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Editorial
This is the fourteenth EARLI SIG 19: Religious and Spiritual Education Newsletter. The purpose of our special interest group is to endorse discussion on the importance of religious and spiritual aspects of education. The Newsletter notifies the special interest group members about upcoming events as well as recent and forthcoming publications on the field.

In this issue, we are reporting from the SIG 19 Conference held in 23rd to 25th August 2012 in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. We feature pictures from the conference, together with some Nijmegen recollections by one of the conference keynote speakers, Prof. Robert Jackson, as well as our new Australian SIG members, Dan Fleming and Peter Mudge, both of whom we have interviewed for this issue. Warmest welcome to your SIG community!

Furthermore, we have included the Minutes of the SIG 19 Business Meeting held during the conference, and the Call for Papers for the Special Issue which will be based on the papers of this SIG conference. And as usual, also some other news from our field.

We are happy to announce that Inkeri Rissanen, the other Editor of our Newsletter, got a beautiful baby girl, Vilja, in the spring. Congratulations to Inkeri and her family! Due to Inkeri’s family leave, our previous Newsletter Editor Arniika Kuusisto has promised to be the Guest Editor for this issue. Some of you already know that we, Arniika and Elina, are second cousins, so the Kuusisto family is very well represented in this Newsletter and also in our SIG19. This issue is our first publication together.

All the best for the newly started academic year!

Elina Kuusisto
Arniika Kuusisto
University of Helsinki, Finland

Note that you can now also join EARLI group in Facebook for information updates and discussion!
There is also an EARLI-group at Linked-In.
RECOLLECTIONS FROM THE NIJMegen CONFERENCE
“What is religious and spiritual education good for?”

EARLI SIG 19 Conference, 23-25 August 2012
Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands

Above, from left: Robert Jackson, Arnika Kuusisto, Theo van der Zee and Chris Hermans in front of the Huize Heyendaal Faculty Club of the Radboud University Nijmegen

Left: Theo van der Zee thanked the Mayor of Nijmegen Hubert Bruls after his festive Opening of the conference in the Beel Room
Sturla Sagberg's Response Talk

Dan Fleming and Shirley Larkin in the audience

Right: Discussion following Professor Jackson’s Keynote Lecture

Right: Theo van der Zee Chairing the Friday morning session
Above left & right: Interesting discussions...but also lots of fun! Laura Hirsto and Tapani Innanen on the right

Above left: One of the Friday keynote speakers Doret De Ruyter, here in discussion with Chris Hermans and Robert Jackson
Above right: Ulrich Riegel, Theo van der Zee
Right: Ferdinand Potgieter holding his presentation
Below left: Chris Hermans, Jacomijn van der Kooij, Dedré Victor; Below right: Our really friendly and welcoming registration desk staff
Right: On Thursday evening we had the privilege to also enjoy Professor Jackson’s talents as a jazz musician!

Below: Lunch time discussions in the sunshine!
Above: Ferdinand Potgieter held a beautiful thank you speech!

Above: We are so grateful to Maria Venhuizen for taking care of the practicalities of our SIG conference! Thank you again, Maria!
Religion, the tango, spirituality and cycling...

It was a real privilege to attend the EARLI SIG on religious and spiritual education, and I regret not having been able to stay for the whole programme. Our colleagues in Nijmegen did some really good organisation and gave us a lovely welcome. The mayor of Nijmegen did a great job opening the conference, and gave us an object lesson on how a politician can talk convincingly about the importance of religion in the public sphere. The programme was rich and varied, and I enjoyed very much the papers I was able to get to, as well as the very thoughtful response to my own paper from Sturla Sagberg. It was also wonderful to have the European part of EARLI extended to include Australia, South Africa and Indonesia, and, of course, to meet old friends and new colleagues.

There were also the surprise benefits of the Courage Hotel! I walked into the lobby late on Wednesday afternoon to check in and found myself surrounded by about 25 couples dancing the tango very seriously and skilfully! Not only had I walked into the monthly tango club, held at the hotel, but had arrived at the time of an annual tango festival, with dancers from all over the world based in different parts of the town. A couple from Macclesfield in England, told me of their love for the tango and of their annual visits to Nijmegen to dance. They regarded the tango almost as a variety of meditation. I could see an ethnographic study coming on....

Then there was the surprise of a magnificent cycle museum next to the hotel and organised by the hotel owner. Sensing my enthusiasm for the bicycle, he opened the museum just for me at nine o’clock in the evening and I had over an hour looking at his amazing collection of machines and memorabilia! Once again, a combination of the physical and spiritual, I feel!

A further surprise was to be asked to draw on the jazz musician side of my life, to sing with a young jazz pianist, Ivan, on Thursday evening. He was so enthusiastic about jazz music, and so keen to work professionally as a musician. I wish him very well. We found some common ground, and did a few songs, which was especially nice for me! Thank you so much Maria for organising this!

In my view, the EARLI SIG provides an important link from general education research in Europe to the specific fields of religious and spiritual education. The equivalent in the UK is the religion and education SIG related to the British Educational Research Association. These groups complement specialist free standing conferences such as the International Seminar on Religious Education and Values, which are well-known in the field of religion and education, but virtually unknown to the general educational research community.

Moreover, the EARLI SIG has established an excellent book series, which should be more widely known (I am enjoying the range of fascinating studies reported in the volume edited by Theo and Terry, and Arniika’s really excellent research report on Adventist young people in Finland). And, of course, the SIG provides a platform for future collaborative research projects.

So, may the SIG go from strength to strength!

Robert Jackson
Nijmegen at night
Name: Dan Fleming  
Title: Mr  
(almost Dr! I’m submitting my PhD in October)  
Age: 26  
Institution: The Broken Bay Institute and  
The University of Newcastle  
Country: Australia  
Good book to read:  
Karen Armstrong (2010), Twelve Steps to a  
Web link: www.bbi.catholic.edu.au  
Research key words:  
theology; moral theology; natural law theory; virtue  
ethics; moral theology and moral education; virtue  
ethics and moral education

1. Please describe your work

Our institute is primarily involved in delivering theology and religious education courses to teachers. My speciality is the design and delivery of the foundational theology courses which involves teaching in face-to-face and online environments, as well as travelling to regional areas of Australia to be with students who otherwise wouldn't have access to tertiary education in theology and religious education.

My research has been largely focused on my PhD, which I will be completing in October 2012. In this, I attempt to create links between the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, Jean Porter’s theory of the natural law, and virtue ethics. However, recently my work at the Broken Bay Institute and the University of Newcastle, especially with Prof. Terry Lovat and Dr. Peter Mudge, has stimulated my interest in religious education and its relationship to my other fields of research, which has meant that I have been exploring contemporary insights which apply to these areas, including from values education and neuroscience.
2. Describe your path how you became a researcher

At a young age I became aware of, and interested in, the ambivalent nature of religion which was, on the one hand, such a positive human phenomenon, but could be the cause of destruction and violence as well. I also had a passion for engaging with young people, and so enrolled in a teaching degree. However, my interests in religion quickly found me transferring to a Bachelor of Theology and, inspired by many fascinating, energetic, and good humoured researchers, I began to pursue this interest, completing an honours degree in theology, and now a PhD in moral theology. Above all, it has been the support and encouragement of peers, as well as the relevance of these disciplines in our current time, that has kept me engaged and passionate as a researcher.

3. What are your current research interests?

Once my PhD has been completed, my research focus will shift into the more educational dimensions of theology, moral theology, and virtue ethics, especially as these are related to the fields of moral education, religious education, and spiritual education.

4. Who has influenced your career the most and in which ways?

The people who have influenced my career most, other than my family and friends with their consistent support and encouragement, have always been academic staff and colleagues who have stimulated my interest, taken the time to discuss interesting issues, and given the tools necessary for exploration and research. These have included Dr Laurie Woods, Dr Antoinette Collins and Michael Foley in my undergraduate degree at the Australian Catholic University; Professor Robert Gascoigne and Dr David Kirchoeffer who are my PhD supervisors; and Professor Terry Lovat and Dr Peter Mudge, who are my colleagues at the Broken Bay Institute and the University of Newcastle.

5. What do you feel are currently the most important areas of research in Religious and Spiritual education and why?

I would see the trend that is developing in religious and spiritual education, which was demonstrated in a number of presentations at the SIG19 conference, towards holistic models of education which take into account student worldview (for example), moral, affective, and values education as highly important. Religious and spiritual education also has especially rich resources available for widening this research and seeking further insight in the history of the religious and spiritual traditions which have, over time, also grappled with this more ‘holistic’ sense of the human person.

Furthermore, religion in the current context is both a catalyst for justice and human fulfilment, as well as a catalyst for fundamentalism, fear, and different forms of violence. This promotes a variety of reactions, including ambivalence and outright hostility towards religion (in the West, this is especially true of Islam). Given the amount of interest surrounding religion and spirituality, research into Religious and Spiritual Education has a key role to play in educating people and empowering them to understand and respond to religion in an intelligent, critical, and prudent manner.

6. Please name up to three publications of your own which you would like to represent here. Please describe the reason for choosing each particular item.

Publication #1
Reason: This was my first publication, and it outlines Jean Porter’s approach to the natural law, including her understanding of virtue ethics, which has become an important foundation of my ongoing research.

Publication #2
Fleming, Daniel (2013 – anticipated), Ethics is an Optics: The Levinasian Perspective on Value as Primary. In J. Arthur & T. Lovat (Eds.), The

Reason: This chapter explores the thought of Emmanuel Levinas, especially as it pertains to the human experience of value. It has important implications for the work I am beginning to do in theological and moral education, and can also act as a phenomenological backdrop for work such as values education.

Publication #3

Reason: In this article, Peter Mudge and myself are using some of the energy and insights gained from the EARLI SIG19 conference to answer a question which is constantly posed to us by our students: what is the relationship between Religious Education and Theology for Australian Religious Educators?

7. Please define shortly what you mean by religion and spirituality.

Briefly, I would define religion as the social and institutional response of humanity to experiences of the sacred, and the social and institutional structures which attempt to facilitate and nourish the continued experience of the sacred. Briefly, I would define spirituality as the practices, techniques and dispositions that nourish the human experience of the sacred.

8. When and how did you become involved in EARLI?

In late 2011, Professor Terry Lovat suggested that I consider being involved in SIG19 in EARLI as an opportunity to present some of my work as well as to meet with European academics working in related fields. After some discussion, Terry, Peter and I decided to write a paper together, which was a wonderful introduction to the collegial spirit of SIG19.

9. How would you describe the role of SIG19 in EARLI?

Whilst I have not yet been a part of the wider EARLI community, I would suggest that SIG 19 plays a crucial role because of the nature of the subject it deals with. As I frequently tell my students, religion is back in the news for all the right and the wrong reasons, and being able to engage with religion in a critical and intelligent manner is crucial in ensuring that we can encourage the positive value of religion in our world, and challenge the dangerous manifestations of it which are the source of many problems we are dealing with today. Furthermore, religious and spiritual education has the capacity to re-engage with sources of wisdom and insight that have largely been discarded in our post-enlightenment era, but which many are realising need to be revisited today. As such, research into religious education will be at the cutting edge of the educational research in the 21st century, hence the value of SIG19.

10. Greetings and wishes for EARLI SIG 19:

I’d like to thank everyone who was at EARLI SIG 19 for welcoming me so warmly into the community, and for the encouraging, challenging, and stimulating days we shared together in Nijmegen. In Australia it is possible for us to feel very isolated in our research (because we are so far away), and so the opportunity to make contact with many fine European minds has given me more energy and passion for my research and the sense of being part of a truly international discussion. I would especially like to thank Arniika, Theo, Terry, and Maria for their organisation of the conference.

Thank you, Dan, for the interview!
INTERVIEW WITH PETER MUDGE

Name: Peter Mudge
Title: Dr
Age: 54
Institution: The Broken Bay Institute and The University of Newcastle
Country: Australia
Family: I am married to Gwen Wijenberg who is of Dutch heritage; we have a son Christopher (20) who is studying music sound technology; and we have eternal love for our daughter Nicola who died of a brain tumour in 2006 aged 9 years.


Web link: www.bbi.catholic.edu.au
Research key words: religious education; spirituality; transformative pedagogy; ways of knowing; connected knowing; art and spirituality; wisdom.

1. Please describe your work

As Dan notes, the Broken Bay Institute is primarily involved in delivering theology and religious education courses to teachers. My speciality is the design and delivery of courses in religious education, Studies of Religion (Higher School Certificate, Yrs 11 & 12), spirituality, and eventually ‘doing philosophy’ in the classroom. Each of these current and future courses involves teaching in face-to-face and online environments, as well as travelling to regional areas of Australia to be with students who otherwise wouldn’t have access to tertiary education in theology and religious education. Each of the courses I teach is also cross-disciplinary in nature (e.g. spirituality, wisdom, ethics, leadership, philosophy) and usually involves an online and face-to-face conversation between Christianity, Judaism, Islam and other traditions.

My original D.Theol. research, which concluded after 12 years in 2000, focused on the areas of sacred space, connected knowing, religious education, and epistemology. This built upon my Masters work which centred on spirituality, formation and narrative theology. Since completing my doctorate, I have tended to focus on the practical classroom and adult education areas of connected knowing, spiritual formation, transformative pedagogies, ways of knowing, and the two halves of life. However, recently my work at the Broken Bay Institute and the University of Newcastle, especially with Prof. Terry Lovat and Dan Fleming (soon Dr.), has stimulated my interest in links related to the above research, such as with monasticism, values education, neuroscience, and virtue ethics.

2. Describe your path how you became a researcher

From an early age, and due to influences from my extended family, I have been interested in the nature of religion and spirituality. Unlike some Australian children today, during my childhood I was able to spend long periods of time studying nature and exploring the Australian bush (cf. Richard Louv’s ‘nature deficit disorder’). As a result of this, I began to make connections between areas I now understand under the aegis of creation,
theology, epistemology, philosophy and spirituality. After completing primary and secondary school, my foundations in spirituality deepened with 5 years spent with the De La Salle Brothers (called Christian Brothers in USA), after which I studied education, special education and French at Macquarie University, Sydney (completed 1980). During the next five years of secondary teaching I commenced B.Theol. studies (1985), then completed my M.Theol. (1988) whilst working in Catholic Education and Adult Education offices in Queensland and New South Wales. I became more deeply interested in religious education and spirituality whilst completing my D.Theol. (2000). My ongoing research career continues to be informed by the above interests but particularly as they relate to classroom religious education, teacher spirituality, philosophy, and intersections with religious dialogue in the major traditions, all from a cross-disciplinary perspective.

3. What are your current research interests? Refer to 1 above.

4. Who has influenced your career the most and in which ways?

The people who have influenced my career most, other than my family and friends who have edged me towards contemplation of religion and spirituality, are my teachers in primary and secondary school who urged that ‘there was always something more than what we physically see’; and that ‘life is a mystery to be lived, not a problem to be solved’. During my years of teacher education and theological studies, I have also been influenced by imaginative and thought-provoking teachers and supervisors such as Dr Michael Whelan (trained at the Institute of Formative Spirituality, Duquesne, Pittsburgh, USA), Dr David Walker (formerly Centre for Christian Spirituality, Randwick and now Bishop of our Diocese of Broken Bay), Dr Chris Harris (formerly Australian Catholic University, Brisbane), and my ‘online, hard copy and audio book teacher’, Fr Richard Rohr, OFM (Centre for Action and Contemplation, Albuquerque, NM). More recently, I have been influenced by
Professor Terry Lovat, Dan Fleming, and really all of my colleagues here at the Broken Bay Institute and the University of Newcastle. Finally, I continue to be influenced by those perennially great writers in my fields of interest, such as Phillip Sheldrake, Ron Rolheiser, Walter Brueggemann, Thomas Groome, and those who customarily write in the Springer, Cambridge and Routledge handbooks in my research areas.

5. What do you feel are currently the most important areas of research in Religious and Spiritual education and why?

Some of the following are reflected in current literature and some are not, but I still consider them to be crucial to religious and spiritual education – spiritual development and the two halves of life, cross-disciplinary researching and teaching, transformative pedagogy and the need to engage with the three major movements of life (secure orientation, disturbing disorientation, and surprising reorientation – Brueggemann), instruction versus education, relating the spiritual classics to the lives of ordinary people, neuroscience, fertile questioning (Harpaz), postmodernism, and Habermas' ways of knowing. Why? For all these issues, it seems to me from working with practising and critical classroom teachers that these are the most crucial for better equipping them at Masters level to teach, reflect, contemplate and live ethically. In other words, these constitute the ‘big picture’ issues that really influence the theory and practice of their thinking, teaching and spiritual formation.

6. Please name up to three publications of your own which you would like to represent here. Please describe the reason for choosing each particular item.

Publication #1

Reason: This was the first formal chapter that I published in an International Handbook. It was significant in that it explored not only holistic learning but the key overlap between education and two types of spirituality still relatively unknown – kataphatic and apophatic; hence implying two distinct ways of knowing.

Publication #2 (one article – two parts)

Reason: This two-part article had its origins in my work with 18 primary schools in a country diocese in far-western New South Wales, the Wilcannia-Forbes Dioceses, which is some 414,400 square kms in size, more than half the state of NSW! These twin articles proposed a six-circle model for mapping the activity of a school across areas of involvement including religious education and spirituality. In my view, it is ground-breaking work which has been used by several other dioceses and a number of individual schools.

Publication #3

Reason: This article, co-authored with Dan Fleming, appropriates some of the energy and insights gained from the EARLI SIG19 conference to answer a question which is constantly posed to us by our students: what is the relationship between Religious Education and Theology for Australian Religious Educators? We also see this article as important, not just in its own right, but as a collegial project that is cross-disciplinary and is of value to many other academics and teachers across other theological institutions.
7. Please define shortly what you mean by religion and spirituality.

Briefly, I would define religion as a human activity based on encounter with various inspiring people and beliefs that is part of culture and everyday life. Religion is also linked to those realities that humans believe and interact with – such as texts, creeds, beliefs, rituals, gender, power and culture.

Briefly, I would define spirituality in general as a conscious way of life based on a transcendent referent that acknowledges a reality beyond but complementary to the imminent, a reality that exists in the Transcendent, yet at the same time exists in and beyond the material or created world. Based on this, Catholic spirituality translates into a way of life centred on and responsive to the Holy Trinity and to the presence of the Spirit of the Risen Christ within each person as a member of the Body of Christ. As such, it is a spirituality that is visionary, sacramental, relational, and transformational.

8. When and how did you become involved in EARLI?

In the same manner as Dan Fleming, in late 2011, Professor Terry Lovat suggested that I consider being involved in EARLI’s SIG19 as an opportunity to present some of my work as well as to meet with European academics working in related fields. After some discussion, Terry, Dan and I decided to write a paper together, which was a wonderful introduction to the collegial spirit of SIG 19. Not only was the presentation at SIG19 our first cross-disciplinary venture, it was our first joint paper presented at an international conference of colleagues, many of whom are the writers for articles we discuss with our Masters students.
9. How would you describe the role of SIG19 in EARLI?

Like Dan, whilst I have not yet been a part of the wider EARLI community, I would suggest that SIG 19 plays a crucial role because of the nature of the subject it deals with. SIG19 has the capacity to drive and nurture critical insights into the nature and applications of religious education and spirituality, as well as into other topics which I have an interest in – pedagogy, transformation, the two halves of the spiritual life, neuroscience, and various forms of cross-disciplinary research. As such, research into religious education will be at the cutting edge of the educational research in the 21st century, hence the value of SIG19.

10. Greetings and wishes for EARLI SIG 19:

Like Dan, I would like to thank everyone who was at EARLI SIG 19 for welcoming us so warmly and for showing interest in and supporting the conversations that we carried from BBI and the University of Newcastle. I was particularly grateful for the receptive atmosphere, the chance to dialogue with colleagues, to share their research interests, as well as to hear Bob Jackson and many other artists perform live jazz classics. Finally, in concert with Dan, I would particularly like to thank Arniika, Theo, Terry, and Maria for their organisation of the conference, and look forward to our gathering in Munich next year. I have it on good authority that it overlaps with Oktoberfest. We are already beginning to study YouTube examples of the ‘chicken dance’ in preparation for the 2013 conference.

Thank you, Peter, for the interview!

Photos by Robert Jackson, Peter Mudge, and Arniika Kuusisto
1. **Opening**: The Chair, Dr Theo van der Zee, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

2. **EARLI Biennial Conference München 27th-31st August 2013** ‘Responsible Teaching and Sustainable Learning’ (www.earli2013.org)
   Submission of proposals should be sent by 31st October 2012. We also need some Reviewers (the list for names went round). For the Invited Symposium, the Chair asked people to suggest now or send in later some theme ideas, submissions, and mentioned the opportunity for finding colleagues to work on a particular theme and propose other Invited Sessions, too.
   Laura Hirsto suggested worldviews as a topic for the Invited Symposium: the notion of worldview, as well as e.g. how worldview development can be supported in different contexts.
   Tapani Inmanen suggested RE in higher education; many of our SIG members are working at the university context, often teaching RE.

3. **Evaluation of the Nijmegen Conference**: e.g. the programme and the venue
   The Chair mentioned that one of the comments for the Malta conference was that the sessions were too wide thematically. This was something that has now been altered here.
   Sturla Sagberg started by stating that the theme was very good and relevant; a good choice.
   Ulrich Riegel commented on the theme, asking whether we actually need a theme in these conferences: Do we have to find common ground in the projects as such? However, he thought we did get new ideas, to make us think, which is a good purpose/outcome in a conference; also moving somewhat outside the comfort zone.
   Peter Mudge commented that a common general theme is good as long as it allows movement within it.
   Sturla added that the theme is not so much for finding a common ground, but it can also be very useful.
   Laura mentioned that at least she was very inspired here, so this must have been a good conference!
   Tapani said that we are not so many here, however it has been good, and we now have something to think about and “to take home” in terms about the usefulness for at least his own work. The size of the group is not only a negative matter, as the discussions have been very good. And of course there is always a negotiation of the timetables.
   Ulrich added that 45 minutes in his opinion is a good time for each paper. Adding a day or two would also add to the wearisomeness.
   Laura comments that we could have had parallel sessions also on Thursday so that the day would have been shorter. Two parallel sessions at the same time is the maximum, though, in order to have enough people in each group.
   Sturla adds that the length of the conference is good as it is.
   Peter comments that there could be mini-breaks in between sessions; e.g. 10 minutes between the presentations – this would be good for the brain, too. That is, we could have less long breaks and more breaks in total.
Shirley Larkin adds that the first morning we could also have started the academic programme earlier. The day (Thursday) in total was too long, but there was waiting time in the morning for those who were already here. But there should be no evening session after dinner!

4. **Publication of papers of the Nijmegen conference**; the journal and the timetable (Arniika presents) Robert Jackson has been in contact with the Journal of Beliefs and Values and they would consider a special issue if we made a good proposal. The issue could come out in 2014. Some other options we’ve been thinking about are the BJRE or the JET, and of course there are others, too. Ferdinand Potgieter comments that the JBV is a good channel, as is the BJRE.
Shirley comments/asks about the opportunity for the issue to come out already in December 2013, as for all the UK contributors it would make a big difference because of the wider publication evaluation system term ending at the end of the year 2013.
Theo says we will ask for indications of interest on the publication from the conference participants in order to write the initial suggestion for the JBV.

5. **The next SIG 19 conference in 2014** is brought up by the Chair, asking for comments and suggestions for the location, theme, and dates. He tells that one possibility is arranging the next one in Helsinki, and Arniika would agree to act as the local organizer. Other location suggestions are not introduced, so the discussion moves to the dates/time of year. It is mentioned that this time of year, i.e. the second half of August, is a good one, as the semester has started, vacation is over, but the students are not there so much yet so the more hectic teaching times and courses are not really on yet.
Ferdinand agrees, saying that this time of year is almost the only possibility also for the South African delegates to participate.
Maria Venhuizen comments, that perhaps next time the Power Point presentations could be sent in beforehand. These could maybe be put into the website in order to be printed out by everyone in advance.
The accessibility of the PPT presentations is discussed, noting that it may be better not to actually provide open access to these (many are works in progress, and the copyright questions arise if they are available to general public), but that the way of disseminating the handouts beforehand should be thought about, as this would be useful.
Theo adds that the participants can now send their PPT presentations to Maria after the conference, too, and these can then be sent on to everybody who is interested in having them.

6. **Other points to be raised**: The future of our SIG. The Chair mentions that the EARLI President who attended our conference now had pointed out how great it is that we as a SIG have our own publication series, as well as the Newsletter. However, the question of how to find our niche “in the market” always exists.
Sturla comments that for him it is the second time he is in the SIG 19 conference, and the reasons that made him participate were, firstly, the theme; secondly, the high academic quality; thirdly, the opportunity to publish in a high quality publication; and fourthly, the optimal size of the group.
Laura comments that the way that we have connected religion to the notion to worldview here, in a wider and broader sense, could also attract more people to attend.
Sturla notes that the theme should, however, not be too all-encompassing, but the aim should be to make the theme *significant* in the broader context of education.
Peter notes that in terms of the courses we teach, we have much more variety of religions; thus, we should invite people and present the perspectives of a wider variety of religions and worldviews. - This point was agreed on by others, too.
7. The organizers thanked everyone for a good conference, and received warm thanks from the other participants; in particular, a beautiful speech held by Ferdinand; as well as gifts from the host organization, the University of Nijmegen.

8. The meeting was closed by the Chair, wishing everyone a safe trip home.

The EARLI 2013 conference will take place at the main campus of the Technische Universität München (TUM), Arcisstr. 21. The conference venue will allow for very short distances: The maximum walking time between two conference rooms will be about five minutes. Moreover, the TUM campus is very centrally located and is surrounded by many nice restaurants and coffee shops. It is situated close to Munich’s central railway station and benefits from good public transport connections.

During the 2013 EARLI conference, full catering (lunch and coffeebreaks) will be available for all registered participants on site and free of charge. Beside wireless LAN-access, several computer rooms equipped with printers will be provided. As a special service for participants willing to attend the conference with children, we will offer an on-site child care service for kids between one and twelve years of age. This service will be made available in cooperation with the TUM Family Service.

The EARLI 2013 will feature a rich social programme which will give conference participants and accompanying persons many opportunities to get together, have fun and thereby build new relationships. The first highlight will be the Opening Reception on Tuesday evening. Don’t miss this event where everybody is invited to grab a drink, find new friends and enjoy a (hopefully) warm summer night!

Of course, Munich is especially famous for its beer well beyond both the city’s and Germany’s borders. Consequently, there are plenty of places to enjoy a nice drink - some of them magnificent! Our plan for 2013 is to hold the EARLI Conference Gala Dinner at a place in the very heart of Munich which will offer both – a wonderful, festive atmosphere and a genuine glimpse into Bavarian culture. Be sure to get yourself a ticket in time for this great evening!

Besides these two main events, Munich offers many opportunities for making your trip to the EARLI 2013 a great experience. Just to name the most proximate option: The conference venue is right in the middle of the Kunstareal Munich – an area in which no less than 12 different museums are located in walking distance of the conference venue!

The Scientific Programme Committee invites both empirical and theoretical proposals for symposia, paper presentations, posters, round tables, ICT demonstrations and workshops. The official language of the conference is English. Proposals should be submitted through the conference website (www.earli2013.org). For questions about the EARLI 2013 conference, send an email to: info@earli2013.org.

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 15th European Conference for Research on Learning and Instruction! The Technische Universität München and the TUM School of Education are proud to host the 2013 EARLI Conference. We are looking forward to welcoming you all in Munich and giving you a forum to share and discuss your research with an international research community.

We all live in turbulent times in which the issues of “responsibility” and “sustainability” are being discussed in many domains. During the 2013 EARLI conference in Munich, we want to explore the meaning of these terms within the fields of learning and instruction. Therefore, we hope to bring together ambitious researchers from across the world and provide them with a forum to engage in both formal and informal conversations, to establish new links and networks – which hopefully may last far beyond the time of our conference!

Indeed, the theme of the conference is Responsible Teaching and Sustainable Learning. This title focuses on elementary issues that educational researchers investigate. Besides, it picks up EARLI’s twofold mission in researching learning and instruction and connects it to recent developments in educational research and practice. We understand responsible teaching with respect to multiple and challenging educational goals, like e.g. knowledge, social competence, social engagement or political awareness. Our vision is that responsible teachers aim at providing powerful, motivating and social learning environments. They do not only prepare learners for particular exams, but for being able to develop their character, being open minded and develop own ideas. In other words: We want to stress the responsibility of teachers to create learning environments which make sustainable learning likely.

We think that the city and the Technische Universität München offer the optimal circumstances for an EARLI conference. For more information on the city of Munich and the 2013 EARLI conference, please visit www.earli2013.org.

We are looking forward to meeting all of you in Munich, the cosmopolitan city with a heart!

Prof. Dr. Manfred Prenzel
Conference President
Dr. Martin Gartmeier
Conference Manager
CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Special Issue on Aims and Approaches of Religious and Spiritual Education

Societal developments on a global, European and national level orient politicians and policy makers to recognize religion as an important topic in the public sphere. Inter-governmental bodies as well as governments emphasize the role of education in informing young people about religions and beliefs with a view to mutual understanding and tolerance. Kindergartens, schools and teachers, however, appear to find it difficult to embrace this societal interest in religion and education, and to re-orient their educational practices. The present difficulty that the teachers face can be related to a divergence or even clash of aims and orientations. What should they aim for? In the education provided, should the main target be on the personal development of the individual (e.g., understanding religious and spiritual experiences) or societal goals (e.g., inclusion, social cohesion, citizenship, democracy, participation)? Is the distinction between education in, about or from religion and spirituality still helpful, or should we proceed further?

The present difficulty of schools and teachers on religious and spiritual education could also relate to divergence of educational approaches and methods. Neuroscientific insight would suggest we need to engage both cognition and emotion (as well as sociality) to ensure the richest learning in any subject including religious and spiritual education. Furthermore, the work of some neuroscientists and moral psychologists has been to extend the thinking into more explicitly named ‘moral’ and ‘spiritual’ domains. In this dynamic, mosaic world where so many of the conceptions of the old social sciences are being overhauled, there’s many challenges for learning and education generally. Religious and spiritual education is both a part of this (i.e., it is being challenged like all other areas) but it also has something distinctive to offer, largely because, as such avowed and difficult area (owing to its minority status), it has been reviewed and worked over like few other areas. Does recent research on religious and spiritual education provide valuable insights in the desirability and effectiveness of various approaches?

As guest editors we compose a special issue that focus on the aims and approaches in religious and spiritual education. Not only societal, political and educational developments challenge the current aims and approaches; also new scientific insights do. The issue will contain seven articles, plus two research reports and two review articles. The issue will be offered to a high quality journal in the field of religious and spiritual education.

We invite scholars in the field of religious and spiritual education to send in a proposal for a contribution to the special issue. The proposal should contain no more than 600 words, and include an appropriate combination of research questions, method, results, conclusion & discussion. Deadline for submissions is 22nd October, 2012. Based on an initial abstract review process, some of the contributors will be invited to compose an article. These articles will then also have to pass a rigorous peer-review process. Publication is expected in the first half of 2014.

Dr Arnika Kuusisto & Dr Theo van der Zoet, Guest Editors of Special Issue

Send your proposal to: arnika.kuusisto@helsinki.fi
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SIG 19 Newsletter
NOTES AND GUIDELINES

We want to encourage a wide participation in SIG19 and in
the Newsletter. If you intend to contribute to the
newsletter, please take into account the following issues.
You can make suggestions concerning to content of the
SIG19 and the newsletter. However, the editors retain the
rights to alter and modify the contributions.

Interviews:
In each newsletter we will focus on two or three
researchers connected to the SIG19. One of the covered
researchers is preferably a junior researcher. Please do not
hesitate to make suggestions concerning the interviewees.

Reviews:
In this section the SIG members can review different
things, such as, books, articles and conferences, etc.
Please do not hesitate to contribute and to present also
your own works. A review should not exceed 250 words.

Special feature:
This section we feature some interesting and inspirational
aspect concerning the SIG19 areas of interest. The author
is invited by the editors with regards to the suggestions by
the members. The contributions should not exceed 500
words.

Announcements:
If you feel that there is something relevant happening in
the interest areas of SIG19, please use this section. Such
things are up-coming conferences and projects. This
section can also include propositions for shared projects.
The announcements should be 100 words at maximum.

New members:
We wish new members warmly welcome to our SIG. 19!
We will list the new members in this section after we have
been informed by them.

Publication & contact:
The newsletter is published twice a year. If you intend to
contribute to the newsletter, please take into account the
following dates. Please send your contributions and
suggestions to:
elina.kuusisto@helsinki.fi

EARLI SIG 19 MEMBERSHIP
How to join us?
To become a member, you must first become a member of EARLI.
For more information, please visit the EARLI website:
http://www.earli.org/

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NOTE!
If your name is not on the list above, please check
from the EARLI office earli@ped.kuleuven.be
whether you have formally renewed your
membership (http://www.earli.org/renewal) of
EARLI (JURE) and the SIG 19 for 2012!