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About

The *Journal of Didactics of Philosophy* is a peer-reviewed academic journal devoted to research on the teaching and learning of philosophy. It is published online twice a year. The access to all articles is free. Articles may be about any level of education, however the main focus is on high school philosophy. We welcome work with a philosophical or normative approach as well as reports of results from empirical qualitative and quantitative research. The journal also publishes reviews of books, textbooks and other educational material of international interest as well as country reports. These reports present information about ways of teaching philosophy, its institutions and activities in different countries. It is an aim of the journal to promote the dialogue among researchers and practising teachers across the world.

**Call for Papers (Volume 2, Number 2/2018)**

Again we are issuing an open call for contributions. If you would like your article, country report or book review to be published in the next issue (Volume 2, Number 2/2018) please follow the instructions on the website ([www.philosophie.ch/jdph](http://www.philosophie.ch/jdph)). Your text should reach one of the editors not later than 31st of July 2018.

**Call for Papers (Volume 3, Number 1/2019)**

We would like to focus the first issue in 2019 on the topic “**What is a philosophical problem?**” If you would like to publish an article on this topic in a didactical perspective please follow the instructions on the website ([www.philosophie.ch/jdph](http://www.philosophie.ch/jdph)) and send your article in English as well as an abstract in an electronic document (word, pdf) by email to one of the editors. Deadline is 31st of December 2018.

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EDITORIAL

Dear readers!

We are thankful for the warm welcome the first issue has received in the community. We are now turning into our second year and we are happy to present to you the first issue of the second volume. You will find in it one research article by Florian Heusinger von Waldegge on the concept of internet addiction and on how to include discussion about it in philosophy classes. The topic is relevant to students' interests and a good starting point for philosophical reflections, in particular, as the author suggests, on the concept of addiction itself and on the topic of free will. You will also find three country reports. Dirk H. Oosthoek presents the situation of philosophy education in the Netherlands, Thor Steinar Grødal and Olav Birkeland present the situation in Norway, and Zoran Kojcic the teaching of ethics in Croatia. Finally, you will find two book reviews. Carola Hübler reviews the collection of articles based on the presentations at the first international conference on didactics of philosophy in Frankfurt two years ago where - as you might remember from the editorial to the first issue - the idea for this journal took shape. And Philipp Richter reviews a book which deserves more recognition, the collection of one hundred of the most important arguments in philosophy edited by Michael Bruce and Steven Barbone.

The theme of the third international conference on didactics of philosophy taking place this July in Cologne will be philosophical problems. We take this as an opportunity to make it the focus of the first issue of the *Journal of Didactics of Philosophy* in 2019. But first we are again sending out an open call for papers with deadline on 31st of July 2018 for Volume 2, 2/2018, if you are interested in publishing an article, country report or book review please submit your proposals to us.

Again, if you have any questions or suggestions, please contact us.

March 2018

*The Editors*

# **DIGITAL JUNKIES? – THE CONCEPT OF INTERNET ADDICTION AND SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR A PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION IN SCHOOLS**

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## **Abstract**

Due to proceeding digitalisation, online communication and online entertainment play a significant role in the lives of many people, who spend great amounts of time online. Although excessive and pathological forms of online behaviour do exist, the impact of internet usage on mental health depends on many individual and social circumstances. A central issue within the scientific debate is the concept of Internet Addiction. However, there is neither a scientific consensus about proper diagnostic criteria, nor a consensus whether such a pathology exists at all. Nevertheless, popularised scientific literature and panic mongering media reports warn about Internet Addiction and its harmful consequences. This is an ethical problem: those unjustified claims stigmatise especially young people and pathologise their leisure activities – such as online gaming and online social networking. Parents, teachers and students are often misguided by the public debate. This article outlines problems of the concept of Internet Addiction and gives some suggestions of how to deal with it in philosophy-classes in schools.

**Keywords:** internet, addiction, philosophy, ethics, free will

## **1. Introduction**

The internet plays a significant role in everyday life. A recent survey found that in 2016 14% of the German population used the internet for four hours or more per day for private purposes and 23% of the population used it for four hours or more for work or education purposes (DIVSI Internet-Milieus 2016). Considering the increasing relevance for work life and leisure activities, the impact of internet usage on mental health has been discussed controversially, both in the scientific community and in the public for many years. Although there is no scientific consensus about that topic, scientists agree that excessive and even pathological forms of internet usage do exist – especially in connection with online social networking and online gaming (cf. Quandt, Festl and Scharkow 2014). However, there is no general *internet effect*. The influence of internet usage on mental health depends on age, sex, and especially the online-user-group the person belongs to.

Nevertheless, popularised scientific literature that warns readers about internet usage is very popular. Some authors, for example, state that the use of digital media harms the intellectual capacities as well as social behaviour and leads to depression in the long run (cf. Carr 2011; Spitzer 2012; Spitzer 2015). Others alarm us with concerns that internet usage would produce narcissism, aggressive behaviour, emotional blunting, social isolation (cf. Aboujaoude 2011; Katzer 2016) or “digital Junkies” and emphasize the harmful consequences “for us and our children” (cf. te Wildt 2015). Although those simplifying diagnoses can be refuted in many cases (Appel and Schreiner 2014; Appel and Schreiner 2015), they have great impact on public opinion.

This is an ethical problem, since those contributors give unrealistic or even wrong advice. The well-known German psychiatrist Manfred Spitzer for example claims that children should grow up without digital media (cf. Spitzer 2015:350). Due to the proceeding digitalisation, this seems to be impossible for today and for the future. Thus, those suggestions rather stoke fears than provide orientation. That might be problematic for older cohorts, the so called “digital immigrants” like parents and teachers, who worry about the frequent internet usage of their children and pupils. But it is an even greater problem for young people, the so called “digital natives”, who are often confronted with negative stereotypes or have to deal with stigmatisation because of their leisure activities like online gaming or online social networking.

It is often asserted within the scientific and public discussion that those online activities would produce new behavioural addictions – like Internet Gaming Disorder, Social Network Site Addiction or Cybersexual Addiction. This article will focus on the more general concept of Internet Addiction, which is sometimes understood as a separate pathology and sometimes as an umbrella term for other addictions. Two schools of thought have emerged within the scientific debate: On the one hand, authors who think that Internet addiction itself or different types of addictive online behaviour merit classification as new or emerging pathologies, which should be part of the official psychiatric nosology of the DSM (“Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders”) and the ICD (“International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems”).<sup>1</sup> And on the other hand, authors who avoid the term “addiction”, and define certain individuals as having problematic or pathological Internet use in relation to specific online activities (cf. Yellowlees and Marks 2007).

Against this background, I want to show in a first step, how some scientists consider the concept of Internet Addiction as problematic and why it is important to deal with it in secondary schools. In a second step, I want to make some suggestions of how to integrate the topic into philosophy lessons, because the concept is not only problematic from an ethical point of view, it also raises classical philosophical questions about scientific knowledge, objectivity, and freedom of will.

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<sup>1</sup> The DSM is published by the *American Psychiatric Association* (APA) and offers standard criteria for the classification of mental disorders. The ICD provides the diagnostical classification by the *World Health Organization* (WHO).

## **2. The emergence of a new clinical disorder?**

Research in Internet Addiction began with an anecdotal observation: In the 1990s, New York psychiatrist Ivan Goldberg identified groups of people abandoning family obligations in order to stare at a computer screen. He described the phenomenon of cyber addiction according to the DSM-4 criteria on substance dependency and sent it to his colleagues. Although Goldberg's statement was a spoof on the concept of behavioural addiction, the idea soon became a field of debate in academic research, popular cultural production, judicial institutions, and news media (cf. Cover 2004:111f.; Vukicevic and te Wildt 2011:109). In 1998 Kimberley Young released her guidebook *Caught in the Net: How to recognize the Signs of Internet Addiction – and a Winning Strategy of Recovery* (cf. Young 1998a), where she introduced the term "Internet Addiction Disorder". She also developed the "Internet Addiction Test" (cf. Young 1998a:45ff.) and the "Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire" (cf. Young 1998b), which provided the first diagnostical criteria, based on the DSM-4 criteria for pathological gambling and substance abuse (cf. Vukicevic and te Wildt 2011:110). This caused a considerable media flurry, but it also quickly revealed that according to her criteria nearly 80% of the respondents would be considered addicted (cf. Cover 2004:110; Widyanto and Griffiths 2007:147). Subsequently to Young's initial work, numerous scales and questionnaires on Internet Addiction and pathological internet usage were developed (cf. Bauernhofer et al. 2016; Schou Andreassen and Pallesen 2014; Kuss and Griffiths 2012). Although they all apply the criteria of pathological gambling and substance abuse to online activities, they differ in the cut-off-scores and in the selection and operationalisation of those criteria and are therefore oftentimes not comparable according to their findings. Another problem is that there is a lack of representative surveys. Depending on the particular context of the survey, prevalence reaches from 1% to 40% of addicted people (cf. Quandt, Festl, and Scharkow 2014:309; Bauernhofer et al. 2016:3). Notwithstanding these problems, which might be typical for empirical surveys, three main problems arise in applying a "rhetoric of drugs" (cf. Cover 2004:111) to the internet:

First of all, the concept of Internet Addiction ignores the multiplicity of online activities and the multiple structure of online communication and online entertainment via social networking websites, e-mail, chat, messenger, or online-games (cf. Cover 2004:115; Quandt, Festl, and Scharkow 2014:309f.). Therefore, it describes the internet as the *cause* of an addiction (cf. Cover 2004:113). But this is obviously untrue. Indeed, different theoretical models exist that explain pathological or addictive online behaviour, and most of them assume a vicious circle beginning with underlying pathologies or problems which produce certain emotional needs. This leads to an increase in certain internet activities which satisfy these needs in the short run but reinforce the underlying problems and pathologies in the long run – leading to an increase of certain emotional needs etc. (cf. Six 2007:363). While the internet is not addictive in itself, different forms of internet usage can sometimes become a medium to fuel other addictions (cf. Widyanto and Griffiths 2007) or be a coping strategy for other problems (cf. Kardefelt-Winther 2014). Therefore, it might be better to differentiate between various forms of pathological internet usage (cf. Quandt, Festl, and Scharkow 2014:307f.) – e.g. Internet Gaming Disorder or Social Networking Site Addiction.

Secondly, this leads to the problem of comorbidity. Many surveys found that excessive internet usage correlates with other pathologies, especially depression and anxiety disorders (cf. te Wildt and Vukicevic 2011:127f.). Some scientists argue that these comorbidities are similar to the comorbidities found in substance abuse – and this is often seen as an important argument to classify Internet Addiction as a psychiatric disorder in its own right. But comorbidity alone does not provide evidence of a separate psychopathology (cf. van Rooij and Prause 2014:208). Perhaps a model of compensatory internet usage is better to explain the problematic behaviour (cf. Kardefelt-Winther 2014), because the transfer of criteria which were developed for substance abuse and pathological gambling to online activities is highly problematic. And this leads to the third and most important problem of the concept of Internet Addiction: Does it even make sense to apply these criteria?

According to Mark Griffiths, all physical or behavioural addictions consist of a number of distinct common components: *salience* (the activity becomes the most important activity in the person's life and dominates their thinking and behaviour), *mood modification* (the substance or behaviour is used to produce a reliable and consistent mood state), *tolerance* (increasing amounts of the particular activity are required to achieve the former effects), *withdrawal symptoms* (unpleasant feeling states and/or physical effects occur when the particular activity is discontinued or suddenly reduced), *conflict* (conflicts between the addicts and those around them or intrapsychic conflicts, which are concerned with the particular activity), *relapse* (the tendency for repeated reversions to earlier patterns of the particular activity to recur and for even the most extreme patterns typical of the height of the addiction to be quickly restored after many years of abstinence or control; cf. Griffiths 2005a). These components are most commonly used in questionnaires and for scales of pathological internet usage (cf. Bauernhofer et al. 2016:4f.; van Rooij and Prause 2014:2f.). But applying these criteria to online behaviour leads to massive problems of interpretation – and in some cases, it does not make sense to apply them at all. Excessive internet usage, for instance, does not lead to *tolerance*, *withdrawal symptoms* or *relapse* in the same way as chemical drugs do. *Salience* seems to be a weak indicator, since many leisure activities can become the most important activities in a person's life. Furthermore, if online activity helps a person in coping effectively with negative effect, it is unclear why *mood modification* should automatically become a criterion for addiction. And as excessive internet usage is not *per se* harmful, the identification of *conflicts* depends much more on the social surrounding, than it does in the context of chemical drugs. This is not the place to discuss all of these criteria in detail (cf. e.g. van Rooij and Prause 2014; Griffiths et al. 2016; Kardefelt-Winther 2015), but some scientists are sceptical about transferring the criteria which were developed for substance abuse and pathological gambling to online activities.

Probably they are right. It is just a naïve failure not to recognize that criteria for problematic symptoms in relation to one activity (e.g. drug abuse) are not necessarily problematic in another context (e.g. online gaming, social networking via internet etc.; cf. Kardefelt-Winther et al. 2017:4). Furthermore, understanding excessive and sometimes harmful online-behaviour within the boundaries of the addiction model is also an ethical problem. On the one hand, putting too much faith in the comparison with substance abuse



might lead to misdiagnosis and ineffective prevention and treatment (cf. Kardefelt-Winther et al. 2017:4). On the other hand, the substance abuse framework considers preoccupations with online activities, like gaming, in a similar way to preoccupations related to chemical drugs, even though the former is an everyday activity and related to far fewer problematic consequences than the latter (cf. Kardefelt-Winther et al. 2017:3). Digital media and online communication play a significant role in everyday life, in particular for young people, thus the concept of Internet Addiction and its reception in the public discussion might lead to an unjustified pathologisation of common leisure activities and to a stigmatisation of youth culture. As the Australian media theorist Rob Cover puts it:

There remains at play, then, a logic which suggests that frequent use of games and digital media is addictive *because* it is used by youth. This is part of [...] cultural generationalism in the West that denounces the practices, behaviours, concerns, ideas and pastimes of youth and children while nostalgically venerating those of the recent past. (Cover 2004:118)

It is beyond doubt, that some people have great problems with excessive amounts of time spent online and that they need help – although recent surveys indicate, that there exist only very few of them (cf. Widyanto and Griffiths 2007; Quandt, Festl, and Scharkow 2014). However, the concept of Internet Addiction is unlikely to help them. The language of addiction rather sensationalises teens' engagement with technology and suggests that mere participation leads to pathology (cf. boyd 2014:78). It is often used in exaggerative way in public discussions in order to warn about the negative consequences of online activities and the harmful impact on mental health. While parents, teachers and students are sometimes alienated and misguided by the public debate, it is important to deal with this topic in schools. On that account, I want to suggest in the next part of this article how to integrate the topic into philosophy education.

### **3. Caught in the Net – Some suggestions for a philosophical reflection in schools**

The concept of addiction poses many philosophical problems about self-control, freedom of will, desire, scientific objectivity, and moral responsibility. For this reason, the topic “Internet Addiction” fits perfectly into many teaching units of philosophy as a school subject – for example in the context of applied ethics/bioethics or philosophy of science. In teaching units about applied ethics or bioethics for example it may be useful to deal with the concept of addiction itself. There exist several philosophical approaches concerning this topic. A good starting point might be the “precising definition” of Walter Sinnott-Armstrong and Hannah Pickard, which can be found in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry* (cf. Sinnott-Armstrong and Pickard 2013). Neil Levy outlines the problematic relation of addiction and autonomy (cf. Levy 2006) and Robert West and Jamie Brown provide a good overview of different theoretical perspectives on addiction (cf. West and Brown 2013). In teaching units about philosophy of science, it might be a good opportunity to investigate the above-mentioned problem of applying the criteria of substance abuse on online activities more closely (cf. van Rooij and Prause 2014). A critique of the current research approach

which focuses an addiction (cf. Billieux et al. 2015; Kardefelt-Winther et al. 2017) might be a good springboard for philosophical discussions about scientific truth and objectivity.

The following suggests a structure for a single philosophy lesson of about 90 minutes in senior classes, introducing the philosophical discussion about freedom of will and critically reflecting the concept of internet addiction. Therefore, it may be appropriate to use this lesson as a beginning for a new unit. It is also possible to use single parts of these suggestions to focus on other aspects of the problem (e.g. behavioural addictions in general, Internet Gaming Disorder etc.), or to combine them with other philosophical approaches.

### **3.1. Kimberley Young at TEDx Buffalo**

As an introduction, it is recommended to show the first 12 minutes and 24 seconds of the talk “What you need to know about internet addiction” by Kimberley Young.<sup>2</sup> It was given at a local TEDx event in Buffalo in 2015 and is suitable for educational purposes. Kimberley Young points out concerns about internet usage very clearly. To make sure that students get the main ideas of her argument, they should be provided with at least one question, which they answer in brief notes (individual work) while listening to the speech. Here are some proposals for possible questions:

- Which forms of Internet Addiction does Kimberley Young describe?
- What are the negative aspects of Internet usage according to Young?
- What can you do, to improve your everyday management of technology?

Although it is likely that students are familiar with the concept of Internet Addiction, they probably want to discuss and reflect their own online-behaviour in class. Considering that, enough time should be scheduled. The talk might also raise some critical questions concerning Young’s ideas about the negative impact of internet usage in general and the concept of Internet Addiction itself – obviously she starts talking about addiction and goes on talking about internet usage in everyday life. Also, some students might maintain that they know other people who are addicted to the internet. Nevertheless, it is recommended to postpone a critical debate and focus on the philosophical problem first: A widespread view of addiction among psychologists, philosophers, and laypeople is that an addict wishes to abstain an immediate desire toward temptation, but his will is not strong enough. In this sense, addiction is a loss of control about one’s own behaviour or a loss or impairment of free will (cf. Foddy and Savulescu 2010:2). By discussing the TEDx talk of Kimberley Young, it is very likely that the students will start to philosophize or to raise philosophical questions, for example: “What is addiction?”, “Is Internet Addiction comparable to a physical dependence?”, “Has someone who is hooked on the internet a free will?” and so on. If students do not come up with their own questions, the teacher can provoke them with quotes from the talk. At the end of the discussion, a key question should be formulated, which guides the rest of the lesson, e.g. “Does Internet Addiction imply an impairment of the free will?”

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<sup>2</sup> See URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOSYmLER664>

### **3.2. Harry Frankfurt on free will and the taxonomy of addiction**

It is a good option to start the philosophical reflection of Internet Addiction with Harry Frankfurt's famous hierarchical account, in which he explains the concept of free will with the help of a taxonomy of addiction (cf. Frankfurt 1971). In his essay *Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person*, Frankfurt distinguishes between first-order desires and volitions, and second-order desires and volitions. Volitions are effective desires. First-order volitions and desires are simply volitions and desires to do or not to do one thing or another. Second-order volitions and desires are related to first-order volitions and desires. Hence the motivational structure of the self is essential for freedom of will:

According to Frankfurt an agent's will is an effective first-order desire and claims that autonomy, or freedom of the will, requires both that the agent exercise control over her will and that she identify, at the level of her second-order volitions, with her will. Identification is the outcome of a process of reflection in which the agent distinguishes those desires that she endorses or regards as "her own" from those desires that she merely finds herself with and is either indifferent to or regards as external to herself. (Mackenzie and Stoljar 2000:14)

The following proposal of a worksheet contains Frankfurt's main arguments and can be worked on in groups:

#### **Worksheet 1: Harry Frankfurt's hierarchical account of the free will**

In his essay *Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person* Philosopher Harry Frankfurt states that it is merely because of a person's volitions of the second order that the person is capable both of enjoying and of lacking freedom of will. He explains his position with the example of two addicts:

One of the addicts hates his addiction and always struggles desperately, although to no avail, against its thrust. He tries everything that he thinks might enable him to overcome his desires for the drug. But these desires are too powerful for him to withstand, and invariably, in the end, they conquer him. He is an unwilling addict, helplessly violated by his own desires. The unwilling addict has conflicting first-order desires: he wants to take the drug, and he also wants to refrain from taking it. In addition to these first-order desires, however, he has a volition of the second order. He is not a neutral with regard to the conflict between his desire to take the drug and his desire to refrain from taking it. It is the latter desire, and not the former, that he wants to be effective and to provide the purpose that he will seek to realize in what he actually does. [...] The unwilling addict identifies himself, however, through the formation of a second-order volition, with one rather than with the other of his conflicting first-order desires. He makes one of them more truly his own and, in doing so, he withdraws himself from the other. It is in virtue of this identification and withdrawal, accomplished through the formation of a second-order volition, that the unwilling addict may meaningfully make the analytically puzzling statements that the force moving him to take the drug is a force other than his own, and that it is not of his own free will but rather against his will that this force moves him to take it. [...] Now freedom of action is (roughly, at least) the freedom to do what one wants to do. Analogously, then, the statement that a person enjoys freedom of the will means (also roughly) that he is free to want

what he wants to want. [...] This means that, with regard to any of his first-order desires, [a person] is free either to make that desire his will or to make some other first-order desire his will instead. Whatever his will, then, the will of a person whose will is free could have been otherwise; he could have done otherwise than to constitute his will as he did. It is a vexed question just how ‘he could have done otherwise’ is to be understood in contexts such as this one. [...] In illustration, consider [another] kind of addict. Suppose that his addiction has the same physiological basis and the same irresistible thrust [...], but that he is altogether delighted with his condition. He is a willing addict, who would not have things any other way. If the grip of his addiction should somehow weaken, he would do weather he could to reinstate it; if his desire for the drug should begin to fade, he would take steps to renew its intensity. The willing addict’s will is not free, for his desire to take the drug will be effective regardless of whether or not he wants this desire to constitute his will. But when he takes the drug, he takes it freely and of his own free will. I am inclined to understand his situation as involving the overdetermination of his first-order desire to take the drug. This desire is his effective desire because he is physiologically addicted. But it is his effective desire also because he wants it to be. His will is outside his control, but, by his second-order desire that his desire for the drug should be effective, he has made his will his own. Given that it is therefore not only because of his addiction that his desire for the drug is effective, he may be morally responsible for taking the drug.

(Frankfurt, Harry G. (1971): Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person, in: The Journal of Philosophy 68 (1), 12-20.)

**Tasks:**

1. Explain the difference between freedom of action and freedom of the will by using examples. Is Addiction an impairment of free action or an impairment of free will?
2. What is the difference between the “willing addict” and the “unwilling addict”? Why should these wills not be called “free” wills?

Within the philosophical debate a number of objections have been raised against Frankfurt’s account (cf. Mackenzie and Stoljar 2000:14f.). Nevertheless, it is still one of the most important compatibilist positions and offers a promising perspective for controversial debates about addiction and self-control. It is important that students realise the difference between freedom of action and freedom of the will in this context, since both are sometimes mixed up within the debate about addiction (cf. Sinnott-Armstrong and Pickard 2013:856). In the last part of the lesson the students should return to the questions from the beginning, now reflecting the concept of Internet Addiction in a more structured way.

**3.3. The Internet Addiction Questionnaire**

This part of the lesson should begin with some general information about Internet Addiction and its pioneer researcher Kimberley Young, as outlined above. The teacher can give a short input on that topic but should ignore the critical aspects at that moment. It should rather be emphasized that Young developed the first diagnostic criteria recurring to the criteria for pathological gambling, which are again based on the criteria of substance abuse. The following proposal for a worksheet contains the *Internet Addiction Questionnaire* (cf. Young

1998b). Although it is twenty years old, it is still used as a template for representational surveys (cf. Durkee et al. 2012) and for numerous scales and questionnaires on Internet Addiction and pathological internet usage like Internet Gaming Disorder or Social Network Site Addiction (see above).

**Worksheet 2: The Internet Addiction Questionnaire**

Researcher Kimberley Young was the first to determine a set of criteria that would define addictive from normal Internet usage. By using Pathological Gambling as a model, she defined Internet Addiction as an impulse-control disorder that does not involve an intoxicant. To provide a screening instrument for classification, Young developed a brief eight-item questionnaire.

<b>The Internet Addiction Questionnaire by Kimberley Young</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1. Do you feel preoccupied with the Internet (think about previous online activity or anticipate next online session)?		
2. Do you feel the need to use the Internet with increasing amounts of time in order to achieve satisfaction?		
3. Have you repeatedly made unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop Internet use?		
4. Do you feel restless, moody, depressed, or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop Internet use?		
5. Do you stay online longer than originally intended?		
6. Have you jeopardized or risked the loss of significant relationship, job, educational, or career opportunity because of the Internet?		
7. Have you lied to family members, a therapist, or others to conceal the extent of involvement with the Internet?		
8. Do you use the Internet as a way of escaping from problems or of relieving a dysphoric mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression)?		

**Tasks:**

1. Fill in the questionnaire. Do you think these criteria are suitable to diagnose an addiction? Why? Why not?
2. Is Harry Frankfurt's taxonomy of addiction (the "willing addict" and the "unwilling addict") transferable to online-activities?

In Kimberley Young's research, participants who answered "yes" to five or more of the criteria were classified as dependent Internet users. But since criteria one to five account for numerous behaviours that we would not necessarily classify as an addiction, the *Internet Addiction Questionnaire* was modified by Keith Beard and Eve Wolf (cf. Beard and Wolf 2001). According to them, items one to five and at least one of the items six to eight must be present, to diagnose an addiction. The teacher might let students fill in the test to discuss the results in class. Depending on context and special interest of the class, it is also possible to use scales or questionnaires about Internet Gaming Disorder or Social Networking Site Addiction. In the end, the class should discuss the suggested tasks. Alternatively, the teacher can just pick up the questions from the beginning of the lesson, like "Does Internet Addiction imply an impairment of the free will?" Thus, students get the opportunity to apply Frankfurt's theory to a relevant problem case.

There is no doubt that these items might indicate a problematic or even pathological behaviour, especially in regard to the modifications of Beard and Wolf. But a willing *addict* is hard to imagine without physical dependence. Negative consequences of online behaviour and conflicts with the social environment might just express personal preferences or coping strategies for other problems. Items three and five aim on the motivational conflicts described by Frankfurt (the "unwilling addict"). But in this case these conflicts might be part of normal decision processes, especially if the social environment has a negative attitude towards online activities, like gaming or online social networking. The teacher can prepare a critical debate on Youngs criteria with the help of the relevant scientific literature (cf. van Rooij and Prause 2014; Kardefelt-Winther 2015; Griffiths et al. 2016). In the end, it should become clear that Harry Frankfurt provides a plausible theory of the free will and hits the common understanding of addiction. But the taxonomy of addiction can hardly be applied to online activities. If time is left it may be worthwhile to finally discuss a quotation from technology scholar danah boyd, which aims on the above mentioned ethical implication of this debate:

There is no doubt that some youth develop an unhealthy relationship with technology. [...] However, the language of addiction sensationalizes teens' engagement with technology and suggests that mere participation leads to pathology. This language also suggests that technologies alone will determine social outcomes (boyd 2014:78)

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## **Country Report: Philosophy at Secondary Schools in the Netherlands**

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### **Brief history<sup>1</sup>**

Philosophy was introduced in secondary schools in the Netherlands in 1973, on an experimental basis. The first national examination took place in May 1974. A small number of students answered questions about a text, written by the academic philosopher Hendrik Pos, ‘Het dal van de naoorlogse filosofie’, which can be translated as ‘The downturn of post-war philosophy’. By 1990 Philosophy was an experimental course in the pre-university track (VWO) at twelve secondary schools. During that year, the decision was taken by the government to introduce Philosophy as a standard curriculum subject, making it possible for every secondary school to offer Philosophy as an elective course. This decision was based on the positive outcomes of evaluations by headteachers, students and parents. Between 1990 and 1998 the number of schools offering philosophy rose from twelve to forty-two. Following this initial surge, further expansion in the number of schools offering Philosophy was sparked by the major restructuring of the education system ‘Tweede Fase’ (‘Second Phase’). This was a renewal of the Dutch education system, in which students at the end of the basic curriculum had to make a choice out of four tracks (Economics & Society, Culture & Society, Nature & Health, Nature & Technology). From now on, schools could offer Philosophy not only at the pre-university level of VWO, but also at the pre-higher vocational level of HAVO. In 2018, the number of schools offering Philosophy as an exam subject has stabilized at 60 HAVO schools and 160 VWO schools (10% and 25% of the total number of schools nationally). Philosophy as a subject in the first three years of HAVO and VWO is offered at about 50 schools.<sup>2</sup>

### **Philosophy in the lower grades**

The motive for schools to offer Philosophy in the lower grades is to acquaint students with a subject they can choose in the upper grades. There is no obligatory curriculum for Philosophy in these grades, meaning that teachers are free to develop their own course. In spite of this freedom, most teachers choose to focus on moral education through critical thinking. *Philosophy in the lower grades*, a program which has been developed by teachers in

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<sup>1</sup> For an extended view on Philosophy at Secondary Schools in the Netherlands: Oosthoek, D.H. (2007). Balans van 35 jaar filosofie in het voortgezet onderwijs. *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie*, 69, 783-809.

<sup>2</sup> Dutch secondary education begins at the age of approximately twelve and is divided into three main streams: 50% of learners follow preparatory vocational education (VMBO, 4 years), the other 50% being spread across higher general education (HAVO, 5 years) and preparatory academic education (VWO, 6 years). Learners following a general route (HAVO) will be likely to progress to higher vocational degrees such as nursing, hotel management, paralegal or technical studies.

philosophy in the lower grades, aims to broaden this focus.<sup>3</sup> This curriculum offers examples of lessons on about fourteen philosophical questions such as *'What is logical thinking?'*, *'What can you be sure of?'*, *'Are we free to become who we want to be?'*, *'What is the relation between body and mind?'* or *'Are all humans equal?'*.

### **Philosophy in the upper grades**

Like other school subjects in the Netherlands, Philosophy in the upper grades of HAVO and VWO has a program which includes both internal and external assessment. The HAVO curriculum differs from the VWO curriculum. The first program is focused on students with a more practical mind set and preparing for higher vocational education, while the second is focused on students who will continue their education at university. The HAVO curriculum is therefore more practical and focuses on humanities. It consists of three main domains: anthropology, ethics and social philosophy. The VWO curriculum is more academic and has four main domains: anthropology, ethics, theory of knowledge and philosophy of science. For the elements that are internally assessed, teachers have much freedom to shape their own program, as they can choose between six different textbooks and find their own ways to examine their subject matter. This freedom does not extend to the preparation for the external examination. Teachers have to adhere to detailed demands which are centered around a specific theme. This theme is laid out in a textbook that consists of a general introduction by academic specialists as well as primary sources from representative philosophers. Examples of these themes at HAVO are: Men and Machine, Utopia, Philosophy of Emotions, Global Justice, and Philosophy of the Self. Examples of themes at VWO level are: Virtue Ethics, Reason and Religion, Free Will, Scepticism, and The Good Life and The Free Market.

### **Didactical perspective and examination**

Philosophy in the Dutch setting is characterized on the one hand with 'Bildung' and on the other hand as 'learning to philosophize'. Students learn to actively deal with the most important approaches and concepts from the philosophical tradition by applying this knowledge to direct philosophical questions, such as *'Are animals able to think?'*, *'Do you have a personal responsibility for poverty in the world?'*, *'Why pay taxes?'* or *'Has religion become redundant in the light of the growth of scientific knowledge?'*. Students are expected not only to be able to recognize, name, compare or criticize the arguments from different philosophical positions, but also to be able to take on a personal and argued view on the subject matter.

National examinations also reflect this structure: the candidates are guided through different cases, whereby they have to analyze central philosophical concepts and apply their knowledge of different philosophical positions before they formulate a personal, reasoned and well-argued point of view.

Teachers of Philosophy prefer to focus on the higher-order skills of in-depth analysis and synthesis rather than focusing on reproduction of knowledge. With the exams the teachers develop in their own schools, there are more possibilities for assessing pupils through other

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<sup>3</sup> [www.slo.nl/downloads/2013/filosofie-in-de-onderbouw.pdf](http://www.slo.nl/downloads/2013/filosofie-in-de-onderbouw.pdf)

means than written tests. Knowledge and philosophical skills can be applied and graded through Socratic dialogues, in appreciative inquiries, in writing a philosophical dialogue or essay, in a systematic analysis of a philosophical concept or doing research on a specific philosophical topic.

### **Effects of philosophical education**

Results from various kinds of research focusing on students and former students indicate that Philosophy supports the development of abilities in clarifying abstract concepts, stimulates insights into presuppositions, gaining a quick overview of arguments in debates, taking on a personal and argued view, and fosters thinking on a cross-curricular level. Next to this it is remarkable that the (former) students often name the significance of Philosophy for the growth of their personality.

### **The role of the organization of teachers in philosophy**

The VFVO (Society of Teachers of Philosophy in Secondary Education) was founded in 1998 and currently has 180 members. The society has a digital magazine named 'Spinoza'. The VFVO organizes training activities for teachers of Philosophy, initiates meetings to discuss the way in which the national exams should be assessed, gives general information about the subject on their website (URL: [www.vfvo.nl](http://www.vfvo.nl)) and lobbies on the political level for the position of Philosophy in the curriculum.

### **International relations**

Since 2012 there has been a Dutch Philosophy Olympiad (URL: [www.filosofieolympiade.nl](http://www.filosofieolympiade.nl)). The core of this Olympiad is a contest in essay-writing and is held annually in Leusden at the International School of Philosophy (URL: [www.isvw.nl](http://www.isvw.nl)). The two winners attend the IPO (International Philosophy Olympiad) to challenge fellow pupils on an international level. In May 2017 the 25th Jubilee edition of the IPO was successfully held at Erasmus University in Rotterdam. The conjunctive theme was Tolerance.

## Country Report: Norway

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The only option to study philosophy for a high school student at the regular high schools in Norway (i.e. not IB-schools), which lasts for three years from age 16 to 19, is to choose (among a wide variety of subjects from science to particular languages) the optional subject called *History and Philosophy* in their second and third grade. Ethical Education in high school is connected to the compulsory subject *Religion*, 3 lessons per week, in third grade. This subject also includes a relatively small part of philosophy. In Middle School (*ungdomsskole*), age 13-16, ethics is part of the compulsory subject *Christianity, Religion, Philosophy of Life and Ethics*. Here there is a lot of political discussion regarding the amount of time prescribed to the teaching of Christianity compared to the time prescribed for other major religions.

*History and Philosophy* is taught at one third of all high schools, and the amount of pupils is around ten percent, and compared to what is tradition for philosophy-teaching in Norway this is a high number. It is a 5 hours per week course, where it is possible to finish the subject after the second grade part (until ca 1850), without attending the third grade course (a modern perspective). There are locally administered oral exams after the second and third grade course, and nationally administered written exams after the third grade course. Most of the students will have to do one of these exams.

The reason behind putting history and philosophy together in one course is that both subjects, each in their own way, try to say something about and question who we are, how we are brought here, and what our possibilities are. The main topics in philosophy are the classical ones: ontology and metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and existentialism and philosophy of science – all presented both historically and from our own modern (or post-modern) point of view.

*History and Philosophy* is one among other voluntary and compulsory courses at high school who leads to *examen artium*, which means that you are ready for entering the university. Beside this the course doesn't give any special benefits. So the pupils mainly choose the subject because of their interests and the idea of philosophy expands their intellectuality and helps them in other subjects and their academic career.

*History and Philosophy* was introduced through a (yet another) new school reform in 2007. Earlier, philosophy was only taught at a few high schools as a two hours a week course. It was voluntary and there were no national written exam. For the last decade it has been an outspoken policy from the school authorities that philosophy has to be strengthened in the pre-university education. Therefore, this new subject arises at the high schools and philosophy has become a bigger part of other courses as well. This includes both at high school and primary school, in subjects like history, social science and religion. The amount of students choosing History and Philosophy has been a great inspiration to any philosophy teacher in Norway, and has meant that all the history teachers now teaching this subject have been forced to re-educate themselves in the history and didactics of philosophy for the first time

since their *examen philosophicum*. A one term compulsory introductory philosophy course all students at the universities of Norway have to attend. This exam means that everyone with an academic education at least know the basic history of philosophy, logic and philosophy of science.

The status of philosophy in general is relatively good in Norway today. The number of students at the institutes is increasing, and the education authorities are aware of the benefits. Skills in philosophical thinking among the population - in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres of society – are needed for ongoing discourses and debates. Even though the career-possibilities for full-time philosophical activities are not that wide, especially not in the private sector, there are still some signals which say that critical thinking, proficiency in analysing problems and dilemmas, and the power of understanding political and moral situations through universal concepts are needed dexterities also in the working life.

## **Country Report: Croatia - Teaching Ethics in Schools in Croatia**

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In Croatia, Philosophy is taught in schools in three different subjects: *Philosophy* (which so far has mainly covered history of philosophy), *Logic* (which covers basic logical principles and approaches), and *Ethics* (dealing with various approaches in all ethical fields, classic as well as contemporary). The subjects *Philosophy* and *Logic* are taught only in so called Gymnasiums and some Art schools, while *Ethics* is present in all schools and it has been taught since 1996 as an alternative subject for students who do not attend *Religious classes*, in a country where the vast majority of citizens are Catholics. Until 2003, *Ethics* was taught mainly as history of ethical ideas, since 2003 the classes are more topic oriented, and aim at provoking critical thinking, active participation and dialogue. The main goal of *Ethics* classes in high schools is now to develop different abilities in moral judgement and ethical argumentation, as well as the recognition of the so called "life philosophy" or "life orientation". Some of the specific goals are divided in thematic groups according to the year of teaching. In Croatia, most of the high schools last for four years and the topics taught in this period are as follows: in the first year (usually at the age of 15 years) students learn about general orientation and meaning of ethics, basic human values, rights and identity with an emphasis on development of critical thought; in the second year students learn about their role in community, both nationally and internationally as well as some moral dilemmas, and their relationship with other humans. The third year is dedicated to a detailed study of bioethics, medicine ethics and ecology, while in their final year (at the age of 18) they learn about morality, history of ethics, anthropology and introductory topics in general philosophy.

So far, one of the main issues with *Ethics* classes is that it isn't taught in elementary schools, where students do not have any alternative subject to *Religious classes*. Many philosophers in Croatia during last 20 years have tried to fix this problem and propose some form of curriculum for alternative subject, which would be *Ethics* or a close approximation to Ethics, but without success. Now again, with the new curricular reform<sup>1</sup> announced for the year 2020, there is much public talk of sorting this issue out, but it seems that the problem will stay unsolved. Philosophers have proposed to make a subject which would teach children how to think critically, similar to some methods used by Philosophy for Children, but the government refuses to issue a green light for such ideas, mainly because of financial reasons. Children aged 7 do 14 are, therefore, left to have one free class for themselves, wandering the school hallways on their own, instead of learning and discovering new ideas, while the majority of their classmates take *Religious classes*. Other than that, as vast majority of school children

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<sup>1</sup>Curricular reform is the subject of public debate for some time in Croatia, with many issues of it's own. In this paper it is assumed that the reform will happen at one point, even it seems that many political institutions are still not ready for it.

attend Religious classes, the minority that doesn't is often stigmatized as atheistic, infidel, communist and the like, as if their choice, or their parents' choice, is wrong, unwanted in society and undesirable. This forces some children to attend *Religious classes* even though they aren't religious, in order to fit in and avoid being bullied by their classmates for their choice. Once they finish elementary school, the situation changes – and this could be a reason for the authorities to consider the alternative subject for elementary school. As soon as children are given the choice, they choose to attend *Ethics*, even though they mostly don't have any idea what *Ethics* is about. Mostly, they are told by their elementary school teachers that *Ethics* is an alternative to *Religious classes* and that they will learn about other religions and cultures, which isn't really the case.

This is another problem: even school teachers are unaware of what *Ethics* is about, but never the less children choose *Ethics* out of their own curiosity, desire for knowledge or because some of the *Religious classes* teachers often use the *ex cathedra* approach of preaching the religion, rather than contemporary teaching methods which are student oriented. Of course, this approach is boring for 21st century students and they hope to find something different in *Ethics*, they expect it to be different and innovative, which for most of the time it is. Speaking from personal experience, students usually name several reasons why they choose to attend *Ethics* classes, even though they attended *Religious classes* in elementary schools. Mostly it is because they are curious about the new subject, they wish to investigate possible new topics and new approaches to life, they find religious classes to be boring, or not challenging enough for their minds. Secondly, students, at age of 14 or 15, claim that they are not religious themselves and that they do not wish to listen to religious preaching any longer, or that their parents didn't want them to go to religious classes in elementary school, so they are continuing the alternative way also in high school. These reasons may vary from region to region, but the current situation is that, on average, around 80% of the students take *Religious classes*, while only the rest choose *Ethics* in high schools, when given a choice. Having this in mind, *Ethics* teachers are often put in front of a challenge in preparing the curriculum year by year or even in fear for their own job if nobody in the new class chooses *Ethics*.

With new general curriculum reform planned for 2020, some of these issues may be fixed. Future *Ethics* classes will focus more on the development of moral judgements and interdisciplinary content and will demand more learning based on personal experience. It will, if the reform is carried through, address two major topics – moral thinking and moral acting. The reform would offer more freedom to teachers and students, as opposed to the current curriculum, where the topics are all obligatory. Future topics would be either obligatory or elective, which would give the autonomy to teachers and even to students to choose different topics, regarding their educational profile or abilities. For example, students who attend the economics orientation in high schools would have the option to choose more topics related to business ethics. The classes would be arranged in a manner such that each topic is related to a certain problem, on which students usually can form their own judgements. This would open a space for discussions, so teachers would have the opportunity to develop new skills in teaching. The *ex cathedra* approach is planned to be abandoned, while the teaching of



dialogue skills are recommended and preferred, such as guided or Socratic dialogue, open discussions or other engaging approaches, which aim to provoke critical thinking and problem solving skills. It is planned that new teaching materials should be produced, but that teachers themselves should be creative and use modern technology when applicable, or other sources at their disposal. Classes should be more open to the public, if possible (e.g. to local government, local business) or arranged outside of classroom (e.g. in parks, the school yard, the local community). Teachers should according to the reform 2020 also avoid classical ways of examination, where written exams are to be completely abandoned, just as well as classical oral examinations. This may open different issues concerning teacher's subjectivity when it comes to grading, but in order to avoid also that, teachers are advised to grade their students by different criteria, taking into consideration their abilities and their activity during the class. Both thinking skills and acting skills (moral thinking and moral acting) should be graded, mostly during conversations or discussions which take place in class. Having in mind that usually *Ethics* classes have less than 10 students per class, rarely more than that, this can already be considered as an individualized classroom, and henceforth it shouldn't be a problem for teachers to grade their students by the aforementioned criteria. What the curricular reform thereby proposes is what is already happening in schools with the coming of younger generation of teachers, which have learned contemporary pedagogic and teaching methods at universities, where philosophers are prepared to be high school teachers after they finish their studies. Following these new methods, younger teachers have already introduced them to their classes and have found that also new generation of students, who have used PC's or smartphones and tablets since their early childhood, are well adopted to these methods and they respond to them really well.

**Helge Kminek, Christian Thein, René Torkler (Hrsg): Zwischen Präskription und Deskription – zum Selbstverständnis der Philosophiedidaktik. Opladen/Berlin/Toronto: Budrich 2018.**

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The didactics of philosophy have a special status. While other didactics are open to empirical classroom and teaching research, as for example the didactics of political education, the didactics of philosophy remain restrained – even after the *empirical turn*. The recently published book, “Zwischen Präskription und Deskription – Zum Selbstverständnis der Philosophiedidaktik” (“Between Prescription and Description – Reflexions on the Self-Conception of Didactics of Philosophy”), arose from the First International Workshop on Didactics of Philosophy and Ethics. The book offers a snapshot of current attempts to include the methods of empirical and non-empirical approaches in didactics of philosophy and their respective location between the poles of description and prescription. Taking a stand on the status of empirical, purely descriptive research became necessary for the didactics of philosophy due to critical voices claiming the current didactics to be detached from practice.

Besides a fundamental statement for a didactics of philosophy based on empirical research the book contains five diverging approaches. In his paper Helge Kminek argues for the claim that the current question “what *should* be taught in philosophy classes?” should be replaced by the question “what *is* taught in philosophy classes?” (21). In doing so, Kminek changes the focus to a descriptive stocktaking based on an approach of qualitative social science. According to Kminek, it is necessary to “reconstruct the praxis”, as the ongoing didactics are based on non-valid empirical assumptions. However, how would a first model of a data-based didactics of philosophy manifest itself? Kminek refers in this context to the desire for “independent empirical didactics”. Although the empirical data may be analysed by research methods taken from scientifically related disciplines, an empirical didactics of philosophy should maintain “in and through research the peculiarity of philosophy” (24).

Julia Dietrich intends to generate new and distinctive features for the didactics of philosophy by conceiving it as a variety of Applied Ethics. Since didactics have to be interested in the outcome of their interventions – as their manner of mediation is deeply permeated with prescriptive elements – the didactics of philosophy have to take responsibility for their interventions too. As a consequence, the didactics of philosophy have to be understood as part of Applied Ethics (44). More precisely, this implies that teachers have to explore the following topics: the emergence and the meaning of morality, the history of morality and the development of morality (46). Nevertheless, the purpose of analysing this content does not lie in a later discussion with pupils. In analysing these areas, teachers are also reconsidering and clarifying their own self-understanding as teachers. Thus, the impact for didacticians lies rather in the need to justify the validity of prescriptive didactical statements.

René Torkler's paper points out that there is a lack of what he calls a "narrative approach" in the didactics of philosophy. It is striking that related didactics, as in the didactics of history or of political education, not only integrated narrativity into their self-concept, but developed it out of genuine philosophical positions. However, no such approach emerged out of the reference discipline itself. Also, the empirical social sciences refer to philosophical positions, as with Fritz Schütze in his evaluation methodology for narrative interviews. Therefore, the question arises whether the notion of narrativity might be a nexus for an empirical access within the didactics of philosophy (84). However, regarding Bourdieu, Torkler points out the limits of this empirical access. According to Torkler, the didactics of philosophy have to reflect the very notion of narrativity as a central medium of philosophizing itself (86). Besides the prevalent reductionist understanding of rationality, reflected in the concept of *logon didonai*, the didactics of philosophy ought to include narrativity to facilitate an unravelling of the human praxis through stories. Considering the ideas of Ricœur, who suggests that stories might equal thought experiments that enable us to train our faculty of judgement beyond decision-making in real life, and the ideas of Nussbaum, who favours the narrative power of imagination, Torkler outlines that a concept of a narrative didactics of philosophy is not restrained to philosophizing in class on the basis of stories. In fact, stories and narrations constitute only the initial texts helping to train the pupil's (inter-) acting and judging competencies.

Philipp Richter considers the question whether, and if so, how, the act of philosophizing might be empirically investigated (52). This is of particular interest as the act of philosophizing does not only consist in using typical conversation methods and being able to make a judgement. One of the particular components of philosophizing is its impact on the constitution of subjectivity. Therefore, one cannot infer from the use of indicators such as "balancing formulations" (e.g. "as well as"/ "although") that an act of philosophizing has taken place. The only possibility of proving a philosophical performance is to infer by abductive inference: If a pupil's answer does contain balancing formulations and, if we agree on the use of balancing formulations in actions of philosophizing, then the answer is a philosophical answer (62). To enhance the probability of the validity of abductive inferences, it is then necessary to get a more in-depth insight into normality assumptions of the praxis.

The starting point in Anne Burkard's still ongoing study is the investigation of teachers' practice: How do teachers respond to students' sceptical comments? Do they perceive these sceptical comments as an opportunity or as a problem? The aim of the study is to generate and test educational material offering a successful way of handling sceptical remarks (105). The research design, based on the Grounded Theory, is modelled as follows: At first, twenty-nine philosophy teachers were asked online to list sceptical comments they were confronted with during lessons and to estimate their respective value. This allowed for categorizing students' comments and gathering possible teacher reactions. In a second step, the teachers discussed the collected data in groups to find, on the one hand, possible answers for the emergence of these students' comments and, on the other hand, strategies for dealing with the situation. Then in a third step, in order to include the students' perspective, students were confronted with some sceptical remarks and requests for comments. Additionally, the students were

invited to give ideas on possible teacher reactions. Thus, this study offers an insight into the different approaches to dealing with sceptical remarks in class from the view point of both the students and the teachers. First results show that while many teachers still struggle in dealing with sceptical comments, they nevertheless perceive them as an opportunity. Therefore, some teachers ask for more didactical support in discussion strategies.

Jonas Pfister has chosen a different starting point. Pfister tries to prove an impact between attending philosophy classes and high marks in all school subjects (137). Although he could not verify a positive effect in attending philosophy classes in the form of higher marks, this does not imply that philosophy does not have any positive effects on students (141). In a closing commentary, Christian Thein summarises what unites all the papers in this book: “From a perspective of scientific theory it is striking that all papers try to answer the question of the appropriate scientific method within the didactics of philosophy [...] starting with the philosophical praxis itself, which is constituted by specific normative aims” (150, translated by C.H.).

Given the diversity of the papers, the volume not only offers a differentiated vision of the present debate on the self-conception of the didactics of philosophy but is also the starting point for a discourse that has to be promoted. This discussion is needed as uncontroversial “ways out of the conflictual relation of philosophy and empiricism” (9) cannot yet be found. In this way this book can inspire the reader to take up his or her position in the tension field between description and prescription.

**Michael Bruce and Steven Barbone (eds.): *Just the Arguments: 100 of the Most Important Arguments in Western Philosophy*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.**

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If you agree with the current discussion in didactics of philosophy that teaching philosophy should always and mainly be focused on philosophical problems, the ways of understanding and challenging them by producing arguments and using methods of reasoning, then you'll find the book of Bruce and Barbone very helpful. They fill a longstanding desideratum: On the one hand, „encyclopaedias of philosophy are great for limited descriptions of philosophers and concepts, but there is a need for reference tools that offer specific arguments“, as Bruce and Barbone write in the *Introduction*. On the other hand, many books and journal articles offer deep analyses and reconstructions of arguments in such a scholarly and profound way that it is quite tough to figure out what exactly it is that makes the argument in question valid and sound.

Therefore the 100 chapters (each 3-8 pages long) do only consider arguments. For example: Why do I have to accept, following Anselm, that it is impossible to claim the non-existence of God? Show me the argument! Sara L. Uckelman (*The Ontological Argument*, p. 25-28) answers this question on not more than 3 pages.

In general, it is helpful that all arguments in the 6 parts of the book (Philosophy of Religion, Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics, Philosophy of Mind, Science and Language) are discussed along the same format. First you will find a boxed area which offers a reference list of original and secondary sources of the text that originally presented the argument. It is followed by a short introduction explaining briefly and precisely what the philosophical problem is, in which philosophical context it was brought up and which strategy (argument) was chosen to deal with it. Problems, mistakes and fallacies are also discussed. Block quotations show how the argument was originally presented in a text (all texts are translated). But the main point of interest is the reconstruction of the argument itself that is presented in a deductive structure with premises (marked „P“ and numbered), also containing the methodological steps and inferences (e.g. „reductio ad absurdum“ or „modus ponens: P4, P5“), and conclusions (marked „C.“ and numbered). For example the ontological proof (Anselm) is presented in 7 premises and 4 conclusions. For sure there could be further discussions about the precise reconstruction but the core argument is clearly presented and is therefore a good starting point for further preparations in teaching.

One example I found especially useful for teaching is „Descartes' Arguments for the Mind–Body Distinction“ (p. 290-296) followed by „Princess Elisabeth and the Mind–Body Problem“ (p. 297-300). Students can first follow Descartes' reasoning in *Meditationes de Prima Philosophia* II and VI to understand this reasoning and its problems. (This could also be combined with „The Cogito Arguments of Descartes and Augustine“, p. 133-136). It should be made clear that even though the distinction of mind and body seems to be common

and familiar it leads to many theoretical problems. These philosophical problems could be easily addressed with Princess Elisabeth's perceptive argument against the mind-body distinction in Descartes. The conclusion of her argumentation is: either Descartes' definition of the mind is wrong or the mind is not able to move the body. In preparing the class one can save a lot of time by starting from this conclusion rather than from reading the letters of Descartes and Elisabeth or their other works.

Note: a copy of Bruce and Barbone is also available in German: *Die 100 wichtigsten philosophischen Argumente*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.