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EDITOR

Sex, Love, and Friendship

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45

VALUE INQUIRY BOOK SERIES

Editorial Foreword

Histories and Addresses of Philosophical Societies (HAPS), a special series in the **Value Inquiry Book Series (VIBS)**, aims to preserve and present to the world-wide audience of philosophers and others interested in value inquiry the best materials aired in the give and take of presentations and commentaries that constitute the content of meetings of philosophical associations.

As early as 1902, James Edwin Creighton, one of the founders and first President of The American Philosophical Association, articulated “The Purposes of a Philosophical Association.” Creighton held that

the history of philosophy is only intelligible when read in the light of present-day problems...[I]t is only one who has pondered on philosophical problems for himself who can intelligently study the history of philosophy...[P]hilosophy, of all species of scientific inquiry, is that which demands, in order to be fruitfully prosecuted, the closest and most intimate intellectual relations between a number of minds...The task which seems too hard for the individual appears in a different light when he regards himself as a member of a body of organized workers. The sense of comradeship, or working with others for a common end, which is brought home to one most forcibly by personal contact, arouses enthusiasm and friendly emulation that issue in a courageous determination on the part of individuals to play their role and contribute in some way to the accomplishment of the common task. It is the development of this feeling of intellectual fellowship and cooperation that is the most hopeful sign of all scientific work at the present day. It is also to a large extent the source of the inspiration which animates all modern investigation and scholarship...The main purpose which we *should* conscientiously set between us...is to promote and encourage original investigation and publication.¹¹

This century has seen an enormous proliferation of philosophers, philosophies, and philosophical associations. And, those associations have for the most part served precisely the functions and aims set up by Creighton at the beginning of the century. But in an important sense, philosophical associations and their activities have remained, historically at least, invisible to future historians of philosophy. For, the activities of philosophical associations—their meetings, their members’ Conversations, the reflections and reconsiderations evoked in those meetings and conversations—are in danger of being lost, as are the contents of those meetings and conversations.

The **HAPS** special series **VIBS** is dedicated to recovering important content and elements of the activities of philosophical associations throughout the twentieth century. It seeks to preserve the stuff, substance, and process of philosophical inquiry into the problems of our age; to assemble our rethinking of the history of philosophy through our investigations of today’s problems; to

record the remarkable (to the “disciplined” mind of today) phenomenon of persons from different disciplines finding common ground in mutual inquiry. Its aim in sort, is historical: to write, as the decade closes, the history of our activities that those who follow us may know our processes with an intimacy approaching that of we who have lived them.

Creighton would have found this record of the presentations given over a fifteen-year period at the Society for the Philosophy of Sex and Love (SPSL) to be the record of a philosophical association *par excellence*. The genius of Creighton’s vision of a philosophical association’s function is well realized in SPSL’s annals of explorations and exchanges about contemporary problems and historical figures. The ability of philosophical inquiry to probe the most basic of human activities in a manner that is intellectually respectable, enlightening, expansive, evolutionary, at once socially conservative and critical, is magnificently exemplified in this collection.

The Preface to the present volume by Carol Caraway, who has taken up the leadership of SPSL and the preparation of the next volume of its annals, makes clear that the focus of the Society’s attention will move to new dimensions of sex, love, and friendship. This illustrates another theme implicit in Creighton’s remarks but known to all serious philosophers, that the business of philosophy, its work, its tasks, are not to be finished and completed but constantly taken up in the thought, research, teaching, and lives of those who practice it. We look forward to the Society’s further development under Caraway’s careful and inspired leadership and to the sharing of the fruits of that leadership in future volumes of the Society’s proceedings.

A word of thanks is in order to the Executive Director of **VIBS**, Robert Ginsberg, and to the publisher of the series, **Rodopi**, for making possible the pursuit of the aims of **HAPS**. Their commitment to the preservation of scholarship that might otherwise remain inaccessible is admirable and rare in this time of market-driven publishing decisions.

Finally, a personal note of enormous satisfaction at Alan Soble’s undertaking this volume. Soble was the founder of **SPSL** and its director during its first fifteen years. It came into being but a few months after he had left graduate school, and he sustained it resolutely as the vagaries of the job market of the late 1970’s and the early 1980’s saw him without a steady and permanent home. The constancy of his vision, its power to attract adherents from across the disciplines and around the world, and its ability to inspire “original investigation and publication” are celebrated in these pages. The profession owes Alan Soble a great debt for his leadership and commitment.

Richard T. Hull
Editor, **HAPS**

Note

¹ J.E. Creighton, “The Purposes of a Philosophical Association,” *The Philosophical Review* 11:3 (May 1902): 219-37.