested to hear about. He was also interested to hear about the Philosophy in School movement which he knew nothing about and which had shaped our own program and the Philosothon and I indicated that I would be happy to pass on information about this model. He had a team of 6-9 students at this stage and he was eager to enter two teams in 2010 if possible. Val informed me later that there had been gang problems at the school and she was returning there later in the week in her role as a liaison person for the District in the Character Development leadership program to facilitate small group work involving students from around the county as facilitators. It seemed to be a wonderful initiative and the enthusiastic involvement of the school in the Ethics Bowl seemed to be another good sign for a healthy future. After our hour long meeting with Nick I offered to write to his principal and he enthusiastically accepted the offer so I placed this on my ever growing 'to do' list of things to do on my return.

We left Gibbs St High for a meeting at St Petersburg High School which was another school involved in the Ethics Bowl. There we met with the teacher/coach Leila Davis and her enthusiastic Ethics Bowl team (pictured here). St Petersburg HS was a much older school than Gibbs St had been, in fact the later had only recently been

moved to a new site. St Petersburg HS was one of the oldest in the county and the age of the buildings was testament to that. It was clean and colourful but the building dated from the early 1900's. After signing in and the usual questions about my strange accent....we met in



the classroom and Leila kindly had arranged for several of the team to be there. The students spoke glowingly of their experience at the previous Ethics Bowl. They were bright and very keen to be involved. Only half the team could make it to the meeting but what they lacked in numbers they made up for in enthusiasm. The team had won the previous Ethics Bowl and



they proudly showed off their trophy to us. They spoke of the value of teamwork and the value of the process which they contrasted with their usual involvement in debating. They indicated that they preferred this sort of competition as it gave them the freedom to agree with the other teams if necessary. They felt that it was much less adversarial than debating which I found interesting in that I had found the Regional Ethics in California very adversarial. The other thing that impressed me about these students and this competition was that was completely voluntary and there was no course on offer in Philosophy and Ethics to compliment it. They were thinking of introducing an Ethics program taught at St Petersburg College but this was in the future and incidentally would make them ineligible to compete in the Ethics Bowl as it would give them an unfair advantage. As the bell went and the next class filed into the room we took a photo of the group and then thanked them for their time.

We had to rush to our next appointment which was a good $\frac{3}{4}$ hour drive away at Tarpon Springs High School which was on the outskirts of the Pinnaeus County Schools. We arrived at the end for the school day and a group of students and teachers were sitting in a large room listening to a speaker addressing the group about what is involved in an Ethics Bowl. Elaine Naves was the teacher in charge of the Ethics Bowl team and there were about 15 students present. It became apparent that most were new Ethics Bowls as only a couple of the students at the meeting had participated in the previous event. They indicated that to me later that they had been “dragged in” at the last moment but they were enthusiastic to be involved again next year and eager to be better prepared. Elaine indicated that she thought they might have enough students to enter two teams. She was very



keen to see this sort of opportunity offered to her students and at the end of the meeting after the students had left she invited Maureen Mahony from St Petersburg College, who was there for the meeting, to return early in the next year to help prepare the team. After the mandatory picture of Elaine for my visual diary we departed.

The next day I had arranged to meet George Sherman at St Petersburg College (not to be confused with St Petersburg HS



which I visited the previous day.) St Petersburg College is a large private College in the Pinnaeus District. Despite there being six separate campuses for the College in the county the drive there was straight forward. I met George in the schools Admin Building and signed in after which we went into a large building an impressive sign “Applied Ethics”. We went to visit the High School within the College grounds which was a brand new purpose built facility. I met with the Principal Starla Metz who spoke at length about the value of the Ethics course on offer from the Applied Ethics Institute which is part of the St Petersburg College. I was impressed by the extent to which the school’s principal saw the Ethics bowl and particularly the study of Ethics as important in the life of the school and the way this has had a flow on effect in the rest of the community.



George Sherman’s involvement was obviously instrumental but it was obviously something that was owned by the school. In the course of the conversation we spoke about many things including the co-curricular involvement of students. We finished our meeting with a photo and returned to George’s Office. On the way he explained the structure of St Petersburg College. I found out that the Applied Ethics Institute has 10 full-time and 20 part-time professors who deliver instruction in a compulsory course which all 40,000 students at the College have to undertake in order to graduate. The founder of the Ethics institute Keith Goree had passed away earlier this year and the grief was still quite palpable. We returned to George’s Office and spoke at length about the High school Ethics Bowls and in that time he printed out a copy of the rules and an outline of the volunteers responsibilities. It appeared to me that the roles were better defined and something I thought we could work on for the 2010 Philosothon. After our meeting George introduced me to Jane Till, the Head of the Applied ethics Department and several other faculty members. We then headed off to a Christmas party for faculty members in other part of the college. After a quick bite to eat and some casual conversation with various staff members we headed off to Countryside High School where we were meeting Maureen Mahoney along with students and coaches of their



Ethics Bowl team. I followed George who drives a Smart Car, which is about a half the size of a mini minor, and which made a strange sight alongside the larger gas guzzlers which are so common throughout the US. In the library we found 10 students sitting in a circle with Sophia Kugeares the coach from last year. We introduced ourselves to the group and then I explained the background to the Winston Churchill Fellowship and the reason for my journey. We got to speaking about a possible Dialogue between students at the school and my students in Perth. The students were very excited about this and I was introduced to the Skype master Mr Peterson who works in the library and was very keen to set something up between our schools. Anyway we spoke for about ½ hour after which time the students had to head off and so did we. I parted from George and Maureen in the foyer but not before handing George a replacement gift plate. I was deeply thankful for my time in Florida and very impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment I had seen from teachers and students. It seemed to me quite a feasible thing to work towards an opportunity for my students to engage in online discussion on ethical issues in time. This is however complicated by the time differences involved but where there is a Will there is a way!

Teaching Philosophy to younger Children-Massachusetts- I met with Dr Tom Wartenberg initially in his office at the beautiful Mt Holyoke College. (See picture below) He explained that we would have another person accompanying us throughout the next few days. I explained to Dr Wartenberg the nature of my visit and what I was hoping to achieve. He



gave me a copy of his new book “Big ideas for Little Kids” and showed me some quotes from the children who are learning Philosophy through literature. Comments like “I love Philosophy” and “Philosophy is like my best friend” seemed to be typical of the comments. It was Tom’s work with the Squire Foundation that had

caused me to include his work on my itinerary. While we were talking Prof. Kathleen Higgins arrived who interestingly I had met last year in Melbourne at the Australian Philosophical Association Conference. (small world) Dr



Wartenberg suggested that we go for lunch nearby where he would expand on the plans for the next few days. Apparently all the schools in the area had been closed due to the snow, except for the Martin Luther King Charter School which thankfully was still open. We would be going in buses out to the school which was in an impoverished part of the town of Mt Holyoke. We needed to get the schools mini buses and so we had to walk the length of the college which provided some magnificent images. Below is an image I took as we walked through the college. We found the buses nearby semi-buried in snow and we split up into two groups. After picking up the students back at the Skinner House we headed off to Martin Luther King Charter School in Springfield. There were five students in my bus and a graduate student who drove the bus. I started by asking the students what they intended to do when they finished school. Apart from one student who wanted to be a mortician the rest indicated that they were unsure. As we drove into Springfield it was very run down and the students started talking about human rights. They were interested to know more about how aboriginal people lived as there had been some news about the recent apology made by the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. We arrived at the school in the early afternoon. The school was housed in the back of a church. We trudged through the snow into the back door and up some stairs. After all fifteen of us had signed in we broke up into four groups, each group to take a class of Year 2 students. It was obvious that the school was down in numbers due to the snow as one group had only several students. I sat in on one of a group of seven students. I was introduced to the students at the start who were quite excited that they knew where Australia was on the map which they pointed out quickly on the map. Settling the students down as they were obviously excited the students started with a breathing exercise which was a good way to begin. They then reminded each other about the rules for the discussion which were placed on a stand at the front of the room. ...one person talks at a time etc.



...The students were doing a lesson on Epistemology using a book by Bernard Wiseman called 'Morris the Moose' which is about a moose who thinks 'a cow' is 'a moose'. The students read the story carefully and then



stopped along the way to explore various philosophical and ethical questions such as “What is the reason that Morris gives for the cow being a moose?” and; “What is wrong with Morris’s reasoning?”. The story goes on to outline how Morris thinks he knows that the cow is a moose. The students ask; “Do you agree with Morris that he knows that the cow is a moose?” In order to explain why he thinks the cow is a moose, Morris gives a reason for his belief, namely, that the cow has four legs, a tail and things on his head the students asked; “Give an example of something you know for which you have a good reason.” The cow then tries to persuade Morris that she is not a Moose, but a cow. The students ask; “How did the cow do this?” When he sees Morris and the cow the deer thinks they are both deer. Morris sees this and gets angry and yells at the deer. “Does yelling make the deer right” the students ask. Then the animals drink and see their own reflections. The students ask; “Do you think that people have a hard time admitting they are wrong?” And then at the end of the book the animals all disagree with one another about who is what. Student ask; “When the animals disagree with one another, how do they try to convince each other that they are right?” and “Can philosophical discussions be settled by looking?” I did not record each of the students responses to these individual questions but the students responded thoughtfully and some with a great deal of insight. They were told at the end of the session that they would be coming to Mt Holyoke College for a special party. Tom had told me earlier that they would each receive a special colourful badge titled; “I am a Philosopher” and a certificate to mark the end of their course in Philosophy. The students were very excited about this prospect.

I briefly sat in on another class group later that afternoon. I wanted to see the only male member of the group in action. I eventually found the other group and they were unfortunately rapping up the session. They were asking the children to go around the room and tell each other what they liked/or did not like about Philosophy. Some of the responses were precious and most enlightening. Some said that they liked Philosophy because it gave them a chance to speak about their own ideas. One girl said



that she liked to have the opportunity to disagree but still be friends. Another said that they liked Philosophy because it gave them a chance to learn about important ideas.

On the way back to Mt Holyoke College the students reflected on their experience and found the lesson had gone really well, particularly considering that some of their best 'Philosophers' had not tuned up. As most of the people in my bus were not people I had observed it was interesting to hear of their experiences including the group that only had 2/3 students.

We arrived back at Mt Holyoke College for a meeting with the student teachers. Tom was eager to give us the opportunity to discuss with students the session that we had just observed. We sat in a large room and the students spoke again of the things that worked well. I asked at one point about discipline issues and whether they had ever found the need to remove students from the class. They indicated that the students came from troubled homes in some cases and that a teacher does remove students from class and they have done likewise although it is rare. They spoke about the fact that many students were absent because of the weather and that teachers tended to stay in the room and they indicated that the teachers had "come around" from initially being wary to being very interested in the process.

The following day we visited the Chinese Immersion School in Hadley. The students were very excited and I overheard a comment on the way to the class to the effect that the young girl was so excited that she wanted to go to the toilet. In class Areal, the student teacher reminded the class of the rules again and then introduced the students to the story. 'Emily's Art' by Paul Catelanotto. This lesson was on Aesthetics. Areal obviously had a good rapport with the children. The class of fifteen students sat in a circle. Areal went through the story carefully stopping along the way and asking them questions. The story starts with Emily school holding an art competition. Students were asked; "Who has been in an art competition? Students responded carefully and eagerly to questions. The story goes on to explain that Emily's art was not chosen to be the winner of the competition. Students were asked; "Which of these paintings do you like?" and "What are some things that you consider to be Art?". In one of Emily's paintings she has four mothers and she explains that this is because her mother is so busy in



the mornings. The students were asked whether they like chocolate or vanilla ice cream better. This elicited a sea of responses from the students and made an obvious link with the Kantian notion of beauty as a matter of taste.

Throughout this session the picture book was held up to the students full of bright and vivid images of the art work being discussed. The judge of Emily's Art is the principal's mother. Her qualifications are outlined to the children; "She is qualified because her cousin is married to an artist". Students identified that being the principal's mother does not make someone a good judge? The judge in the story loved Emily's picture when she thought it was a rabbit but when Emily's teachers told the judge it was a dog, she changed her mind and chose another picture. Students were then asked; "Is this how the picture should be judged?" and "Is it possible to know what an artist is thinking when they paint a picture?" The students were totally engaged in the story and were very disappointed when they were told that they were not going to finish the story today. Instead they went around the group and explained why they liked Philosophy and all responded carefully and thoughtfully. Students were told that they were about to graduate and that they were coming to Mt Holyoke College for a special ceremony. They were very excited!

There were a number of things that came out of these sessions that would be useful for the course I am teaching. I thought that my students could benefit greatly by doing something similar with our Junior School students. Also this might also help develop a love for Philosophy at a young age at Hale. I resolved to discuss this further with the new Head of the Junior School at my school and if this does not work out then discuss it with the local Primary School Principals at Woodlands PS or Wembley Downs PS. We could do it in our double Philosophy and Ethics lesson. Dr Wartenberg book is an excellent resource, titled "Big Ideas for Little Kids" (see Bibliography).

I met with the Principal of the school who was very enthusiastic about the program and she was interested to hear about the Philosophy for Children Movement. (P4C) She reflected on the rich tradition of Philosophy in China and the way in which this sort of course can complement this. I left Massachusetts feeling quite inspired by what I had seen and despite some



earlier misgivings I thought this section of the Fellowship was something of a highlight.

I also spent a day at Harvard with Hale Old Scholar, Binu Jayawardena who is currently doing a scholarship there. Here we explored the library, museums and the chapel over the course of the day. This was a thoroughly enjoyable day and fulfilled a long held dream to visit this great school.



The 2009 National Ethics Bowl Champion team- Bloomington Indiana- I had a day free and so decided to see my first American Grid Iron Game. (Colts v Broncos) On the following day I drove to Indiana State University which was some 3 ½ hour drive away from where I was staying in Indianapolis. My main reason for visiting this University was to meet with those involved in coaching and preparing the winning Ethics Bowl team. Indiana State University had won the National Ethics Bowl earlier in the year and I had been encouraged to meet with Professor Richard Miller who had coached this team together with the faculty members from the Philosophy Department. I was to meet with Professor Miller later in the day. I arrived in the mid morning on the 14th December having arranged six appointments for the day. My first appointment was with Professor Leah Savion, a lecturer in Philosophy at Indiana State University. I eventually found Professor Savion's office. She warmly welcomed me and after explaining the purpose of my visit and the new course in Philosophy that we teach at Hale she gave me lots of resources and ideas for teaching critical thinking, which is a core area in the new P & E course at my school. She gave me a copy of her undergraduate text book in critical thinking which seemed to cover all the key concepts covered in the critical thinking course in WA. The title of the Book is; "Thinking and Reasoning." On later reading it will prove to be a wonderful resource for Philosophy and Ethics as it covers formal and informal fallacies in a very user friendly way. She had many other texts she referred me to including; "How We Know What Isn't So: The Fallibility of Human Reason in Everyday Life" by Thomas Gilovich. This explores faulty explores our tendency to reason from incomplete or ambiguous data, a



tendency to seek out "hypothesis-confirming evidence" and the habit of self-serving belief. In the second half of the book, he debunks holistic medicine, ESP and paranormal phenomena.

She also referred me to SOTL which is a growing movement in post-secondary education.

“SOTL is scholarly inquiry into student learning which advances the practice of teaching by sharing this research publicly. It builds on many past traditions in higher education, including classroom and program assessment, K-12 action research, the reflective practice movement, peer review of teaching, traditional educational research, and faculty development efforts to enhance teaching and learning.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scholarship_of_Teaching_and_Learning



Professor Savion spoke about the Intensive Freshman Seminars (IFS) which are run out of Indiana University which provide student with an entree to Life in the University. Students enroll in specially designed courses, including courses in Philosophy. IFS courses are limited to just 20 students and are very

popular. This seemed like a good idea for our school to consider for students going into Year 9. With the introduction of Middle Schools it seemed like a useful entree into secondary schooling.

Other resources she suggested were “The Philosophy of Language” by A Martinich. The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Language by Lepore/Smith and she mentioned various video presentations that she uses on TED.com, such as Henry Markram’s presentation on the mysteries of the mind in which he suggests that these mysteries will soon be solved. He suggests that mental illness, memory, perception: are simply made of neurons and electric signals, and he plans to find them with a supercomputer. This would be useful for a Community of Inquiry (COI) when we deal with the Philosophy of Mind in Year 11 (reference in the Bibliography).



Also Michael Shermer's presentation on 'Strange Beliefs' –

“Why do people see the Virgin Mary on a cheese sandwich or hear demonic lyrics in "Stairway to Heaven"? Using video and music, skeptic Michael Shermer shows how we convince ourselves to believe -- and overlook the facts. This is a great resource for critical thinking.”

This presentation would be useful in the area of Philosophy of Science. Also interesting is Al Sheckel's presentation on perceptual illusions that fool our brains. Loads of eye tricks help him prove that not only are we easily fooled and we kind of like it.

Another presentation that was recommended by Professor Savion was one by Danial Gilbert from Harvard who demonstrates just how poor we humans are at predicting (or understanding) what will make us happy. (A useful resource for our Year 10 Introduction to Philosophy course on Happiness).

Finally Hans Roslings presentation on Global Health-

“You've never seen data presented like this. With the drama and urgency of a sportscaster, statistics guru Hans Rosling debunks myths about the so-called "developing world.”

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/hans_rosling_shows_the_best_stats_you_ve_ever_seen.html

This would be a useful presentation for Critical Thinking as it shows the problems with bias in data interpretation.

I then had a meeting with Dr Brian Schrag (pictured right) at the Poynter Centre for Ethics which is attached to the University of Indiana. The Poynter Centre for Ethics was an impressive colonial building on a corner block on a key thoroughfare to the University.



Dr Schrag had been an early contact person for the Ethics Bowl and he had put me in touch with many folk for my trip. As I was to find out later he had also been intimately involved in establishing the national identity for US Ethics Bowls. This is a key ingredient to my Winston Churchill Fellowship as I was interested to find out how the competition moved from being a regional event to a successful national competition. This was important because I wanted this fellowship to inform the move of our Philosothon from regional to national competition. We spoke about a number of things and I was particularly interested in the process of the competitions development which appeared to be largely by word of mouth and through the Association on Ethics Institutes. One interesting factor was that they had attracted some sponsorship soon after the establishment of the national competition. This sponsorship had covered some of the costs for the earlier national events. This started me thinking about possible avenues for similar sponsorship support for our competition in Australia. Brian also gave me an outline of the program for the National Ethics Bowl which was to be held on the 5th March. There are nine separate districts and thirty three teams competing. The program includes a mini conference, the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, a Reception and the Ethics Bowl. This seemed to be a useful model for consideration of how our own national Philosothon might proceed. Perhaps it could develop alongside the FAPSA's Annual General meeting and could include a mini conference which related to supporting Philosophy in schools.

I met with Professor Rich Miller who is the Co- Director of the Poynter Centre for Ethics. He was the coach for the 2009 winning National Ethics Bowl team. Interestingly Professor Miller's background was in Philosophy of Religion and Religious studies. He explained with some pride that Indiana University's Ethics Bowl teams have ranked in the top four in the nation, taking the national championship in 2004 and making it to the finals and semi-finals in 2003 and 2005, respectively. In 2009 they won the national competition. He outlined the preparation process for his team and mentioned several resources which were helpful. Among other things I was particularly interested in how they chose



their Ethics Bowl team. He explained that they advertise among students involved in their courses and then select from those who express an interest. He went on to recommend a book which he uses which on further exploration seems an excellent resource for teaching Ethics; “The Elements of Moral Philosophy” by Rachels James. Following our meeting we parted but not before taking a photo of the two of us in front of the Ethics Bowl trophies which the IU had won. He had arranged for me to meet with the current coach Luke Phillips later in the day.

I met with Professor Marcia Baron who teaches Philosophy at IU. She listened carefully while I outlined the Winston Churchill fellowship. She outlined her courses and interests which centred on ethical theory, the History of ethics, and philosophical issues in criminal law. She uses primary sources with her students such as John Stuart Mill’s “On Liberty”. She went on to suggest several key people that she thought would be interesting contacts for me. She suggested people such as Professor Gareth Mathews from the University of Massachusetts and Associate Professor Megan Laverty from Columbia University. She was keen to offer any support and answer further questions via email but as it was getting late and so I departed for my final meeting for the day.



At the end of a long but productive day I had the opportunity to meet with the current coach of the IU Ethics Bowl team, Luke Phillips. Luke was a young and enthusiastic doctoral candidate (pictured below-far right) who had taken on the role of coach for the 2009 regional Ethics Bowl Competition. He explained that he works closely with Professor Sandy Shapshay who acts as an advisor to the IU Ethics Bowl team. The IU team had come third in the regional competition and therefore they had secured a place in the nationals in 2010. There were 18 teams in the regional competition, a team from the University of Kentucky placed first, with a team from Wright State University placing second.



Luke was happy to explain what they do by way of selection and preparation. Meetings are held weekly closer to the event and the team members will all read the source material before the meeting. At these meetings students will grapple with a sustainable position



in relation to the issue. Each student will select two topics which they will present speak on and they will select someone to play the part of ‘devil’s advocate’ as someone else presents their position. Luke was also happy to answer further questions via email and so we agreed to stay in touch. I am very keen to see how these teams fare in the National Competition in March 2010.

Visited Germantown Academy and Centre for Bioethics University of Pennsylvania -Philadelphia - Pennsylvania – In Philadelphia I had the opportunity to visit Germantown Academy for a day. Craig Merow was my contact there. Like the Florida contacts I had been introduced to him through the Director of the Squire Foundation. Craig had received a grant from the Foundation to develop online Agoras, which are Philosophical Communities of Inquiry about philosophical and ethical Issues. Craig was keen to see some sort of ongoing dialogue between our students.

I arrived at Germantown Academy (GA) on Wednesday 16th December and was struck by the beauty and history of the college. GA is the oldest non-sectarian day school in the United States. Founded in 1759, The GA is celebrating its 250th anniversary of its founding in 2010. Craig has a passion for Philosophy and Ethics and as you walk into his classroom this is apparent by the sea of images and great quotes from important Philosophers that surround you in his classroom. On several walls there are head high bookcases full of Philosophical works and all the other walls contain images and quotes. Quotes like; “Eat Think and be Merry!”. I was surprised to find that most of Craig’s teaching time is spent teaching Maths. He is doing a Masters Degree in Bioethics and the subject area is obviously something of a passion for him. He particularly enjoyed his senior Bioethics class which was a new and unusual initiative. It is unusual in the sense that few schools



offered the subject to students in Philadelphia. We initially chatted for some time about Philosophy and he was fascinated to hear that we have a high



school based P & E curriculum. During our discussion he mentioned an interesting discussion between the Australian Philosopher Professor Peter Singer and Disability Rights Activist Harriet McBryde Johnson. He later sent a copy of the discussion via this link below and I include it as an

excellent discussion starter when dealing with personhood.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/16/magazine/16DISABLED.html?pagewanted=1>

During our initial meeting Mr Merow indicated that he intended going to the APA conference in New York and that we would probably catch up there. Following our discussion he had a Maths class which I sat in on. It was a small remedial class of Maths students and he had recently marked their work and many had failed. He proceeded to give them an inspiring pep talk along the lines that -"School could go on without grades but not without ideas". He wanted them to understand the concepts, the ideas and not focus on their grades. He was obviously an excellent teacher and well respected by the students. Following that lesson he had his Bioethics class. The Head of the School, James Connor attended the lesson which consisted of about twenty students and two selected students reading their papers. Students then asked questions and discussed the papers. Both papers related to bio ethics and specifically the sale of organs. The students put forward a case largely based on rights...the right of a human to control their own body. The papers were well thought through and the questions and responses were indicative of the profound insight and their enthusiasm students have for the subject area.

Later Mr Merow and I had some time to discuss his idea of an Electronic Agora. I have included below an outline of the invitation I had earlier received from Craig.



“The Germantown Academy Bioethics class invites you to become an integral part of our class. You can join us on the blog, *The Student Philosopher*, which appears on the Squire Foundation’s website (<http://thephilosophicalstudent.blogspot.com>). It provides readers with a series of introductory dialogs designed to provoke discussion, annotated lists of references, and suggestions for essay topics. High school students from around the world are encouraged to submit essays for possible posting and people of all ages are invited to interact with the student authors. The plan is to have the blog function as an “electronic agora.”

In ancient Greece, the Athenian Agora was a 30-acre market place down the hill from the Acropolis. It was there that Socrates earned his “gadfly” status by artfully questioning anyone willing to discuss fundamental philosophical issues. Some of these conversations are preserved in the dialogs of Plato. We hope to recreate some of the intellectual excitement of that place and time in this electronic “agora.”

The idea of an online AGORA sounded interesting when I first heard it and more interesting having listened to his students. A problem with a live discussion is the time differences and while I would prefer a live and dynamic discussion Mr Merow’s idea could be more workable if we can find the time.



Later in the day Mr Merow had a lunch time Philosophy Club meeting. Students were to read a selection from the story by Kurt Vonnegut, Harrison Bergeron. The stimulus material was long but excellent. In the story, social equality has been achieved by handicapping the more intelligent, athletic or beautiful members of society. For example, strength is handicapped by the requirement to carry weight, beauty by the requirement to wear a mask and so on. This is due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th amendments to the United States Constitution. This process is central to the society, designed so that no one will feel inferior to anyone else and handicapping is overseen by the United States Handicapper General, Diana Moon-Glumpers. The amount of time that students had to discuss the piece was minimal but they did a good



job nevertheless. I was surprised how many students had read the article as it was a volunteer lunch time meeting. This is an excellent resource for our unit on dystopian societies.

Leaving Germantown academy and back to Philadelphia I had a rest day then a visit to the Centre for Bio Ethics at the University of Pennsylvania and a meeting with Dr Dominic Sisti. This was another contact I had made through the Squire Foundation. The Centre for Bio Ethics is involved in research in the area of bio ethics and “the deployment for ethical, efficient, and compassionate practice in the life sciences and medicine”. Fellows and Associates with full- and part-time faculty appointments teach in a number of University of Pennsylvania schools and departments -- including medicine, law, nursing, business, education, philosophy, psychology, sociology, religious studies, and public policy -- and collaborate to advance the interdisciplinary field of Bioethics.

Dr Sisti was awarded a grant from the Squire Foundation to develop self-



contained, all-inclusive curriculum materials designed for high school teachers who would like to teach bioethics but may not have a background in the field. These materials are offered, free of charge, via the Penn Centre for Bioethics and the Squire Family Foundation websites. In addition to these

materials, the Centre plans to create a virtual presence advancing the teaching of bioethics in secondary schools. The link for this high School Bio Ethics website can be found at; <http://www.highschoolbioethics.org/>

Dr Sisti explained that he mainly works with teachers and uses the case of Terry Schriro as a way into fostering critical thinking about bio-ethics. On the website there is an excellent resource dealing with Critical Thinking, Ethical Decision Making, and Philosophical Analysis.

The Centre for Bio Ethics Project operates within four domains: teacher training, student education, web resource development, and policy development, utilizing the internet for broad dissemination and



collaborative development of initiatives. Each year, they offer several instructional workshops, intensive summer courses, teacher fellowships, and student internships. Additionally, staff deliver lectures and outreach events. Project staff members also partner with high school teachers who wish to develop bioethics curricula for use in science classes or syllabi for stand-alone bioethics courses. An example of this partnership exists in the relationship between Germantown Academy and the Centre for Bio Ethics. While at the university of Pennsylvania I visited the university bookshop which had an extensive selection of Philosophy and Ethics books where I purchased several texts which are included in this reports Bibliography.

I was to meet with Professor Arthur Caplan on the following day but unfortunately a snow storm resulted in our meeting having to be cancelled. He is the director of the Penn Centre for Bioethics.

American Philosophical Associations National Conference and various meetings- New York –

On the evening before the conference I met with Professor John Kleinig at the hotel where I was staying. He is an old scholar of Hale School and a lecturer in ethics and social philosophy at the Australian National University in Canberra (Feb-July) and the City University of New York. (Aug-January) Professor Kleinig had contacted my school earlier in the year indicating that he was wanted to make a financial contribution to the school and while visiting the school he found out about the new Philosophy and Ethics course and the Philosothon. Our meeting was to explore this possibility further. Professor Kleinig spoke of his family history and his move into teaching Philosophy. It was a fascinating story and one that helped me further think through how this support might be best used to foster the development of Philosophy and Ethics.



One of the reasons for my visit to New York was to attend the Eastern Division American Philosophical Association for Philosophy (APA)



Conference. This conference involved nearly 3000 people and was a wonderful opportunity to see what is happening in this subject area. I went to several sessions including;

- Australian Contributions to 20th Century Analytic Metaphysics- Professor Mark Johnston-Princeton
- Realism and Australian Metaphysics-Professor Brian Weatherspoon Rutgers University
- The Doctrine of Double effect as an Objective Principle - Howard Nye University of Michigan
- Present Desire Satisfaction and Past Well Being- Professor Donald Bruckner Penn State University
- Are we watching the Game? Values and Perceptions of Risk - Professor Dan Kahan -Yale University
- Public Risk Perceptions and the Legitimacy of Emotions - Professor Sabine Roeser- Delft University
- The Conservative disposition and Precautionary Principle - Professor Stephen Turner Florida State University
- Kierkegaard and Heidegger on Authenticity - Professor Noreen Khawaja - Stanford University.
- Heidegger, Kierkegaard and Authentic Being toward death Dr Adam Buben- University of Florida
- Philosophy for Children as the Practice of Freedom - Antonia Cosentino - Italy

Perhaps the most interesting and relevant session I went to was the APA Committee session: Models for Teaching Philosophy in the Pre-College Environment. This included several interesting papers, including;

- Philosophy and Integrating the disciplines in Middle School- Paul Thomson- Columbia Secondary School



- Setting Philosophical Horizons' Introducing Philosophy to Memphis Schools Michael Burrows - University of Memphis.
- Preparing teachers for Philosophical inquiry – Dr Wendy Turgeon (St Josephs College.) The session was chaired by Dr Rory Kraft who is a well known identity in this area in the USA. He is the co-editor, Questions: Philosophy for Young People.

Without going through the content of each paper and the ensuing conversations I make the following observations and reflections. In relation to Philosophical Horizons at Memphis, like the Philosothon, it draws heavily of the P4C model. Discussion groups are lead by graduate students and undergraduate majors from the Department of Philosophy at the University of Memphis. There is no grading involved and this is seen as a positive aspect of the program. Introductory Philosophy courses are offered at select High Schools. Students enrolled in this course receive college credit through the University of Memphis dual enrolment program. Philosophy for Children courses and conferences are offered at the University of Memphis to train local teachers to implement Philosophy in their classroom. Each year children participating in the Philosophical Horizons program (all age levels) are brought to the University of Memphis campus for a culminating experience. In April 2010 the culminating experience will be a performance of Plato's *Apology*.

The second paper by Dr Paul Thompson related to teaching Philosophy in the Middle School. Among some of the interesting things he had to say he indicated that "every teacher teaches Philosophy" and "Philosophy tries to pull it all (all subjects) together" I include the following link which reflects the content of his presentation for those interested in Philosophy in Middle Schools;

<http://www.columbiasecondary.org/philosophy>



The final paper by Wendy Thurgen was perhaps the most interesting and I would be happy to pass on a copy to anyone interested. The paper raised and dealt with important questions related to the training of High School Philosophy teachers;

☐ What constitutes training in philosophy?

☐ What are some of the common problems encountered by teachers in implementing philosophy with children?

☐ How can we help a teacher come to a deep and sustained understanding of the nature of philosophical questions?

☐ How can we assist these prepared teachers in an on-going way so as to best support them in their continued growth as facilitators of philosophic dialogue? Please email me if you are interested in this paper.

During the conference I purchased and obtained many resources for teaching Philosophy and Ethics. There was an extensive array of Exhibitors and Advertisers at the conference. My main obstacle was the space required to transport the material back to Australia. The following resources were purchased or given to me. There are more details in the Bibliography.

Books:

- Do you think what you think you think? by Julian Baggini
- The Cambridge Companion to Rawls edited by Samuel Freeman
- Hackett Readings on God and Free Will edited by Timothy Freeman
- How Philosophy can save your Life by Marietta McCarty

CD's:

- Kant's Foundations of Ethics A set of CD and Text of Readings from Kants writings by Albert Anderson
- A CD with computer assisted program titled 'Introduction to Logic' by Kevin Possin

I had the opportunity to meet with Roberta Israeloff, the Director of the Squire Family Foundation during one of the days at the conference. This was



very interesting for both of us. I found it very useful as I was interested to hear about the origins and workings of the Squire Foundation which seems to hold a unique place in the USA, working with philosophers and educators to ensure that all students in American secondary schools have an opportunity to study philosophy. The history of the organisation started me thinking about whether there is someone in Australia like Gary Squire who has a similar vision for Philosophy in Schools. Gary Squire has a long-standing interest in both ethics and education. In addition to studying philosophy at Oxford University before graduating from Harvard Law School, Mr. Squire also served on the board of Trustees of various schools. He believes that all high school students should have the opportunity to study ethics before high school graduation in the hope that the decisions they make, in their personal and professional lives, will be grounded in an ethical framework. The Foundation is working with many of the organisations I visited on this Fellowship and so Ms Israeloff was very eager to hear about my experiences over the previous five weeks.

Before leaving New York my family, who had now joined me in New York, and I had dinner with Prof John Kleinig and his wife, Dr Tziporah Kasachkoff in Greenwich Village. Dr Kasachkoff also lectures in Philosophy, six months in the Graduate School and University Centre of the City University of New York and six months in Ben Gurion University. This was a very pleasant evening and Professor Kleinig kindly gave us a local's tour of Greenwich Village. Dr Kasachkoff is the editor of the APA Newsletter on Teaching Philosophy and she invited me to write an article on the Philosothon later in 2010.

Meeting with the founder of the Ethics Bowl Competition -Los Angeles – California –This will perhaps be the shortest part of my report but in a sense it was the most important meeting I had while I was in the USA. Professor



Rob Ladenson is the founding father of the US Ethics Bowl. He and his wife kindly arranged to meet with me while on holidays in Los Angeles. He also was instrumental in setting up many meetings with people involved in US Ethics Bowls. When we met he outlined

the history of the Ethics Bowl Briefly, it was developed in 1993 while he was



at the Illinois Institute of Technology. An Ethics Bowl was held at IIT for two years, and in 1995 a small local competition was held where teams from DePaul University, Loyola University, and Western Michigan University were invited to compete against the winning IIT from that year's competition. In 1996, the same four schools participated in the local competition, along with a team from the United States Air Force Academy. This process of the competitions development made me wonder about the possibility of inviting winning teams from the four Australian states currently running Philosothon to an inaugural national Philosothon Competition in Sydney in 2011. Whereas it might be easier to organize this in Perth Sydney is central.

The first nationwide Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl was held in 1997 in Washington, D.C. in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics. This has now developed to the point where they also run a mini conference alongside the Ethics Bowl and the AGM on APPE. In Australia we could try to run a national Philosothon Competition with a national mini conference and national meeting for FAPSA. The National Ethics Bowl now takes place at the APPE annual meeting every year.

The United States Military Academy competed in and won the National US Ethics Bowl Championship in 1998 and 1999. In 2006, due to the number of teams wishing to participate in the Ethics Bowl, regional competitions were held at locations throughout the U.S., and the top-scoring 32 teams were invited to participate in the national competition held in February, 2007. We could work towards inviting people to participate in a national Philosothon in 2011.

Professor Ladenson spoke about the process of registration for the Ethics Bowl and the fact that Universities paid a nominal fee of \$200 US to enter the national competition. Ethics Bowl participants are also invited to attend the Association's Annual Meeting for a special fee of \$85. The Association will pay the Annual Meeting registration fee for the first 70 actively competing National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl team members. The problem with using this model in Australia would be that teachers would be supervising students if visiting another state for a national event and they may not be free to participate in the meeting. A mini conference which



catered for the interests of Philosophy students and teachers would, however, be workable.

Professor Ladenson also spoke about the process of acquiring sponsorship for the national competition. This did not cover the cost of transporting teams. This was the responsibility of the colleges involved. Rather sponsorship money was used to cover the cost of incidentals at the event. It totaled little more than \$5000 per year but it helped in the cost of running the national event. This arrangement did not involve any naming rights for the event rather included on any publicity was the name of the organization. Professor Ladenson was very interested to hear more about our competition and eager to support its growth.

Presenting my findings at an international conference. Honolulu – Hawaii

The final destination for my Fellowship was the International Conference on Education in Hawaii. Here I had the chance to present a paper based on the development of Philosophy and Ethics and my reflections from the Fellowship. This was a good chance to collect my experiences and percolate my thoughts. I also had the chance to attend the following sessions.

- Using Community of Inquiry Framework for Faculty Assessment and Improvement of Online courses - Dr Phil Ice and Dr Karen Powell
American Public University
- Differences in learning Strategies and Motivations of E learning Students and on Campus Students - Dr Michael Wright- University of Calgary
- Living Values and practical philosophy as evaluation of teaching practice - Dr Anne Gray-
AUT University
- A preliminary investigation of the impact of a High School Character Education Program on student Behaviour - Dr Hannah Toney and Dr Ronald Childress - Marshall University
- Teaching Thinking – Dr Deborah Zuerchner
University of Hawaii



- Teaching Social Studies Through Critical Thinking About Material Culture-Dr Penelope Fritzer- Florida Atlantic University
- The Effectiveness of using Picture Books in Social Studies Instruction with Adolescent students -Tammy Alexander - Alabama A & M University.
- Best Practices in Social Studies: Active Learning and Teaching-William Wilen-Kent State University
- Academic Motivation, teacher-student relationships and the transition into secondary school - Dr Roch Chouinard-university of Montreal.
- The impact of Classroom Management on a Reconstituted 9th Grade Academy - La Shonda Williams and Reginald Alexander-University of Houston
- Shakespeare 1.5 Essential Questions in the Content Area -Timothy and Martha Viator-Rowan University
- Little people thinking about Big Ideas-Martha Viator-Rowan University
- Strategic Planning that works in Schools - Peter Britton - Brisbane Boys College

The keynote speaker was Colin Kippen who spoke passionately about a unique Native Hawaiian education program revolving around the concepts of *mauli* (being and becoming) *ike* (knowing and doing) and *kuleana* (contributing) are foundational to education of Native Hawaiians. The sessions reminded me of indigenous issues in our Australian education system and I wondered to what extent the COI model lends itself, or cuts across indigenous Aboriginal learning styles of learning. This seems to me to be an area to be further researched.

There were hundreds of poster sessions. Perhaps the most useful from my point of view was a poster session titled “*WOW! Can my Students Do That? Utilizing Internet2 and Video Conferencing Resources*” by Susan Lancaster-Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education- Here I was interested in exploring ways of using technology to facilitate online discussions.



The Australian version of Internet 2 is APAN which stands for the Asia Pacific Advanced Network. This network is a non-profit international consortium designed to be a high-performance network for research and development on advanced next generation applications and services. APAN provides an advanced networking environment for the research and education community in the Asia-Pacific region, and promotes global collaboration. This may be helpful in creating a format for video conferencing with educational institutions in other countries.



Major Findings:

The research highlights similarities and divergences between the Ethics Bowl competition and the Philosothon. It also identifies helpful resources and established useful contacts for the ongoing development of Philosophy and Ethics.

1. The US Ethics Bowl competition is a wonderful national success story and there are many lessons to be learnt from this success. An Ethics Bowl is, nevertheless, fundamentally different to the Philosothon in nature and focus e.g. it is primarily a University based initiative. The involvement of High Schools in US Ethics Bowls is an exciting new development. The Ethics Bowl in general appears to have had a similar growth story to our Philosothon. Basically students from both continents enjoy philosophical and ethical discourse.
2. The Australian education system has embraced Philosophy and Ethics as a legitimate and rigorous subject in High Schools more so than US High Schools. If US schools do teach Philosophy and Ethics at this level they generally do it in the context of Applied Ethics courses or Social Studies courses but more often they do not teach it as a standalone or even an embedded subject. I had some indications that some thought it an 'Adults Only' area. Philosophy and Ethics as a separate subject area flourishes at University and College level in the US and at an Elementary/Primary level there are some exciting initiatives such as those identified in this report.



Recommendations:

The research puts forward the following recommendations for consideration and action.

1. A National Philosothon Competition is something we should work towards for the future, perhaps for 2011. This fellowship has provided a useful set of parameters for the development of a National Competition. The possibility of inviting interested teams from various Australian states to an inaugural national Philosothon Competition seems feasible. It may be easier to organize this in Perth, however, it would be more accessible in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra or Brisbane. The involvement of organizations like APIS, FAPSA and DAN would be vital.
2. On the basis of my observations I think Australia has a great deal to offer the US in terms Senior Secondary Philosophy and Ethics Curriculum. I would recommend the P & E Course and related resources in West Australia (other Australian states have similar P&E courses) to educators in the USA as an excellent curriculum model to introduce critical thinking skills and ethical thinking to students, a vitally important area in the curriculum.
3. The creation of a Foundation or Institute at Hale. This organization would seek to attract funding from philanthropic families and organizations. It would promote best practice in the teaching of Philosophy and Ethics in Australian Schools. The organization would be based on the Squire Foundation model and would work with philosophers and educators (specifically targeting new teachers of Philosophy and ethics) to foster rigor and excitement about the subject area.
4. A review of Philosothon procedures- While there has always been a formal procedure for review from the Philosothon judges which has been instrumental to the success and growth of the competition there is a need to consider some of the findings of this report. I suggest that we invite submissions from interest groups who would like to contribute to a review. Issues raised in this report include the development of the national competition, the use of non-specialist judges, developing more prescriptive score sheets, role clarifications, charging a fee for entry, the use of sponsors and the involvement of para-educational organisations.
5. Explore ways of developing a discourse between students in the USA and Australia (and other countries.) There has been some work done



here already by Craig Merlow but I recommend we take up his invitation. Basically utilizing modern technologies to open up new possibilities for online AGORAS (forums) to foster dialogue on important ethical issues. If other schools are interested in this then please contact me and I will pass on your information to Craig Merow in Philadelphia.

6. I would like to see students in Senior Year levels have the opportunity to implement the model I saw demonstrated by Dr Tom Wartenburg. Thereby senior secondary students would work with some Junior school students using children's literature to teach important philosophical ideas...please refer to my report from Massachusetts-(page 19) I would recommend a trial series early in Term two.



APPENDIX 1

Case #7: MySpace Invasion

Twenty-five-year-old Stacy Snyder, a senior at Millersville University in Millersville, Pennsylvania, was dropped from the student-teaching portion of her course work after the staff at the high school where she was student-teaching viewed postings on her MySpace page. Already frustrated by what the high school administration viewed as Stacy's poor subject knowledge, her weak grammar skills, and her overly informal attitude toward her students, the high school staff decided, after viewing Stacy's postings, that she was not an acceptable candidate for a teaching degree. When Stacy could not complete her required hours of student teaching because she was not allowed on the high school grounds, the university decided to award her a degree in English rather than the anticipated degree and certificate in teaching.

The postings that the high school staff found inappropriate included a photo of Stacy taken at a costume party. In the photo, Stacy is seen wearing a pirate hat, drinking from a plastic cup; the photo caption reads: "A Drunken Pirate." Her MySpace page also included a posting that could be interpreted as a negative comment about her supervising teacher at the high school. Millersville University had warned the student-teachers earlier that they should not post any comments about the high school staff on their web pages, nor should they direct their students to personal web pages; both directives Stacy ignored. In addition to showing general bad judgment in posting questionable photos on MySpace, employers may generally dismiss an employee for failure to follow workplace policies.

Ms. Snyder filed a federal law suit against the university, claiming violation of her First Amendment rights. She sued for her degree in teaching and the right to apply for a certificate.

Some states have enacted laws protecting employees from repercussions of personal postings on the web, but Pennsylvania does not.

The federal judge ruled against Ms Snyder, stating that the university is under no obligation to award the teaching degree without the required hours of



student teaching. The judge also stated that a teacher's First Amendment rights pertain to public matters only, not personal.

APPENDIX 2

Case #1: Sexting

The exchange of racy images between consenting adults is a phenomenon that has exploded with recent technological advances. Pornography is one of the Internet's major revenue generating mechanisms and many people report receiving unsolicited emails for pornographic websites. Users have found ways to transmit pornography with other technology, including text messages sent via cellular phone. A recent survey of 1200 teenagers revealed that one in five had used their cell phone to send "sexy or nude photos of themselves," or sexts.

Sexting can be as simple as a person sending a provocative image to his partner to inspire a wry grin. The issue has become prominent in part because the couple just described might be children, and the image might be extremely provocative. In one case a 17-year-old girl used her cell phone to send nude photos of herself to her boyfriend. After the two broke up, however, the photos began circulating among the other students at their high school. In one such case, the teen committed suicide. While sexting may facilitate easier transmission of these types of images, some contend that new messaging technology is just a new medium for old behaviours.



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