

WELCOME BACK!



Left to right, Mike Cook(Chair), Bernadette McCreight, Alison Taysum, Rene Saran (Trustee), Sarah Banks, Dieter Krohn (Trainer), Marije Altorf, Julie Rhodes, Kirsten Malmquist(Trainer), Santosh Kumar, Vander Lemes and Artur Massana

April 2013 Award Certificate Ceremony in Birmingham

Congratulations go to Alyson Taysum, Artur Massana, Bernadette McCreight, Julie Rhodes, Marije Altorf, Santosh Kumar, Sarah Banks, Vander Lemes, on completing the rigorous 2 year facilitator training course. The training included

- Theory and application of Nelson/Heckmann Socratic Dialogue model
- Group dynamics
- Analysing the various stages of a dialogue
- Facilitator preparation for an ethical dialogue
- Delivery of Socratic Dialogues

SfCP has now successfully completed one of its targets to grow the number of English speaking Socratic Dialogue facilitators in the United Kingdom using the Nelson/Heckmann method. We now have trained facilitators in Bulgaria, England, Scotland, Spain, Switzerland and Northern Ireland.

If you are interested in undertaking with training with SfCP please contact Angella Hodgson (Trustee) admin@sfcg.org.uk and she will be happy to discuss the process.

7th International Conference in Berlin Philosophizing through Dialogue

Berlin 26 July - 2 August, 2013.

Organised by PPA, GSP, SfCP and the Institute for Comparative Ethics (Freie Universität Berlin).

This well attended conference was busy and engrossing throughout. Socratic Dialogues in English or German on Saturday and Sunday were followed, from Sunday to Wednesday, by the conference proper. In more senses than one the highlight of the conference was possibly a theatre workshop and presentation entitled, 'An empathic encounter in the midst of the North-South conflict'. Here we experienced performatively and shared experientially concerns that epitomized and vividly illustrated for many participants some of the conference's major themes and preoccupations, in which social and racial prejudice in 20th century Europe were explored in highly original and creative action research mode. The production, entitled 'Socratically Oriented Theatre' was devised, performed and produced by Richard Schmutz and a highly talented group of actors (CITSAUG) from Switzerland.

Humanistic education, the art of questioning, the role of language in Socratic dialogue, were just a few of the topics examined in a wide range of workshop discussions, on Monday and Tuesday. On Monday evening, Professor Susan Neiman, Director of the Einstein Centre at nearby Potsdam, gave a freshly considered and engaging talk, based on work currently in progress, in which she explored the subject, 'Coming of Age: thinking for yourself', making use of wide-ranging references to the work of Kant and Rousseau on the role of education and in learning to think. Unfortunately, too little time remained at the end adequately to consider all the questions raised by her stimulating talk. On Tuesday evening, we were delighted by an expressive and

accomplished performance of a piano transcription of the second movement of Beethoven's 7th Symphony. Enthusiastic applause earned from the soloist, Thomas Betz, an equally delightful short encore.

On the final day a special lecture, 'Dialogue as a means to cope with cultural diversity' was given by Prof. Dr. h.c. Heinz Kimmerle, former holder of the Endowed Chair for the Fundamentals of Intercultural Philosophy at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam. The range and number of questions, exemplifying or exploring further the potential role of dialogue in situations of cultural and racial conflict, outran the time available.

This was an exciting conference, well-planned and executed, varied in content and format but always showing thoughtful attention to and opportunities for exemplification of the conference's headline theme, responding to the challenges and potential benefits of 'philosophizing through dialogue'.

Michael Strain, 28th August, 2013.

Trustee Focus Dorothy Moir



Dorothy Moir's background is in education and her involvement in the Society for the Furtherance of Critical Philosophy began by working with Rene Saran on BELMAS Council (www.belmas.org.uk). In 1996 she attended the first International Conference and on the appointment of Trustee Pat Shipley as Honorary Fellow, became a Trustee.

Regretting the absence of the teaching of Philosophy in the English Curriculum, she introduced a Thinking Skills programme to the school of which she was Headteacher and continues, as an English specialist, to study what children, students, and adult readers can learn of philosophy through the study of literature and particularly poetry. She has introduced Socratic Dialogue to some of the schools in her area, taking part in Dialogues and supporting the Facilitator training programme. She is also using the Socratic Method to introduce students to the concept of Socratic Dialogue and as part of the AgeUK Staff and volunteer development programme in her local area.

She has contributed to the organisation of the International Conferences, ensuring with fellow Trustees that the Conference framework and content reflect, in all aspects, the principles and values of the SfCP.

She is a Trustee and Director of her local AgeUK and continues to serve on BELMAS Council as a Trustee and Director, offering, with Rene Saran and Angella Hodgson workshops and taster Socratic Dialogues at BELMAS International Conferences.

Active in supporting her local community in various capacities, including as a Library Volunteer, she was also trained as a Relate Counsellor; in her spare time she is a keen gardener.

Socratic work in Bulgaria 2012 - 2013

Socratic dialogue as a method of philosophizing was introduced in Bulgaria at the beginning of the new millennium. Since then the number of people acquainted with the method increased significantly, especially after the year 2010 when the training of 8 facilitators was completed thanks to the support of the SfCP and the German trainers. During the last year a number of Socratic dialogues were performed in various settings: with students who train for teachers at the universities of Sofia and Plovdiv, and in organizational settings. Among the topics of the dialogues were: What is knowledge?, What is language?, Where is happiness?, Are women and men to be treated equally?

In February 2012 an international conference 'Dialogue and cooperation in education' took place in Sofia University. High school and university teachers from all over the country took part in it, some of them brought their students. Dr. Horst Gronke from Germany facilitated a dialogue in English, the topic was 'What is good education?' Two other dialogues were conducted during the conference, preceded by a theoretical part containing a lecture by Dr. Gronke and discussion on the various features of traditional and Nelsonian Socratic dialogue. The feedback was very positive. A number of teachers from different schools invited Socratic facilitators to perform dialogues with their students. Some of the dialogues took place last year, some are planned for this summer.

One very important achievement of the Bulgarian Socratic community is the inclusion of Socratic dialogue in the philosophy syllabus for high school. This means that thousands of students who chose the human sciences as their special subjects for the 11th and 12th grade will study the theory of Socratic dialogue, and where the teachers are trained facilitators on invite from the university, there the students will experience a real Socratic dialogue.

It can be concluded that a real Socratic movement is being established in Bulgaria, although sometimes teachers say that the method seems excellent, but the school settings do not allow its full performance. As a perspective, cooperative work with NGOs interested in education must be pointed out. There are some invitations from such organizations to introduce Socratic dialogue to school teachers. Another possibility for introducing Socratic dialogue to the teachers of philosophy and humanities is during in-service training. A proposal to this end was made to the department's authorities.

Aneta Karageorgieva, Bulgaria

Opportunities for funded partnership work

SfCP are currently seeking organisations that may be interested in working with us on any of the following projects.

1. Community and Voluntary Sector Project

Our aim is to increase participation in Socratic Dialogues of those working in the Third Sector, or with the beneficiaries of services provided by community and voluntary organisations. SfCP will provide a facilitator who will work with you to

- identify a theme or area that you feel would be beneficial for your organisation, beneficiaries to explore
- practical coordination of when and how the dialogue should be delivered e.g. weekend or evening.

Your organisation will need to provide a key person to liaise with SfCP and to provide a room suitable for 12 people to take part in a Socratic Dialogue.

2. Education Project

Teacher training in Germany (See 'The Socratic Dialogue and teacher education' in Teaching and Teacher Education journal www.elsevier.com/locate/tate) and Norway has included training in using Socratic Dialogue methods as well as partaking in Socratic Dialogues. We would like to work with educational providers who are interested in taking part in any of the following:-

- i) Deliver an in house Socratic Dialogue for teachers, discuss the model and how it is used and how some of the methods can be used as part of the teaching process
- ii) In house inset day - Governors/Governance or whole organisational approach with teaching staff/admin/governors with a Socratic Dialogue in the morning then workshop in the afternoon
- iii) Working with a group of learners e.g. School Council groups, Student Union representatives

If you are interested in having an exploratory discussion please e mail admin@sfcpc.org.uk

Socratic Dialogue - A Personal Account

I attended my first Socratic Dialogue in November 2006, in a university setting when the subject for the day was 'What are the limits of tolerance?' The Dialogue facilitated by Rene Saran and Kirsten Malmquist from the Society for the Furtherance of Critical Philosophy (SfCP), and I will always be grateful to Rene for the time she spent talking with me that day, and explaining in detail the theory, method and practice of Socratic Dialogue.

Looking back I remember finding my first dialogue difficult mainly because the group was large, and most of the participants were more accustomed to the usual 'cut and thrust' of academic debate. However, I was fascinated by my conversation with Rene, the method's application to real life situations, and its potential for developing critical, analytical thinking, and active listening skills.

Having attended a further five SfCP dialogues in London (where the groups were smaller and the communication between us easier), I began to think about arranging dialogues in the Southend-on-Sea area for local people I knew were interested but found travelling elsewhere difficult. And with the help of my daughter Rachel I finally managed to locate a suitable venue in the town centre, which is close to bus and rail stations. The first Socratic Dialogue in Southend-on-Sea took place on the Saturday 15th December 2012, and we have held 2 more since. If you would like to attend dialogues in Southend, please let us know.

Pat Wood Participant Coordinator of Southend Dialogues

Events that may be of interest to you

Conway Hall

Conway Hall in Central London, near the Institute of Education regularly hosts talks and seminars on a range of topics including philosophy.

London School of Economics (www.lse.ac.uk/publicEvents)

Run a variety of free events that may be of interest, all are free although some may require you to pre book.

Upcoming events include

The Nature of Existence Tuesday 8TH October Professor Tim Crane
What does it mean to exist?

Sir Karl Popper Memorial Lecture 15th October Helga Nowotny
The Cunning of Uncertainty

Forum for European Philosophy Ethics Matters dialogue

Virtue Ethics 15TH October Prof. Timothy Chappell, Prof. Brad Hooker

SOCIETY FOR APPLIED PHILOSOPHY

Annual Lecture 2013: Universal Healthcare in the Developing World: Solution or Siren? Some Preliminary Thoughts,

Professor Larry Temkin (Rutgers University)

The lecture will be given on Thursday 31 October 2013 at 5pm - 6.30pm in the Music Building, Corpus Christi College, Oxford (Doors open from 4.30pm). The

lecture will be followed by a drinks reception for Society for Applied Philosophy members (6.30pm - 7.30pm).

Belgium Friday 15th - 17th November 2013

Kristof Van Rossem is leading an international training weekend 'Critical Thinking and the art of questioning' in Antwerp, Belgium. If you subscribe before the 15th of September there is a reduced price of 325€. For more info see www.socraticdialogue.be.

The Barnes Philosophy Club

List of Talks - Season 4 - September 2013 - June 2014

Philosophy and the Arts (Includes music, film, theatre, literature, and art)

2013

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| 11 September 2013 | Nick Aldridge - 'Nietzsche: Art and Life' |
| 09 October 2013 | Prof Derek Matravers - 'Imagination and Fiction' |
| 13 November 2013 | Prof Chris Berry - 'The Colour Red' in film |

2014

- 08 January 2014 Dr Daniel Barnes - 'The Reality that Forgot Itself': Baudrillard
- 12 February 2014 Dr Marije Altorf - 'Iris Murdoch: A Life of Philosophy and Literature'
- 12 March 2014 Professor Andrew Bowie - To be announced
- 09 April 2014 Simeon Underwood: 'Philosophising Translation, Translating Philosophy'

If you would like to organize a Socratic Dialogue

- in your area, geographically
- a group of people working within your area professionally
- a specific group of friends etc
- particular topics or questions

SfCP is happy to work with you to find a venue and to market the dialogue to our mailing list to guarantee a viable group. Please e mail us at socraticdialogue@sfc.org.uk and we will try our best to accommodate your request.

UPCOMING SOCRATIC DIALOGUES

Southend Dialogues

Normally takes place on a Saturday

Venue Clarence Road, Southend

For more information and enrolment, please contact pawood@fastmail.co.uk

Dialogues in Ladbroke Grove, West London

Sunday 20TH October - 10.00 till 5.00

Question for the dialogue: **Must I always tell the truth?**

Sunday 17th November 10.00 till 5.00

Question for the dialogue: **Under what circumstances is disagreement fruitful?**

For more information, please contact angellahodgson@yahoo.co.uk

Help Required

Venues - we are always searching for reasonably priced venues throughout the U.K. with availability at the weekend as well as during the week. If your organization has a room to let at preferential rates to charities please let us know.

Volunteers - If you have good IT skills or marketing and research skills and are looking for either a long term or short term volunteering opportunity we are interested in hearing from you. Please send in a C.V. and a cover letter stating your availability and we will get back to you.

admin@sfc.org.uk

NEXT BULLETIN

If you have any events in 2014 that our readers may be of interest to our readers please send details to admin@sfc.org.uk

Please note, in keeping with our confidentiality policy, your contact details will not be shared with other people registered with SfcP or passed on to any other organizations.