



WINTER REPORT

2018/19



From the National Team

Established in 2014, MAP UK has been gaining strength and stability year after year. Now with 18 chapters across the country, our movement has representation in a growing number of major UK institutions. We are nothing without our chapters. They work tirelessly to advocate for diverse and inclusive practice in philosophy, to fight for equal treatment of all individuals, and to further the cause of public philosophy.

We are very proud of what our chapters do. So far this year, our chapters have met regularly and continue to discuss and address MAP-related issues. As part of their work, they have hosted a wide variety of events, and are planning many more for the upcoming term. The following report is primarily the highlights of these activities.

As a national team, we also operate a number of projects that are aimed at providing support for our chapters and other supporters. From mentoring to inclusive events, we're here to provide a national framework for our chapters and supporters to use. We also include an update on our national work in this report.

As always, we'd like to thank all of our new and existing chapters for their continued hard work and dedication in organising such a fantastic and varied programme of events. We recognise that participating, running and organising a MAP Chapter requires hard work and a lot of energy, and we're immensely grateful for everyone's help and involvement – whether it's large or small.

We'd also like to thank everybody who participated in these events and activities, as well as all other supporters in our home departments and beyond, who have helped to make all of these activities possible. We'd also like to thank our ever-growing network of mentors, whose commitment to making philosophy a more inclusive and supportive environment is invaluable. We wish everybody a wonderful year!

For further information on MAP UK, or to make a suggestion, please contact us at mapforthe-gap.uk@gmail.com.

MAP UK Directorship Team



Azita Chellappoo



John Parry



Lizzy Ventham

News

Blog & Website Launch

The MAP UK blog and new website launched in October 2018 and has been doing well! Huge thanks to everyone who has helped to make it such a success. Some of our posts are reaching thousands of hits already. We hope to continue to use this as a platform for underrepresented views, and as a vital tool for communication between our chapters.

Scottish MAP Collaboration

This autumn heralded a new dawn in social justice for some of our Scottish universities. The former St Andrews and Stirling chapters have combined into one chapter, to best represent the unique interests of the students who study there. Welcome aboard to the SASP Chapter!

New Chapter

Another success in Scottish representation comes from a new chapter that formed in October: the Aberdeen Chapter! Welcome aboard!

Could you be our next Co-Director?

As the years keep turning, MAP UK will be looking for volunteers for some new co-directors soon. Keep your eyes peeled!

Sussex to launch MAP Magazine

Our Sussex chapter is planning to launch a MAP Magazine, with support of their department. Their aim is to produce content in philosophy and politics to help share MAP outside of academia. Please get in touch with the Sussex chapter representative if you're interested in contributing!

Events & Activities

Here are some examples of events and activities that our chapters got up to this year.

Our Edinburgh chapter...

- Has started up a reading group in Feminist Philosophy
- Held their annual New Enlightenment lecture on the 10th December

Our Southampton chapter...

- Continued on with its weekly 'well-being lunches', attended by both staff and postgrads

Our Sheffield chapter...

- Hosted their annual lecture, this year with Marika Rose from Winchester
- Organised a joint workshop with the Diversity Reading List
- Hosted two days of seminars on Decolonisation
- Organised a cinema trip to see The Hate U Give

Our York chapter...

- Organised a reading group on Elizabeth Anscombe
- Hosted a talk on Daoism by Ian Kidd from The University of Nottingham

Our Sussex chapter...

- Hosted regular reading groups, film screenings and a presence at their freshers' fair

Our Warwick chapter...

- Organised a workshop on affirmative action
- ... And another on social diversity!

Our SASP chapter...

- Ran a mentoring programme for undergraduate students who identify as members of under-represented groups
- Organised a series of discussion groups, on topics such as 'social defeat' and 'lookism, beauty standards and gender'
- Held a series of well-being lunches to combat isolation and stress
- Ran a climate survey among postgraduate students and presented their results

Our KCL chapter...

- Ran a weekly reading group on alternate epistemologies
- Held film screenings and discussions on intersectional oppression
- Invited a speaker from the department to give a lecture on her work on epistemic utility theory

Interest in particular activities? Get in touch with the chapter's contact(s), listed on our website here: <https://www.mapforthe-gap.org.uk/chapters>

In the Pipeline

Below are just a few of the biggest events to be held in Spring/Summer 2019.

Conferences

Decolonisation

Hosted by our KCL Chapter

9-10 March 2019

For further details, contact
mapforthe-gap.kcl@gmail.com

Philosophy *for* Liberation

Hosted by our Cambridge Chapter

13 March 2019

For further details, contact the Cambridge
chapter contacts: Azita and Rory.

Workshops

Silencing, Prejudice and Resistance

Hosted by our SASP Chapter

Call for abstracts expected soon.

For further details, contact

Us and Them: Violence, Discrimination and Minorities

Hosted by our Glasgow Chapter

11-12 April 2019

Details [here](#)

MAP Annual Lectures

Sheffield

Dr. Brianna Toole

*Holding resistance hostage: when
resistance is futile*

1st March 2019

For further details contact the
Sheffield Chapter.

UCL

Dr. Nina Power

*Philosophy as self-defence: how knowing
your own mind protects yourself and others*

21st March 2019

Register [here](#)

For updates on these events and for more as they're organised, check out our website here:

<https://www.mapforthe-gap.org.uk/blog/map-uk-events-first-half-of-2019>

Chapter Report Feedback

In every request for chapter updates, we ask for feedback on how the local chapters are doing and how we as a national team operate and relate to them. Previously, we have not made these comments public. But we feel that public accountability is important for our work. From now on, we aim to include collated comments from each survey in our reports.

Engaging the Academic Community

A number of chapters are having trouble with regular attendance at MAP events. Though this can be natural and/or track the size of a department's postgraduate community, it is important to share ways of improving practice where possible. We'd like to point to the success of regular, low cost activities as a way of providing more engagement with a wider audience. For example, 'well-being breakfasts/lunches' (spaces for meeting up within a community designed to combat stress and loneliness) seem to promote further involvement. Likewise, regular film screenings within your department can help to spark curiosity in certain topics and provide an avenue for retention.

There was also a highly variable involvement of lecturers and professors in MAP activities, with some chapters reporting close support for MAP projects and others reporting little to no support. It is important to connect with established academics within your institutions, as this is how local policy can more easily be changed. To do so, you might have in-depth conversations with those already interested in MAP-related areas or goals, or you might approach some with interest in holding a MAP-hosted event on an area of their research. Even if you might feel pressure not to engage with certain academics with high workloads or other institutional commitments, your project is important too.

Some chapters are also having trouble engaging with undergraduate populations. A number of strategies have worked for other chapters in this area, including: appointing an undergraduate officer tasked specifically with this engagement, holding film screenings, involving undergraduates in community philosophy (either as participants or facilitators), holding reading groups that tie into readings for certain modules (e.g., Feminist Philosophy), and working directly with your local student Philosophy Society to co-host events.

Your Team and Workloads

One chapter noted specific difficulties in workload where there was a small core group of MAP organisers at the institution, and an often variable larger group of those partially interested. Of course, this leaves organisational responsibilities to a small group (who already have papers to write!). It is important to make sure that in furthering the MAP cause you don't overstretch yourself. If you have a small organising committee, then focus on smaller, low cost (in money and time) events and build larger committees for larger events. One thing you may think about is the long term sustainability of your chapter with a small organising committee. You might consider advertising your work and calling for volunteers during the yearly new starter inductions for both

PhD and Masters students. This will help to build your team and raise awareness of your work. You might also consider holding more social and less strictly academic events – building social cohesion around a movement can be just as important as discussing the ideas themselves.

What We Can Do For You

Three important requests were made to us via this survey, all of which we'd like to give more information about. First, we were asked to distribute information from chapters via our social media channels. We are more than happy to do this – if you send us the information as soon as it's available via email or private message, we'll be sure to publicise your event as much as we can!

Second, there was a request to be more transparent regarding funding opportunities for chapters. This is perfectly understandable – there are few funds we can turn to for this kind of work. In the first instance, we'd suggest approaching your department for funding, as they typically have pots of funding for engagement and diversity/inclusion activities and setting a precedent could make your chapter more sustainable in the longer term. MAP International also distribute limited funds to its over 100 chapters across the globe each year in two rounds, typically October and January. We are not directly involved in this process, so for more information, please see the MAP International website at mapforthe-gap.com.

Finally, one chapter requested information on how to communicate with other chapters in sharing best practice and pooling resources. We've been struggling with the best format for this for a number of years, and have many avenues for you to use with their own benefits and costs. Most obviously, there is our [blog](#) – where you're welcome to post a piece on the topic of your choice. Secondly, we can circulate any questions you might have to our mailing list if you email us, or you can contact other chapter representatives local to you via their details on our website. Thirdly, we have social media channels you could utilise – our [Facebook page](#) allows for public posts (though we moderate to filter spam) and we are happy to retweet anything you have if you tag our Twitter account [@mapforthe-gapuk](#). Lastly, there is a Facebook group which some use called [UK Minorities and Philosophy Activism](#), which you're welcome to join. We're also looking at other ways of allowing chapter communication via our website, and will be building features in the coming months. Keep an eye out for updates.

Structure of MAP UK

Since its foundation in 2014, MAP UK has always been an informally organised group. Within this survey, we included a question on how chapters would like to relate to MAP UK, in order to gauge interest in some form of formalisation of MAP UK and our relationship to our chapters. There was significant support for continuing our relationship via our twice yearly surveys and reports. There was also support for the development of a national constitution, in conversation with all chapters, and the founding of a board of trustees to oversee national direction. In line with this interest, we will be developing a first draft of a constitution we hope to use as a starting position for the future of the organisation. We'll ensure to be in touch as soon as we can with further updates.



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