

SIG19 Religious and Spiritual Education Newsletter

Autumn/2008 (special issue)

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The Religious and Spiritual Education SIG is advocating research on religious and spiritual development that includes cognitive, social and emotional components. Values and beliefs are important aspects in religious and spiritual education which need a discussion forum of their own.

EDITORIAL

This is the seventh *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 or forthcoming publications on the field.

This newsletter is a little bit smaller than previous newsletters, because this is a special issue about the SIG19-conference in Canterbury, that was held from the 28th till the 30th of August. We decided to publish this newsletter to inform all the SIG19-members that haven't been on this conference and to give SIG19-members that have been there a chance to exchange their experiences.

The conference in August had at least three aims: to foster the scientific community of researchers in religious and spiritual education, to strengthen the interrelationship of the members of SIG19 and other researchers in the field and to investigate chances and opportunities for establishing an international network of researchers in religious and spiritual education.

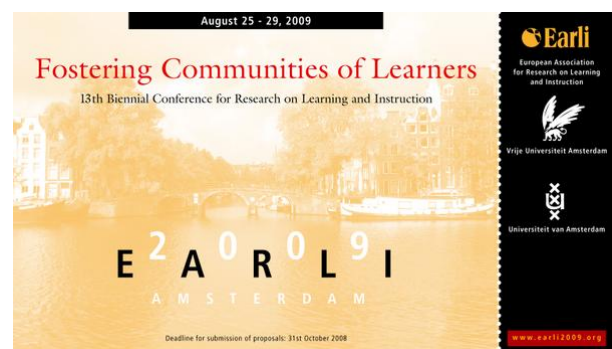
Many participants have emphasized the fact that this took place within a small group of people (due to some cancellings the group consisted of 15 persons) was really nice: everybody has been given lots of chances to speak in a friendly and encouraging community, that could at the same time be critical, but in a positive way. At least, that was my experience.

To give everybody an impression of the conference, we've included reactions of some participants and some pictures. Furthermore, we've included the report of the businessmeeting that was held at the conference. By reading it you can get an impression of where our SIG stands and what the plans for our SIG are, in particular the 2010 conference in Malta!

I like to thank Kirsi Tirri and Theo van der Zee for organising this conference, Ray Godfrey and Mike Radford for getting us all to Canterbury (which is really a nice town) and Charmian Cowie for all her work on this location, Fritz Oser for his inspiring keynote lecture and all the other participants, Adrian Gellel, Karolin Kuhn, Arniika Kuusisto, Terry Lovat, José Middendorp, Graeme Nixon, Marian de Souza, Paul Vermeer, and Wiel Veugelers for their presentations, active participation in the discussions, and the nice company outside the sessions. I hope to see you all on the forthcoming EARLI conference in Amsterdam, 2009!

Frank Willems
Co-Editor
Radboud University Nijmegen
The Netherlands

FORTHCOMING EARLI CONFERENCE (2009)



Impressions of the conference

"The most interesting thing for me was getting to know such diverse people who are all engaged in religious or spiritual education. Despite the differences in culture, denominations and approaches to RE, we share many common concerns. The conference helped me envisage new responses to the challenges we face."

- Karolin Kuhn



"I enjoyed the interesting presentations and the very constructive atmosphere in the SIG19 Canterbury conference. Both the programme and the practicalities were well organized and the timetable worked soundly. In comparison to many other research meetings -as was also mentioned in some of the final discussions- here the group size was really good for enhancing both discussions and networking. Looking forward to attending the future SIG meetings!"

- Arniika Kuusisto



"For me, the highlight was simply in the sharing of a common interest between scholars pulled from the four corners of the earth and in the variety of evidence these scholars brought forward that education everywhere is cohering around the notion that religious and spiritual education are not marginal but central to the overall goals of education. It is heartening to see this being recognized by an esteemed research body like EARLI."

- Terry Lovat



"The conference was extremely stimulating, well-run and challenging. As a fairly new researcher I welcomed the positivity, support and critical analysis offered by the event. Everyone was extremely friendly and enthusiastic about all the papers on offer. Canterbury offered a lovely venue and the hospitality of our hosts Ray and Mike was first class. The conference allowed me to go beyond the relatively small world of Scottish Religious Education and certainly provided an international and stimulating forum in which to discuss religion and spirituality.

I enjoyed a number of papers, many of which will now impact on my research and teaching. In particular I was interested in Terry Lovat's paper on values education in Australia, Paul Vermeer's paper on the interpretative approach to Religious Education and Will Veugeler's insight into a humanistic 'life stances' approach. I have already referenced each of these papers in my teaching about Religious Education and Values Education."

- Graeme Nixon





"The first SIG meeting in Canterbury was my first international meeting with researchers. I liked the meeting: There was a good atmosphere, where we could be critical to each other. I learned about other themes, especially I learned from the feedback after my presentation. In the hospitable atmosphere of Canterbury there was time for the content of our research and time for a personal meeting. It was a great time!"

- José Middendorp



"I gladly accept the invitation of the editors of our newsletter to share some of my thoughts and memories on this conference. I perceive our first SIG 19 conference as successful. We have had only a small group of 15 participants, but good and thought-provoking presentations, and even more interesting and fruitful discussions. I remember the keynote of Fritz Oser as a very good start of the conference, and as a good appetizer for the rest of the days. I also have good memories about the social exchange of the participants. The food and drinks in Canterbury were excellent. In short, I look forward to our next SIG 19 Conference in the end of August 2010 in Malta!"

- Theo van der Zee



"This was my first international conference, and the first time I had to present something in English, so I was kind of excited about it. I really liked the fact that the group was not too big and that the atmosphere was really good: it made me feel comfortable. Also it was nice to meet my SIG19-newsletter-co-editor Arniika for the first time: after e-mailing a lot with each other, I was kind of curious!"

In Canterbury I learned a lot about the content and the width of the field of religious education, and I also learned a lot about my own project. The critical comments that have been put forward during the discussion gave me a lot to think about, and that is a good thing!"

- Frank Willems



REPORT of THE BUSINESS MEETING of SIG 19: RELIGIOUS & SPIRITUAL EDUCATION Canterbury, 28th August 2008.

1. Opening

At a quarter before eight o' clock Kirsi Tirri opened the business meeting and welcomed all participants to the business meeting.

2. EARLI 2009 Conference

Kirsi and Theo as coordinators will organize an invited symposium and a future & vision session at the EARLI 2009 Conference in Amsterdam.

All participants are invited to write a proposal according to the EARLI guidelines (http://www.earli2009.org/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=96) and send it to Theo (t.v.d.zee@iko.ru.nl) before 30th September. The coordinators then will decide which researchers present on the symposium and session.

Other EARLI SIG 19 members are invited to organize another SIG 19 symposium too. These members are kindly requested to follow the instructions on the EARLI website, and to inform the coordinators.

The deadline for the submission of individual papers and symposia is 31st October, 2008.

Finally, EARLI SIG 19 members who are willing to review other proposals are requested to write their name down on a note, which will be sent to the organization committee.

3. Publication of papers of this conference

The *Journal of Empirical Theology (JET)* offers the opportunity to compose a special issue on Religious and Spiritual Education. This can be done with papers which are presented at this conference. Guidelines for authors in this journal can be found at <http://www.brill.nl/AuthorsInstructions/JET.pdf>

Presenters at this conference are invited to submit their paper as an article and send it to Theo in order to be included in the special issue. Possibly, Kirsi and Theo will get in touch with presenters to stimulate them to submit their paper. The deadline for submission is the 10th December, 2008.

Apart from the JET, the next journals can also offer an avenue to publish: British Journal of Religious Education, Journal of Values and Beliefs, or Catholic Educational Studies (?).

4. EARLI SIG 19 as international network

To answer the question how our EARLI SIG 19 could or should be an international network of researchers in religious and spiritual education, various participants joined in for the discussion. Marian de Souza said that she would like more attention drawn to spirituality in stead of religiosity. Paul Vermeer said that it should be presented more clearly which are the core themes of our SIG, and suggested that the newsletter can be a platform to discuss these themes. Ray Godfrey pleaded for actual collaboration, in a project for example. Adrian suggested that we could apply for support of the European Union to start a collaborative project, but also pleaded to act more strategically in the context of EARLI. Kirsi Tirri replied that this will be the case, and various steps are to be taken in that respect. This can be done, for example, when suggestions are made for keynote speakers at the EARLI-

Conference. Terry Lovat suggested to invite scientists on religion to take part in our discussions on religious and spiritual education.

5. Next EARLI SIG 19 Conference

We decided to accept the offer of Adrian Gellel that the University of Malta will be the host of our next SIG 19 Conference. It is agreed to hold our next conference in the final week of August 2010, from Thursday till Saturday. Provisional theme is the relation between spiritual and religious education. To be continued.

6. Other matters to be discussed.

Wiel Veugelers expressed his gratitude to the two newsletter editors (Arniika and Frank) for their good job editing the newsletter so well. Other participants agreed on that.

Fritz Oser articulated his thanks and satisfaction with the conference. Especially, he thought the mutual respect of the participants and the size of the conference is "wonderful". Kirsi Tirri replied by thanking Fritz for his inspiring and thought-provoking keynote.

7. Closing

Nearly nine o'clock the business meeting was closed.

Participants

- Adrian Gellel*
- Ray Godfrey*
- Karolin Kuhn
- Arniika Kuusisto
- Terry Lovat*
- José Middendorp
- Graeme Nixon
- Fritz Oser*
- Mike Radford
- Marian de Souza
- Kirsi Tirri*
- Paul Vermeer*
- Wiel Veugelers*
- Frank Willems*
- Theo van der Zee*

* Member of the EARLI SIG 19 according to the EARLI office (20-06-08)

ANNOUNCEMENT

EARLI SIG 19 conference 2010

Our coordinator Theo van der Zee is pleased to announce our second SIG19-conference in Malta, 2010!

Data: From Thursday 26th August (14.00 h) till Saturday 28th August, 2010 (14.00 h).

Provisional theme: the relation between spiritual and religious education.

Location: University of Malta: <http://www.um.edu.mt/>

Further information will be given by the coordinators in due course.

LIST OF SIG 19 MEMBERS

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/>

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: arniika.kuusisto@helsinki.fi or f.willems@iko.ru.nl.

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If you are not on this list, then you are not an official member of EARLI SIG19! Please register or renew your registration! Mail to: earli@ped.kuleuven.be.
