

The Women in Parenthesis Podcast

Making a Podcast

Read & gather info

I worked with school materials developed by Liz McKinnell along with these major texts:

Mary Midgley, "Rings and Books." Unpublished manuscript, <https://www.womeninparenthesis.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/rings-and-books.pdf>.

Iris Murdoch, *Existentialists and Mystics*. Edited by P.J. Conradi. London: Chatto & Windus, 1997.

Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.; "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of the Double Effect." *Oxford Review*, no. 5, 1967.

G.E.M. Anscombe, "Mr Truman's Degree." Self published, 1956.

Organize a script

Some episodes are an exegesis of a paper, others explore topics that caught my interest while reading. I was pleasantly surprised to find common threads between and within each philosopher's thought. For instance, it is evident that all four of the Quartet were concerned with doing philosophy in the context of real-world problems and regular life.

Input from others

In addition to receiving script suggestions from Liz McKinnell and Robbie Moser, I was encouraged to conduct interviews and collaborate with other readers of Quartet philosophy. After writing conversation questions, I had the pleasure of talking with many young In Parenthesis scholars.

The podcast is greatly enhanced by interviews with: Ellie Robson, Amber Donovan, Rebekah Howlett, Cathy Mason, Sasha Lawson-Frost, Lesley Jamieson, Ana Barandalla, Rachael Wiseman, Anne-Marie MacCallion, and Jacquelyn Maxwell.

Composition & recording

To create continuity between the podcast series, I composed a base tune that could be personalized to each philosopher. I recorded special sounds as an audio cue to represent each topic: water, birdsong, train, walking.

Editing & production

Having collected the audio from my scripts and interviews, all that was left was to fit everything into digestible episodes. To increase accessibility, episodes were generally limited to seven minutes.

Publishing & design

When the episodes were proofread and ready to go, I sent them off to the In Parenthesis team for final publication and design. (Thanks to Sally Pilkington and Rachel Bollen.)

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Series 1: Mary Midgley, 'Rings and Books'

Though the script never aired, 'Rings and Books' brings attention to the number of bachelors and married philosophers in the history of western thought. Along with Midgley's work on Gaia theory, this series highlights her commitment to understanding human life in context — as animals, in families, and connected to a greater whole.

Series 2: Iris Murdoch on Morality

This series provides a general overview of several important concepts in Murdoch's moral philosophy including: moments of choice, moral vision, attention, unselfing, and love. These discussions demonstrate the moral importance of having better pictures of self and reality (or metaphysics).

Series 3: Philippa Foot and Trolley Problems

These episodes explore two texts: "The Problem of Abortion and the Doctrine of Double Effect" (1967) and *Natural Goodness* (2001). These texts demonstrate Foot's efforts to ground ethics and guide decisions — even life-threatening ones.

Series 4: Protesting with Elizabeth Anscombe

This shorter series tells the story of Anscombe's stand against awarding an honorary degree to Truman. She held that his decisions caused the murder of innocent people in Japan. Her speech offers a clear outline of the moral failing of this act.

Series 5: Conversations: The Quartet, Intersections and Comparisons

My exploration of the Quartet helped me think about the various links, overlaps, and disagreements between their philosophies. This bonus series encourages listeners to do the same. The interviews illuminate interesting points of connection between the philosophers, such as the importance of morality and how we see ourselves in the world, along with links to feminism and taking the Quartet as a school of philosophy.

Series 6: Mapping the Quartet: Oxford Self-Guided Audio Walking Tour

In 2022, we reprised the podcast using Ana Barandalla's guided tour of Oxford. Based on the Quartet biography *Metaphysical Animals* (Clare MacCumhaill & Rachael Wiseman, 2022), the tour covers several locations around Oxford that were significant in the lives of the four women.



Like what you hear? Get in touch!

I am always looking for more projects to get involved in.
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For more resources and to listen to the podcast, go to the Women in Parenthesis website.

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