PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH SEMINARS
SUMMER TERM 2015
All meetings run from 5.30-7.15 pm in Room 828
(UCL - Institute of Education, 20 Bedford way, London, WC1H 0AL)

22 April - Paul Standish (UCL Institute of Education)
Knowing in Feeling

What can be said about the nature of aesthetic judgment? What strategies do we have for avoiding the responsibility of making such judgments for ourselves? In the light of a 1967 essay by Stanley Cavell, “Music Discomposed”, this paper begins by considering the reception of avant-garde works of art, especially music. This involves examining the idea of knowing in feeling – a characterisation of a way of knowing that is other than the familiar categories of knowing-that and knowing-how, and closer to a knowing by acquaintance. The possibilities of judgement that this exposes are then related to aspects of education, as found in the experience of learners, teachers, and policy-makers.

29 April - Heikki Ikaheimo (University of New South Wales, Australia)
Conceptualizing Causes for Lack of Recognition—Capacities, Costs and Understanding

In contemporary Hegel-influenced philosophy recognition is mostly thought of as a good thing. Some see it as a pre-condition of positive, individual or collective self-conceptions or -identities, others even as ontologically foundational for the human life-form and thus as something without which we could not exist as the kinds of beings we are at all. But if recognition is indeed such an important and good thing, and if it is in principle something humans can give each other, why is there so often lack of it? In this paper I will discuss the different potential answers – turning around the notions of capacities, costs and understanding – in terms of the most differentiated analysis of the concept of recognition that I can currently think of.

6 May - Mark Cain (Oxford Brookes University)
To be confirmed

13 May - Christine Sypnowich Queens University, Kingston, Ontario
To be confirmed

20 May - Renia Gasparatou (University of Patras, Greece)
Teaching and emotive performance

This paper considers J.L. Austin’s speech act theory in order, first, to contribute to discussion of the relationship between reason and emotion, and, second, to discuss the performative aspects of teaching.

27 May Karin B Lesnik-Oberstein (University of Reading)
I will be considering how children’s literature and neuroscience, which may seem on the one hand quite disparate fields, but on the other are increasingly brought in to potential connection through the increasing number of neuroscientific studies making claims about childhood as well as literature, can in fact be read to be rooted both in the same beliefs about thought and emotion as visible ‘objects’.

3 June - Simon Glendinning (LSE)
Heidegger and Wittgenstein on Education in the Technological Age

In his "Memorial Address" Heidegger's discussion of modern technology concludes with a recommendation to his audience to practice what he calls "releasement" [Gelassenheit]. This demands a sort of self-discipline and re-education through which we achieve a "free relation" to technological devices. When Wittgenstein considered the same issue he turned to a much wider institutional framework of education, taking in the whole question of what an education of young people should look like in the technological age. At the end of his remarks Wittgenstein refers to the same question as it arises in the work of John Dewey. Focusing on Heidegger and Wittgenstein, this talk will explore their approaches to the distinctive and singular challenges facing us, in the technological age, concerning "the kind of human being" we might "wish by education to produce" (Dewey).

10 June - Axel Mueller (University of Chicago)
To be confirmed

17 June - Mark Wrathall (University of California Riverside)
To be confirmed

24 June - Ralph Bannell (Pontificia Universidade Católica, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil)
Having the world in view means feeling it first: the aesthetics of understanding

The phrase “having the world in view” comes from Hegel, who emphasises the social and cultural constraints on thinking and reason. This idea is taken further in the work of John McDowell and Robert Brandom, who argue for a theory of conceptually constrained perception and a pragmatically constrained semantics and theory of reason. I don’t reject these theories but argue that neither takes the body seriously enough. Using the work of Mark Johnson, Alva Noë and Saun Gallagher, I argue that there are bodily constraints on perception, meaning and reason. This opens up the possibility of an aesthetics of understanding, which puts the qualities of life and the emotions at the centre of our capacity to give meaning to the world and to understand. The implications of this for education will be outlined.