



Editorial

by **Christopher R. Stones**
Editor-in-Chief

Special Edition on the Teaching of Phenomenology
Guest Editor: **Rex van Vuuren**

While phenomenology has a rich and diverse history, largely embedded in the on-going debates amongst philosophers and social scientists, the one area that perhaps has not been focused on sufficiently is the teaching of phenomenology itself. Whilst it might be true that the very nature of engaging in debates is itself a form of teaching - and learning - the phenomenological endeavour could likely come to nought unless taught in a systematic, formalized and sustainable fashion.

It was this kind of discussion that occupied the minds of Professor van Vuuren and the Editor-in-Chief during, at least, two lunch meetings on the campus of St Augustine College, the home territory of Rex van Vuuren. It was during one of these lunch discussions that the issue of succession planning arose since many of the South African academics committed to the teaching phenomenology are now of an age when retirement is looming. Consequently, the discussion began to focus on how best to encourage a greater number of postgraduate students and younger academics to adopt a phenomenological approach in their research projects, curriculum and supervisory engagements. It was felt also that the teaching of phenomenology not only serves to involve university students in the discipline but importantly can also lead to the development of the discipline through the didactic process of questioning and answering as is the usually the case in post-graduate teaching.

Simultaneous with these discussions, there had also been lengthy discussions between the Editor-in-Chief and the journal's Language and Copy Editor regarding ways in which a phenomenological approach could influence the teaching of subject matter - any subject matter really - but specifically in the social sciences. Enthusiastically, the Language and Copy Editor suggested that perhaps the *IPJP* should release a special edition dedicated to the teaching of phenomenology.

Armed with fervour, I approached Professor van Vuuren with the request that he serve as the Guest Editor of a Special Edition that would deal with the Teaching of Phenomenology. Rex eagerly seized upon the idea and set about the challenge.

As readers will judge for themselves, the calibre of this Special Edition compilation as well as the Guest Editorial itself attest to the high standards demanded by Rex in his development of this collection of relatively diverse papers.

It is our hope that the release of this Special Edition will influence not only the way in which phenomenology is taught at the tertiary educational level but also that others might be encouraged to press ahead with developing the broadly based set of disciplines that are considered to fall within the ambit of phenomenology.

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About the Author



Professor Christopher Stones, previously of Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa and currently Professor of Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg, has enjoyed a lengthy academic and research career, in the course of which he has taught in the areas of physiological, clinical, forensic, social and research psychology. He is Vice-President of the South African Association for Psychotherapy and past Chairman of the South African Society for Clinical Psychology. Editor-in-Chief of the *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology* since 2003, he is also on the editorial panels of two other online journals. Using both natural scientific quantitative methodologies and phenomenological approaches, Professor Stones's research interests are in the areas of identity, attitudes and attitude change,

phenomenological praxis and methodologies, abnormal psychology and psychotherapy, spirituality and religious experience, in all of which areas he has published extensively. An Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, with which he is registered as a Chartered Psychologist, Professor Stones is licensed with the South African Professional Board as both a research and a clinical psychologist, and conducts a part-time clinical practice with particular focus on adolescents, young adults and families, as well as offering long-term psychotherapy. In addition, he is regularly called on to serve as an "expert witness" in medico-legal (civil and criminal) court proceedings, and to contribute as a consultant in the field of forensic investigation.

E-mail address: editor@ipjp.org