



Foreword

Josie Roux

The Stellenbosch Socratic Journal was born out of Stellenbosch University's Philosophy Society: The Socratic Society. Through debates and talks, the student-founded and student-run Socratic Society fosters fruitful philosophical dialogue and mature critical debate on a wide range of pertinent topics and aims to enable students from other disciplines to discover the joys of philosophy. By establishing the Stellenbosch Socratic Journal, which will be published biannually, the Socratic Society hopes to expand its project of encouraging students to engage with meaningful philosophical discourse.

In creating a formal academic platform that showcases the work of Stellenbosch philosophy students, it is our hope that the Journal will incentivise and empower philosophy students to share and develop their ideas and engage with the work of their peers. We welcome papers on any philosophically interesting topic from any postgraduate students in the Stellenbosch philosophy department, or from any third-year student who has produced a particularly exceptional piece of work. The content of the Journal is not limited to any particular branch or field of philosophy as we aim to exhibit the broad array of areas that Stellenbosch philosophy students are working on and ideas they are exploring.

As any postgraduate student knows, entering the world of academia and publication can be daunting and intimidating. Thus, it is also our hope that by providing philosophy students with the opportunity to publish their work in this formal academic space, the Journal will assist aspirant academics to familiarise themselves with the publication process. To that end, the Stellenbosch Socratic Journal largely follows the same processes and protocols as the average academic journal. Each (conditionally) accepted submission is peer-reviewed by two anonymous student reviewers (all reviewers are either at Masters or Doctoral level) who provide critical feedback that will help the author improve their work. This process is facilitated by the editorial board, a group of postgraduate Stellenbosch Philosophy students from a wide range of specialisations.

In this inaugural edition, we are excited to present the works of students in varying stages of their academic journeys—from undergraduate to doctoral level—and with a wide range of philosophical interests. In the first paper, I use Amia Srinivasan’s account of anger to question whether Martha Nussbaum’s philosophy of anger may contain some normatively problematic implications, specifically in a political context. Is anger both intrinsically and instrumentally useless or does it have value? And, even if it does not, is it *just* to require those who are angry at injustice to rather not be?

Understanding our collective inaction in the face of climate change is a question that only becomes more and more pressing as the days tick by and the temperature ticks up, and frustration at the passivity and foot-dragging of climate policy is hard to ignore. In the Journal’s second article, James Smith turns to Aristotle to seek an answer to why it is we continue to act in ways that are detrimental to the environment, even as we are aware of the dire consequences.

A common criticism of philosophical counselling is that it enters into the realm of mental health professions without evidence of its treatment efficacy. Jaco Louw investigates how to “keep the philosophical counsellor in the realm of philosophy”, proposing a new approach to addressing a counselee’s problem.

In the penultimate paper, Shirah Theron invites us to think about the project of sexual inclusion: “the project that promotes the equal and largely indiscriminatory opportunity for each person to engage in meaningful and pleasurable nonmorally good sexual experiences”. Why is it so important for each of us to have the opportunity to partake in nonmorally good sex? And given the subjective nature of sexual experience, is the project of sexual inclusion even possible at all?

Finally, Jurgens Johannes Pieterse undertakes a Derridean deconstruction of the YouTube video “Why is Modern Art so Bad?” by Robert Florczak to conclude that, in fact, modern art is *not* so bad, but right-wing critiques of it are.

Thanks is due to the Journals' editorial board for getting this pilot edition up and running. It has been a big learning curve for us all and I think we can be proud of the final product. To our contributors and reviewers, thank you for helping to make this first edition possible and for giving generously of your time and energy. And to Dr Andrea Palk and Professor Vasti Roodt, the Socratic Society and Stellenbosch Socratic Journal convenors: thank you for your helpful advice and assistance throughout this process. May the Journal flourish and grow in the years to come!