All meetings run on Wednesdays from 5.30-7.15 pm in Room 828, unless otherwise specified. Sessions are followed by a drink and further discussion in the Students’ Union for those who wish to attend. All are welcome.

24 April  A. Scott Carson (Queen’s University, Canada)
A Moral Paradox in University Governance: Good Faith and Trust
Room 828

University boards of governors are increasingly pressed by governments to accept an economic mandate by functioning as engines of economic growth and competitiveness. The success of a board is thereby determined by economic measures and targets, manifest in its approval of partnerships with business, privatized programmes and other commercial activities. Paradoxically, a ‘successful’ board could also be a ‘failure’ if it permitted the university’s academic mission to degrade significantly because of reallocated priorities. What is the board of governors’ moral obligation to the university community? How could the board be trusted to steward the university in turbulent times?

A. Scott Carson (PhD in philosophy of education, Institute of Education, 1980) has taught at several universities and held senior executive positions in business, government and academia. He is currently a Professor of Strategy and Governance at Smith School of Business, Queen's University. His research focuses mainly on governance and ethics. Most recently he has edited three books (McGill-Queen’s University Press) on healthcare governance: A Canadian Healthcare Innovation Agenda: Policy, Governance, and Strategy (2018, with Nossal); Managing a Canadian Healthcare Strategy (2016, with Nossal); and Toward a Healthcare Strategy for Canadians. Queen’s (2105, with Dixon and Nossal).

1 May  John White (UCL) with a short response from Michael Young (UCL)
The End of Powerful Knowledge?
Room 828

John White will respond to two discussions of his ‘The Weakness of Powerful Knowledge’ (London Review of Education, 2018), the first by Johan Muller and Michael Young, and the second by Jim Hordern (also LRE). The question focused on is ‘What is powerful knowledge?’ Doubts are raised about Muller and Young’s new answer to this question as well as about Hordern’s defence of Young’s position more generally. White suggests in conclusion that it would be helpful to abandon the term ‘powerful knowledge’ and use language more suitable to impartial scholarly investigations. Michael Young will provide a short response.

John White is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Education at UCL Institute of Education, where he has worked since 1965. His interests are in the mind of the learner, and in educational aims and curricula. Recent

**8 May  Adam Swift (UCL)**
*The Political Morality of School Composition: The Case of Religious Selection*

Room 828

I present a normative framework for the assessment of education policies and apply it to the issue of religious selection. Such policies can be justified, and challenged, on many different grounds. The main philosophical aim is to complement with non-consequentialist considerations the approach of Brighouse et al (*Educational Goods: Values, Evidence and Decision Making* (2018)) and to apply the proposed framework to issues of school composition and selection. I argue, further, that policies that allow schools to select all their students on the basis of their parents' religious affiliation cannot be justified.


**15 May  Richard Pring (Oxford University)**
*Philosophy as the Handmaiden of Education*

Room 828

The title derives from the well-known passage in 5th century Boethius’ ‘The Consolations of Philosophy’ where he speaks of philosophy as the ‘Lady handmaiden of theology’. The responsibility of philosophy was to clarify what was not clear in theological discourse (thereby giving rise to problems), to advance such discourse through criticism, but showing how the unreflective involvement in such discourse (without the philosophical clarification) led to much nonsense. There is much in common here with the later Wittgenstein as I hope to illustrate from the nonsense that arises when educational policy arises from creating false dichotomies.

**Richard Pring** studied philosophy under A.J. Ayer at UCL, before joining the Civil Service at the Ministry of Education. He subsequently taught in a Comprehensive School and Goldsmiths College, before joining the new Curriculum Department at IoE. Subsequently he was Professor of Education at University of Exeter, before becoming, in 1989, the first Professor of Education at Oxford University. He was Director of the Department until retirement in 2003. Most recent books: *The Future of*

22 May Sharon Hunter (Strathclyde University)
Agency and sovereignty: Georges Bataille’s antihumanist conception of child
Room 828

Whilst the academic community talks about children’s agency, participation and ‘voice’, contemporary education has become progressively more authoritarian, disciplinarian and transmissive. Rather than conceive of this divergence as a simple clash of educational values along the lines of a progressive/traditional binary, I want to consider the possibility that there has been a fundamental misstep in the way we have come to think of children’s agency. I will venture the introduction of Georges Bataille, an unfamiliar voice in childhood studies, to explore alternative conceptions of agency, through exploration of the concepts of taboo, transgression and sovereignty.

Sharon Hunter is a lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. She is interested in the concept of child in relation to modernity and counter-modern thought in the first half of the 20th Century, with the intention of gaining a different view of the contemporary educational problematic. She has written on the Frankfurt School, Surrealism and queer theory. A slight detour has taken her to the rich and varied writings of Georges Bataille, where she intends to linger for as long as the forces of neoliberal performativity allow.

29 May Randall Curren (University of Rochester, USA)
Children of the Broken Heartlands: Rural Isolation and the Geography of Opportunity
Room 828

There is a deepening economic, educational, and cultural divide between the rural ‘heartland’ interiors and large cities of the U.S. and Britain. This has immense implications for the opportunity of children in rural towns to achieve positions of respect in the wider society, yet educational researchers rarely address rural isolation as a barrier to equal opportunity. This paper will address several aspects of rural isolation, including its cultural aspects, similarities and differences between rural isolation and racial isolation, the role of educational system growth in shaping a geography of opportunity that increasingly disadvantages rural youth, and possible remedies.

Randall Curren is Professor and Chair of Philosophy and Professor of Education at the University of Rochester and an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues (JCCV) at the University of Birmingham. He was the Ginny and Robert Loughlin Founders’ Circle Member at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, for 2012-2013, and held research professorships at the JCCV and Royal Institute of Philosophy in 2013-2015. His recent works include Living Well

5 June: Carla Carmona (University of Seville, Spain)
Understanding Embodied Cognition and Making It Tangible Through Dance Education
Room 804

How can we, as educators, shed light on the fact that perceptual experience includes external processes, in which the body-in-action plays a central role and where there is no fracture between the body, its immediate environment and cognition? I shall discuss examples from dance practices (and other practices such as yoga) and propose a number of physical experiments that might to foster insight into embodied cognition. Apart from supporting many of the fundamental claims of sensorimotor enactivism, I shall describe a version of embodied cognition that is non-representational at root, and hence potentially supportive of a radical version of enactivism.

Carla Carmona joined the University of Seville in 2017. She is currently teaching Theory of Dialogue and Interculturality, East Asian Aesthetics, and Epistemology. Previously, she was Assistant Professor at the University of Extremadura. She was educated at the University of Seville and the University of Innsbruck. She has specialized in the philosophy of Wittgenstein, in particular in its application to arts and aesthetics, dance education, aesthetic epistemology, embodied cognition and knowing-how, the pictorial oeuvre and Weltanschauung of Egon Schiele and the intellectual and artistic atmosphere of fin-de-siècle Vienna. She currently develops her artistic practice under the name of 0|C.

12 June Richard Marshall Interviews
Room 828

This special session will be a celebration of the series of interviews that Richard Marshall has done with leading philosophers. The interviews first appeared online at 3:am magazine, and can now be found at 3:16. Such has been their success that Oxford University Press has now published two compilations, Philosophy at 3:AM and Ethics at 3:AM. On this occasion Richard Marshall will be accompanied by contributors to the series, and the interviews will be extended into open discussion.

Richard Marshall was until recently a contributing editor at 3:ammagazine. For his day-job he is headteacher of the Royal Greenwich trust School. Otherwise he is biding his time.

19 June Matthew Charles (University of Westminster)
The Concept of Educative Experience in Walter Benjamin’s Critical Theory
Room 828

Following a revival of interest in a theory and practice of learning influenced by the critical theory of Walter Benjamin, this paper proposes to
examine Benjamin's philosophy of education through the focus of his concept of educative experience. The centrality of such a concept differentiates his work from other critical theorists, suggesting points of contact with the liberal and pragmatic tradition, while pointing to a distinctive practice of teaching and learning (viz. transdisciplinarity, teaching-led research, mimetic education) that nonetheless needs to be problematized, it will be cautioned, in light of changed political and historical circumstances.


26 June    Michael Merry (University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands) and Darren Chetty (UCL)  
Is Faith in Citizenship Education Naive?  
Room 731

Nowadays there is widespread consensus that citizenship education (CE) lies at the heart of the mission of the school. CE includes coming to understand different points of view, and working through ideological conflicts so that shared norms and values can emerge. Meanwhile, a number of practical difficulties stand in the way: school choice and segregation; parental objections; and teacher reticence to tackle controversial subject matter. Yet even in the absence of these challenges, there remain other formidable obstacles. The authors demonstrate why faith in citizenship education may be not only naïve; CE may in fact have little chance of ever getting off the ground.

Michael S. Merry is professor of philosophy of education at the University of Amsterdam. Darren Chetty is a doctoral candidate at UCL Institute of Education.