

Editorial: from the new Editors

The first issue of *Philosophy* appeared in January 1926 under the title *Journal of Philosophical Studies*. (The journal adopted its current title in January 1931). It featured papers on art and science, evolution, the nature of psychology, instinct and emotion, and the purpose of philosophy. Now as then, *Philosophy* is distinctive among academic journals in being shaped by the dual aims of promoting original philosophical research of the highest standards while serving a broad interest in philosophy among educated non-specialist readers.

The founders, who included the philosophers Samuel Alexander, Bertrand Russell and Sydney Hooper (the first editor), were animated by a conviction that the philosophical quest ‘begets a certain spirit of impartiality in judging all things’. That our culture is in sore need of such fair-mindedness hardly needs saying. In almost every quarter, kinds of thinking that seek truth and produce deeper and truer understanding are under threat from greed for power, fanaticism, ruthless pursuit of profit, and sheer carelessness. These beget mistrust, indifference, even hopelessness at the very time when we most need their opposites, faced as we are with some urgent problems and challenges. We need to understand better how to live well in ourselves, with each other, and with the other creatures with whom we share our endangered planet. While philosophy on its own cannot remedy all these ills, it can help. Its methods – its underlying purposes – make it a powerful tool against mendacity, narrow-mindedness and bunk.

As the journal’s fifth and sixth editors, we are committed to *Philosophy*’s – and philosophy’s – obligation to reach an ever-wider audience through articles that identify and clarify the challenges the world faces, relating them to the fundamental problems that have animated the best work in philosophy throughout its history. Our first issue includes papers on trust in the digital age, Athenian lessons on public office and accountability, the value of knowledge, friendship as a test for moral theory, the impact of biology on our conception of ourselves as agents, and on predistribution (as opposed to redistribution) as a political economic strategy.

Our immediate predecessor was Anthony O’Hear, who edited the journal with dedication for nearly a quarter of a century. During that period, he ensured that it continued to publish outstanding

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philosophical work while retaining its wide appeal: today, *Philosophy* has over two and a half thousand individual and library subscribers across the world – a patent tribute to Anthony and his editorial team.

Building on this success but mindful of the fact that sometimes it is necessary to move in order to stay the same, we have made some changes to the editorial process which are intended to bring it more in line with current peer-review practices. We have introduced an online submission system with triple-blind refereeing. After our initial editorial evaluation, submissions will be reviewed by a member of an Editorial Board – another new element – who will determine subsequent refereeing. The expertise of the Board reflects the breadth and variety of areas and approaches that we hope to include in the journal: in addition to us as Co-Editors, there are four Associate Editors: Sarah Fine, Sacha Golob, James Stazicker, and Raphael Woolf; a Reviews Editor, John Callanan; and an Editorial Assistant, Matt Hewson. And we shall also rely on the expertise and advice of members of the Executive Committee of the Royal Institute of Philosophy.

We aim to make this new process agile and robust but constructive: when appropriate, we'll endeavour to work with authors to improve their papers and make them suitable for publication, helping to find ways to develop their ideas and identify their relevance while avoiding unnecessary technicality or parochial self-referential debates, but without compromising precision or rigour.

We greatly look forward to working together on the journal and would like to thank the Trustees of the Royal Institute of Philosophy for entrusting us with the editorship. We are especially grateful to James Garvey of the Royal Institute and to Olivia Hassall, Richard Horley and their colleagues at CUP for their generous help with our transition into the role.

Maria Alvarez
Bill Brewer