

Philosophy 364/ Fall 2009/ Thurs.10-1/ Room C 1426

Instructor: **Anastasia Anderson**

Phone: ext. 2558

Email: anastasia.anderson@ufv.ca (*This is the quickest way to reach me.*)

Office hours:

Thursdays: 1:00-2:00 Abby (Room D3085) During this hour my local is 4444

Feel free to drop by my office during office hours. If you can't make it to my office during office hours, please contact me for an appointment.

Philosophy and Children

“Childhood is unknown. Starting from the false idea one has of it, the farther one goes, the more one loses one’s way.” – Rousseau (Preface, Emile (1762))

Calendar Description: What is a child? The concept of a child occupies a precarious position and has not always received the attention that it deserves. Not yet a fully rational agent, but endowed with the potential to become one, the child’s status spells trouble for core philosophical concepts. Theories of rationality, freedom, personal identity, and responsibility all impact children and their caregivers, yet often ignore them. Delving into philosophical theory and the practical issues of childhood, this course is of great importance not just to philosophers but to anyone who works with children, has children, or was once a child.

Evaluation:

- Take-home midterm 20%
- Seminar Paper 20%
- In-class Essay 20%
- Research paper proposal and bibliography 5%
- Research Paper 35%

Required Texts:

- ***Taking Responsibility for Children.*** Samantha Brennan and Robert Noggle, eds. (2007) Wilfrid Laurier University Press. (Available at UFV bookstore)
- ***Phil 364 Course-pack*** (Available at UFV bookstore)
- ***Readings available on the internet through library course reserve***

Late Policy: Late assignments will not be accepted unless I have granted you an extension **before** the due date. **ALL** assignments are due **IN CLASS** on the assigned date. Assignments left at faculty reception or emailed will not be accepted unless you have made special arrangements with me.

UFV’s Plagiarism Policy:

Plagiarism is considered a serious breach of student conduct. Students should be aware

that UCFV has policies regarding academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating. The policy defines plagiarism as follows: Plagiarism occurs when a student presents work or data as original when part, or whole, was written or composed by someone other than the student. Plagiarism occurs when paragraphs, phrases, sentences, or ideas within the work are taken from another source without referencing or citing the author. When an instructor has evidence of plagiarism or cheating by a student, the instructor is entitled to assign a score of zero with the first incident, and to issue a written notice that any further incident will result in the student being required to withdraw from the course. With any further incidents of plagiarism or cheating, the student may be required to withdraw formally from the course.

Tentative Schedule

Because each class works at its own pace, I reserve the right to change the schedule. You will be expected to come to class having completed the readings assigned for that date.

Sept 10th Introduction and Discussion of the Concept of Childhood

Sept. 17th Virtue Ethics and Examples from Ancient Philosophy

Readings:

- “Virtue Ethics” (link in course reserve)
- “Stoic Children” by Lawrence C. Becker (course-pack)

Sept. 24th Have Children Signed a Social Contract?

Readings:

- “The Social Contract Tradition” (link in course reserve)
- “Thomas Hobbes’ Children” by Peter O. King (coursepack)
- “John Rawls: From a Theory of Justice” (coursepack)

Oct. 1st Kantian Moral Theory and the Care-giver Child relationship

Readings:

- “Kantian Ethics” (link in course reserve)
- “What is a Child?” by Tamar Schapiro (link in course reserve)
- “Children, Caregivers, and Friends” by Amy Mullin (textbook)

Oct. 8th The Right to Have Children

Readings:

- “Rights” (course-pack)
- “Begetting, Bearing, and Rearing” by Onora O’Neill (course-pack)
- “Procreative Liberty” by John Robertson (course-pack)

Oct. 15th Should Parents be Licensed?

Readings:

- “Licensing Parents” by Hugh LaFollette (course-pack)

- “Parent Licensing and the Protection of Children” by Mark C. Vopat (textbook)

TAKE HOME MIDTERM DUE OCT. 15th

Oct. 22nd A Right NOT to be Born?

Readings:

- “Can having Children be immoral?” by Laura Purdy (course-pack)
- “Wrongful Life” by David Archard (link in course reserve)
- “Could There be a Right not to be Born an Octuplet?” by Laura Purdy (textbook)

Oct. 29th Children’s Rights

Readings:

- Selection from Shulamith Firestone’s *The Dialectic of Sex: The case for feminist revolution* (course-pack)
- “Children’s Rights and Children’s Lives” by Onora O’Neill (link in course reserve)
- “What Rights (if any) Do Children Have?” by Harry Brighouse (course-pack)
- “Children’s Choices or Children’s Interests: Which do their rights protect?” by Samantha Brennan (course-pack)

Nov. 5th Who is Responsible for What?

Readings:

- “Raising Children: Who is Responsible for What?” by Colin Macleod (textbook)
- “Parental Responsibility” by Jan Narveson (textbook)
- “Parents Rights and the Value of the Family” by Brighouse and Swift (link in course reserve)

Nov. 12th Children’s Future Autonomy

Readings:

- “The Child’s Right to an Open Future” by Joel Feinberg (coursepack)
- “The Child’s Right to an Open Future?” by Claudia Mills (link in course reserve)
- “Political Liberalism and Moral Education: Reflections on Mozert v. Hawkins” by Mark Ramsay (textbook)
- “Education in a Liberal Society: Implications of Ross” by Karen Wendling (textbook)

Nov. 19th IN CLASS ESSAY: Children’s Right to Sexual and Political Choice

Come to class prepared to write about the topic and having read the following article.

- “Children’s Right to Vote and Sexual Choice” by David Archard (coursepack)

Nov. 26th Criminal Children

Readings:

- “Criminal Children” by Norvin Richards (link in course reserve)
- “Adolescence and Criminal Responsibility” by Jeffrey Blustein (coursepack)

Detailed outline of research paper and bibliography due (Nov. 26th).

Dec. 3rd Philosophy for Children

Readings:

- “Philosophy and the Young Child” by Gareth Matthews (coursepack)
- “Philosophy for Children” (link in course reserve)

Course-pack bibliography (in order of appearance):

- Becker, Lawrence C. (1998). “Stoic Children” in Gareth Matthews and Susan Turner (eds.), *The Philosopher’s Child* (pp.45-60). Rochester: University of Rochester Press.
- King, Peter O. (1998). “Thomas Hobbes’ Children” in Gareth Matthews and Susan Turner (eds.), *The Philosopher’s Child* (pp.65-83). Rochester: University of Rochester Press.
- Rawls, John (2002). “John Rawls: From a Theory of Justice” in Daniel Boneva (ed.), *Today’s Moral Issues* (pp.511-516). New York: McGraw Hill.
- Almond, Brenda (1993). “Rights” in Peter Singer (ed.), *A Companion to Ethics* (pp.259-269). Oxford: Blackwell.
- O’Neill, Onora (1979). “Begetting Bearing and Rearing” in Onora O’Neill (ed.), *Having Children: Philosophical and Legal Reflections on Parenthood* (pp.25-38). New York: Oxford.
- Robertson, John (2004). “Procreative Liberty” in Peg Tittle (ed.), *Should Parents be Licensed?* (pp.211-223). Amherst: Prometheus Books.
- LaFollette, Hugh (2004). “Licensing Parents” in Peg Tittle (ed.), *Should Parents be Licensed?* (pp.51-64). Amherst: Prometheus Books.
- Purdy, Laura (2004). “Can Having Children be Immoral?” in Peg Tittle (ed.), *Should Parents be Licensed?* (pp.143-157). Amherst: Prometheus Books.
- Firestone, Shulamith (1971). *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution* (selections). New York, Bantam.
- Brighouse, Harry (2002). “What Rights (if any) Do Children Have?” in David Archard (ed.), *The Moral and Political Status of Children* (pp.31-53). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brennan, Samantha (2002). “Children’s Choices or Children’s Interests: Which do their rights protect?” in David Archard (ed.), *The Moral and Political Status of Children* (pp.53-70). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Feinberg, Joel (1980). "The Child's Right to an Open Future" in William Aiken and Hugh LaFollette (eds.), *Whose Child? Children's Rights, Parental Authority and State Power* (pp.124-153). New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams & Co.
- Archard, David (1993). *Children: Rights and Childhood* (pp.70-81). London; New York: Routledge.
- Blustein, Jeffrey (1985). "Adolescence and Criminal Responsibility" *International Journal of Applied Philosophy*, vol. 2, pp. 1-17, Fall 1985.
- Mathews, Gareth (1980). *Philosophy and the Young Child* (Chapter Three). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Course reserve bibliography of articles (in alphabetical order):

- Archard, David (2004). "Wrongful Life" *Philosophy* 79, 2004.
- Brighthouse, Harry and Swift, Adam (2006). "Parents' Rights and the Value of the Family" *Ethics*, vol. 117 No.1, 80-108.
- Mills, Claudia (2003). "The Child's Right to an Open Future?" *Journal of Social Philosophy*, vol.34 No.4, Winter 2003, 499-509.
- O'Neill, Onora (1988). "Children's Rights and Children's Lives" *Ethics* Vol. 98, No. 3, 445-463.
- Richards, Norvin (1997). "Criminal Children" *Law and Philosophy*, vol.16, No.1, 63-89.
- Schapiro, Tamar (1999). "What is a Child?" *Ethics* 109 (July 1999) 715-738.