



*Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia*

www.pesa.org.au

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## Newsletter — January 2020

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### Letter from President, Liz Jackson

Dear friends and colleagues,

Happy New Year and Gong Hei Fat Choy (Gong Xi Fa Cai) in the Chinese Year of the Rat!

As I think of recent and ongoing political, social, and environmental turmoil, from Australia and New Zealand, to Philippines and China and all around the world, I sincerely hope this newsletter brings you good cheer, and that 2020 is happy, healthy, and peaceful for you.

In Hong Kong, we have had our share of challenges in 2019. The region and its major universities faced intense political upheaval. For me, it culminated in the decision, unanimously made by the PESA Executive Committee in November, to cancel its 2019 Annual Conference which was to be held in Hong Kong. This was not an easy decision for the Exec, and it was not made lightly. I had so looked forward to welcoming all of you to my home and my university. However, safety of all was utmost in our decision making, and fortunately conference expenses related to the cancellation were minimal. A full report on the organisation of the conference and its cancellation can be found in my Presidential Report from our Annual General Meeting, which was held for the first time by virtual meeting, in December.

In my Presidential Report I also note the outstanding work of PESA colleagues and Exec members that has taken place this last year. In particular I would like to highlight the significant and sustained efforts of Michael Peters and his team, with Tina Besley and Marek Tesar, to continue to build PESA's journal *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, to fantastic new heights. The latest impact factor is 1.267—another incredible increase from the last year. Stay tuned for PESA Agora, a new initiative currently under development by this team.

In the last year, PESA has also significantly updated its website, thanks to Rachel Buchanan, Christoph Teschers, and Tina Besley, while Exec continues its regular work to support members through book awards, research and events grants, social network spaces, and more.

Thanks very much to the Executive Committee of 2019 for their hard work in this last year: Michael Peters, Tina Besley, Christoph Teschers, Rachel Buchanan, and Marek Tesar, as well as Sonja Arndt, John Ozolins, Ruyu Hung, and Jennifer Bleazby. And welcome to our new Exec members this year, Andrew Madjar and Janet Orchard. Congratulations to Rachel, our new Treasurer, and thanks to John for his ongoing efforts to support Exec, including helping with the transition of Treasurer, and leading the planning of the next PESA Annual Conference, celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> year as a Society, in Sydney. Don't forget to save the dates: 7-11 December, 2020.

While this last year has been challenging for many of us, it is heartening at such times to remember that PESA exists due to the voluntary work of colleagues, with shared interests and goals and a collegial spirit. This includes not only those on Exec, but many others, working outside Exec, on other portfolios and sub-committees and groups, and as regular conference attendees. While I was very sad to cancel the PESA Conference in Hong Kong, at the same time I received many warm wishes of support, for PESA and for what we do, from colleagues all around the world. PESA remains an active, flourishing, well-supported society despite challenges faced. The hurdles are simply tests that make us stronger as community. Thanks to all of you for being a part of that.

Sincerely,



Liz Jackson  
PESA President  
January 21, 2020

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## **AGM Highlights and PESA Exec**

The 2019 AGM was held online for the very first time in December, with 17 members in attendance via zoom.

Some of the highlights of the AGM were:

### **Book awards**

Congratulations to the authors and editors of the two books awarded PESA book awards this year:

1. Ruyu Hung: Education between Speech and Writing: Crossing the Boundaries of Dao and Deconstruction
2. Editors: Peters, M.A., Rider, S., Hyvönen, M., Besley, T. (Eds.): Post-Truth, Fake News: Viral Modernity & Higher Education

Members are reminded to submit books for consideration for the book awards every year. Please visit the <https://pesa.org.au/members-books/pesa-book-awards> link for further information.

## PESA Website

Updates to the PESA website are ongoing. Remember that it contains features where members can now easily submit news items to be published on its newsfeeds by filling a brief online form.

*In particular, members are encouraged to submit the following items:*

- Calls for papers
- Upcoming events
- General news items  
(e.g., recent events, jobs, obituaries, new journals, significant achievements of members)
- Photographs from PESA conferences for the "[conference gallery](#)"
- Publications of books by PESA members

To submit all other news items select the "[news](#)" menu on the PESA homepage.

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## PESA Executive Committee

No elections were held for the PESA executive, as 1 nomination was received for the two open positions of Treasurer and Member representative. The members of PESA executive are:

- *President: Liz Jackson, University of Hong Kong*
- *Vice-President: Sonja Arndt, University of Melbourne*
- *Secretary: Christoph Teschers, University of Canterbury*
- *Treasurer: Rachel Buchanan, University of Newcastle*
- *Ex Officio — Immediate Past President: Tina Besley, Beijing Normal University,*
- *Ex Officio: Michael A Peters, Beijing Normal University*
- *Member Representative: Marek Tesar, University of Auckland*
- *Member Representative: Andrew Madjar, University of Auckland*
- *Member Representative: Ruyun Hung, National Chiayi University*
- *John Ozolins, Notre Dame University, co-opted for 1 year*
- *Janet Orchard, University of Bristol, co-opted for 1 year*

Further details about the executive are available [here](#)

We welcome our two new members – who briefly introduce themselves below:

**Andrew Madjar** has been appointed to the PESA executive as a postgraduate member representative.

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I am a PhD candidate at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. I work in the area of human science pedagogy, drawing from phenomenological and hermeneutic philosophy to help understand how the classroom is lived and experienced in meaningful ways by teachers and children. On my PhD journey it has been a privilege to become a member of a community such as PESA that is highly committed to the task of thinking about education. I look forward to serving on the PESA executive in order to continue building relationships with other members and other postgraduate students in order to further promote research and teaching in the Philosophy of Education.

**Janet Orchard** has been co-opted onto the Exec Committee for 1 year.



I am delighted to have been given this opportunity to join the PESA Executive Committee over the next year as a co-opted member. I look forward to making new connections with academic Philosophy of Education colleagues in the Asian Pacific region, where I am a regular visitor as Programme Director of the EdD that Bristol University runs in partnership with City University in Hong Kong. I was pleased and proud to play an active role as a local committee member

for the PESA Annual Conference in 2019, and desperately disappointed when political events conspired against us and the event had to be cancelled.

I joined PESA in 2017 and am concurrently a member of INPE (since 2014) and the PESGB since 1998 (PESGB Executive member from 2008-2018). I am keen to explore ways in which stronger reciprocal relationships between these excellent academic societies can be fostered. For example, in 2017 I worked with Liz Jackson and others to translate a PESGB initiative to a culturally appropriate equivalent in Hong Kong, sponsored by PESA, which led to a series of further publications and joint initiatives related to my interests in promoting philosophy in teacher education. I am also interested in supporting part time doctoral students who are practitioners and understand the issue of recruiting and retaining doctoral candidates in Philosophy of Education is a concern for PESA in the current academic climate so I am interested to be part of that conversation. I am interested to think about how EPAT might enjoy greater recognition by philosophers of education based in Europe.

Looking forward to working with everyone and meeting many more fellow PESA members in Sydney 2020!

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### **AGM Minutes and reports**

The AGM minutes and reports are available in the Members section of the PESA website:

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PESA AGM 2019 – draft minutes: <https://pesa.org.au/membership/member-documents/general-meeting-minutes/137-draft-pesa-agm-2019-minutes/file>

PESA 2019 President’s report: <https://pesa.org.au/membership/member-documents/other-general-meeting-documents/136-president-s-report-agm-2019/file>

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### **PESA Conference 2020 – 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!**

The 2020 PESA conference will be a celebration of 50 years of PESA! The conference will be held at Notre Dame University, Sydney, during 7-11 December. The committee is currently developing the conference website. Stay tuned for more info soon!

For general PESA conference information and for archives of past conferences, including conference proceedings, click [here](#).

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### **PESA PhD Scholarships**

PESA has awarded two doctoral scholarships in most years since 2006. The value of these scholarships is AUD 10,000. Applications for the 2020 scholarships close on the **1st of May, 2020**.

Further details on how to apply are available [here](#).

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## PESA Grants and Awards

Each year PESA awards research grants, as well as financial support for events such as conferences, symposia, and seminars.

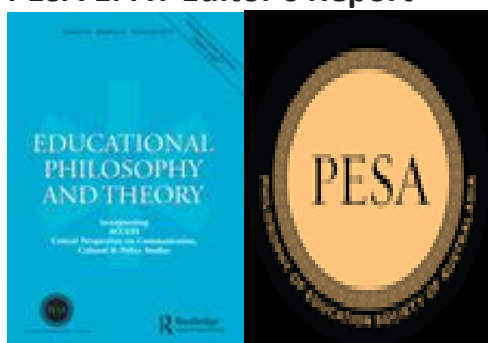
There are now two rounds of funding:

- Applications for the first round of funding close on the **1<sup>st</sup> of May, 2020**.
- Applications for the second round close on the **1<sup>st</sup> of October, 2020**.
- Funding application for amounts of AUD 1,000.00 or less are accepted throughout the year

Further details on how to apply are available [here](#).

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## PESA EPAT Editor's Report



Published on behalf of the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia.

ISSN 0013-1857 (Print), 1469-5812 (Online)

Citescore (Scopus) 2019: 1.49

#18/135 History and Philosophy of Science

#296/1040 Social Science: Education

The 2018 Journal Citation Reports & Impact Factors by Clarivate of *EPAT* has increased from 0.864 to 1.267. The journal now has a ranking of 149/243 in the Education & Educational Research subject category.

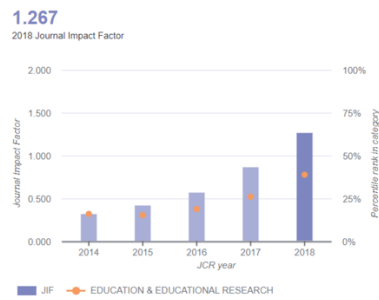
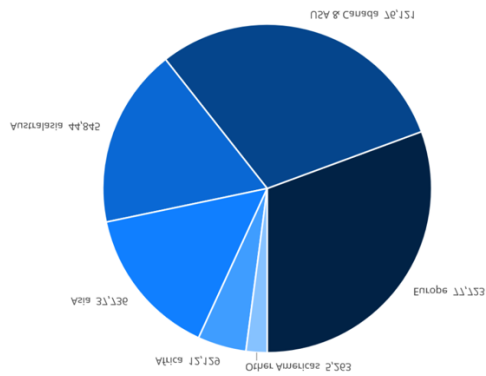
Web of Science, Clarivate

### Highlights (from the Publishers' Report 2019)

- Your Journal received 253,219 article downloads in 2018, which is 86.5% higher than downloads received in 2017.
- The most downloaded article is 'Technological unemployment: Educating for the fourth industrial revolution' by Michael A. Peters, with 7,637 downloads.
- The top Altmetric scoring article was 'Peter Boghossian—What comes after postmodernism?' by Peter Boghossian & James Lindsay, with a score of 170.
- The journal's 2018 Impact Factor is 1.267, ranking 149/243 in the Education & Educational Research JCR category.
- There were 316 publications in 2018, 7 of which were Open Access.

Journal circulation 2,963 Institutions

Article download by region and Impact Factor



This year the journal is focusing on collective writing – philosophy, methodology and pedagogy.

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We will launch the new **PESA Agora** OA journal that incorporates ACCESS and the digital archive (thanks to Marek Tesar).

**Preview Access** - The website can be accessed here: <https://pesaagora.com?preview> Without the preview on the URL the user is redirected to a coming soon page. This restriction can be removed whenever. Once the preview has been used once that browser will be able to browse without being redirected.

**What has been done**

Basic site has been built to match the mock-ups with 6 articles added to the Essay category. A CFP and Event have been added also, and an example promotion (for the PESA conference) appears above the footer on all non-homepage pages.

**Agora Editorial Team: Appointment / assignment of Web Related Editorial Positions**  
**These are paid positions – if you are interested please contact [mpeters@bnu.edu.cn](mailto:mpeters@bnu.edu.cn)**

*Content Manager/Assistant Editor*

- the person who processes and publishes content on the website. This involves processing pre-existing and new articles into a format suitable for the web.
- it will be very helpful if this person has access to a recent copy of Adobe Acrobat Pro DC and Microsoft Word.

*Social Media and Communications Manager*

- the person to run the Facebook and Twitter page
- the person who puts together email campaigns

*Administrator*

- the person who handles the [admin@pesaagora.com](mailto:admin@pesaagora.com) email account

Thanks to: the Editorial Team – Marek Tesar, Liz Jackson, Tina Besley & Susanne Brighthouse; all the reviewers for 2019; and the contributors. 2020 looks a promising year for EPAT.  
 Michael A. Peters: Editor-in-Chief

## Events and Calls for Papers



### TOWARDS A NEW ACADEMIC ACTIVISM

#### First PaTHES online webinar discussion

As a response to the enhanced pressure on universities from neoliberal regimes, we see a rising wave of student protest movements, and political and institutional debates on academic freedom, research integrity, and sustainable higher education futures. We see protests escalate into violent confrontations, students and teachers turning on each other, and institutional leaders caught in a conflict between their professors and governing Boards. In spite of the much-celebrated turn towards academic activism in universities around the world, we detect disturbingly little cohesion, communal spirit, and ethical grounding in these movements. In this webinar discussion, we ask, what are the values and common beliefs foundational in the formation of a new academic activism?

#### Date and time

Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, at 16.00-19.00 (CET)

#### Webinar programme

16.00-16.15: Welcome and presentations of speakers and participants  
16.15-16.45: Presentation from Professor Ryan Gildersleeve, University of Denver, United States  
16.45-17.15: Presentation from Professor Nuraan Davids, Stellenbosch University, South Africa  
17.15-18.00: Break & group discussions  
18.00-18.30: Joint debate  
18.30-18.45: Discussant, Emeritus Professor Ronald Barnett, University College London, UK  
18.45-19.00: Final remarks, closing and good-bye

The event will be chaired by Dr Søren S.E. Bengtson, Chair of PaTHES, Aarhus University, Denmark.

The event is organised by the Philosophy and Theory of Higher Education Society (PaTHES), and is **free and open** to all interested. However, signing up for the event is mandatory, so if you wish to attend, please send an email, with your name, title and affiliation, and email-address to PaTHES at: [pathes2018@gmail.com](mailto:pathes2018@gmail.com).

**Please sign up for the event before March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

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## Re/framing Educational Equity: An international collaboration

University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

August 30<sup>th</sup> – September 1<sup>st</sup> 2020

[Conference Website](#)

*In partnership with 'Experiments in Education Theory': [www.exet.org](http://www.exet.org)*

### Call for Papers

**SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE NOW EXTENDED TO MONDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2020**

Across the world, nations aspire towards educational equity. Very often this aspiration involves efforts to close what is called the 'education gap' or the 'attainment gap'. Many of



these efforts stem from concerns to increase attainment on national, standardised tests so that students might better position themselves in the job market. Such efforts are not without success and many countries can point to a reduction in the gaps between certain groups with regard to such educational attainment. However, it has to be noted that not every nation focuses their efforts on attainment alone; indeed, some would point to other measures for equity in education such as access to higher education or general health and wellbeing.

Whatever the focus, it is notably the case that in some form or other, evaluation takes centre-stage as the means by which policies designed to uplift educational success are judged. However, it is not always clear what procedures would allow for evaluating accomplishment in education on a micro- or macro-level: it is debatable whether or not, and to what extent, measurement can be an instrument of evaluation. That such measurement takes place is a feature of efforts such as the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM) to demonstrate, at national levels, the ways and means by which education can be positioned, neoliberally, as an individual right and benefit, and an economic good. The question remains, though: what is left unaccounted for by emphasising measurement as the predominant instrument of evaluation?

Furthermore, the very concept of an education gap is often assumed to raise issues of equity across societies that are deeply stratified. That education is tasked to close such gaps is already a great challenge. But there are other complex gaps competing to be addressed, gaps created by those who do, or do not: have access to technology; or who struggle for recognition or inclusion in terms of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.

Beyond questions around the general criteria of educational success and the means with which we could ascertain such success, what is also often missed in debates are efforts to fundamentally question common understandings of education equity: 'the education gap'. For example, it remains a general assumption that the education gap is something that should, as far as possible, be closed, and neither the nature of the education gap nor the question whether such a gap is desirable or not are discussed. From a broader perspective, it needs to be asked what equity in relation to education could truly mean; that is, what kind of differences and what causes of difference are we prepared to recognise or embrace, and how are we to ascertain equity in the light of the basic condition of difference? Philosophical and sociological discussion, for example, needs to take place so that policy might begin to consider the fundamental approaches that are taken to addressing the challenges posed by aspirations of equity in education.

This conference is part of a larger project working in collaboration with colleagues at the Education University of Hong Kong. The event provides a forum for scholars to debate the nature of educational equity and its relation to academic attainment and achievement. These inequities, and resulting gaps, will be examined through their relationship with education systems that purport to narrow the differences between rich and poor, male and female, advantaged and disadvantaged, etc. In doing so it seeks to address themes such as:

- How might education equity and inequity be defined? What criteria could be used to decide the existence of educational equity or inequity?
- How could the relation between education equity and general individuality and capacity be conceived? What is the relation of equity and difference with regard to education?
- What roles do education equity and inequity play in the broader context of society?
- What does the elimination of inequity in education seek ultimately to achieve?

- What might be the consequences of not achieving equity, e.g. of not narrowing the education gap?
- How might we theorise the existence of differential outcomes so that all might be able to achieve academically or with regard to any other criteria used to define education equity or inequity?
- What is the relation of evaluation and measurement, and how does this relation affect the framing of education equity?
- Whose interests are threatened by efforts to close the attainment gap?

These questions and more are at the heart of any endeavour to create a just and equitable education system. They involve consideration from a variety of standpoints and through a number of disciplinary lenses. The positions taken by politicians and policy-makers centre on ways to achieve success as determined in narrow terms. Perhaps what is required is further reflection on what the achievement of success actually means.

**Indicative themes for this conference include:**

Re/framing (in)equity: In what ways is equity a driving force for good in developing appropriate theories for mitigating the education gap? How might a drive for an inclusive education system mitigate the effects of education disadvantage? In what ways does theorising about the education gap contribute to an understanding of inclusivity?

Re/framing policy: How does policy at global, national and local levels shape thinking about the education gap? How might individuals and groups engage with theorising about the education gap? How might new partnerships enhance or inhibit educational initiatives and the mobilisation of research?

Re/framing curriculum: How does the curriculum (in whatever form) engage with a constantly changing and evolving, unequal world? How might curriculum engage thinking about human flourishing? What insights can be gleaned from different theoretical perspectives on curriculum? How might education practitioners engage with the process of curriculum reform to effect deeper understandings of the education gap?

Re/framing assessment: In what ways does National Assessment evidence drive conceptions of education disadvantage and advantage? How does theory contribute to an ever-evolving understanding of the place and form for education disadvantage?

Re/framing Research: What challenges are facing education researchers and how are new research methods being innovated in response to educational challenges? What new questions need to be asked and examined to effect change in understanding educational equity? How are different theoretical perspectives and paradigms creating openings for new questions, new forms of research, critical insights into advantage and disadvantage? How can more innovative research methods contribute to supporting learning and change in challenging times and spaces?

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**Confirmed Keynote Speakers:**

Prof. Sheila Riddell, University of Edinburgh, Scotland: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/profile/sheila-riddell>

Prof. Gert Biesta, Maynooth University, Ireland: <https://www-gertbiesta-com.jimdosite.com/>

Prof. Kerry Kennedy, The Education University of Hong Kong: [https://oraas0.ied.edu.hk/rich/web/people\\_details.jsp?pid=15707](https://oraas0.ied.edu.hk/rich/web/people_details.jsp?pid=15707)

For more details and registration, see the [conference website](#).

- Dr Paul Adams
- Dr Karsten Kenklies
- Dr David Lewin

For queries email: [ree-conf2020@strath.ac.uk](mailto:ree-conf2020@strath.ac.uk)

Further details about these events and CFPs can be found on the [PESA website newsfeeds](#)