

Politics 9505b/Philosophy 9123b: Intergenerational Justice
Instructor: Richard Vernon, SSC 4216 ravernon@uwo.ca.
Winter 2017-8, Monday 9.30-11.30, SSC 4112

This seminar is a highly selective exploration of three areas of political theory that deal with transfers of benefits and burdens between generations: in Part I, obligations arising from past injustices; in Part II, the conferring of benefits (?) on children; in Part III, the question of benefits to (and from) non-adjacent future generations.

Evaluation: a final essay, 15-20 pages due April 15, 75% (2% late penalty per day): seminar participation, 25%. The essay will normally explore one of the weekly topics, drawing upon the readings for that week; depending on the approach, it may be necessary to consult the instructor about additional or alternative sources.

Part I: Taking responsibility for the past.

1. Do inherited benefits create obligations?

Daniel Butt, "A Doctrine Quite New and Altogether Untenable: Defending the Beneficiary Pays Principle," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 31 (2014) 336-48.

Richard Vernon, *Justice Back and Forth* University of Toronto Press, 2016, chapter 3.

Dennis Klimchuk, "Unjust Enrichment and Reparations for Slavery," *Boston University Law Review* 84 (2004), 1257-75.

2. Do past injustices get to be superseded in time?

Jeremy Waldron, "Superseding Historical Injustice," *Ethics* 103 (1992), 4-28.

Nahshon Perez, *Freedom from Past Injustices* Edinburgh University Press 2012, chapter 2.

Ton van den Beld, "Can Collective Responsibility for Perpetrated Evil Persist Over Generations?" *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 5 (2002), 181-200

3. Revenge or Forgiveness?

Jean Hampton, "The Retributive Idea," in Jeffrie Murphy and Jean Hampton, *Forgiveness and Mercy*, Cambridge University Press 1988.

Trudy Govier, *Forgiveness and Revenge* Routledge 2002, chapter 5

Jon Elster, "Retribution", in Elster ed. *Retribution and Reparation in the Transition to Democracy* Cambridge University Press 2006

Part II: Giving things to children.

1. Is existence a benefit?

Elizabeth Finneron-Burns, "What's Wrong with Human Extinction?" *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 2017 .

Seana Shiffrin, "Wrongful Life, Procreative Responsibility, and the Significance of Harm," *Legal Theory* 5 (1999), 1352-3252.

(If you have read Benatar) Rivka Weinberg, "Is Having Children Always Wrong?" *South African Journal of Philosophy* 31 (2012), 26-37.

OR if you haven't read Benatar:

David Benatar, *Better Never to Have Been*, OUP 2016, chapter 2 (28-49)

2. Conferring genetic benefits

Julian Savulescu, "Procreative Beneficence: Why We Should Select the Best Children," *Bioethics* 15 (2001), 413-26.

Christine Overall, *Why Have Children?* MIT Press 2012, chapter 3.

Matthew Liao, "Selecting Children," *Philosophy Compass* 2008, 973-91.

3. Conferring advantages

Harry Brighouse and Adam Swift, "Legitimate Parental Partiality," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 2009, 43-80.

Thomas Douglas, "Parental Partiality and the Intergenerational Transmission of Advantage," *Philosophical Studies* 2015, 2735-28756

Colin Macleod, "The Puzzle of Parental Partiality," *Theory and Research in Education* 2004, 309-21

4. Conferring culture.

Claudia Mills, "The Child's Right to an Open Future"? *Journal of Social Philosophy* 34 (2003), 499-509.

Matthew Clayton, *Justice and Legitimacy in Upbringing*, Oxford University Press 2006, chapter 3

Johannes Giesinger, "Parental Education and Public Reason: Why Comprehensive Enrolment is Justified," *Theory and Research in Education* 2013, 1-11.

Part III: Non-adjacent future generations.

1. Do future generations benefit us?

Joseph Heath, "The Structure of Intergenerational Cooperation," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 2013, 31-66.

Samuel Scheffler, *Death and the After-Life*, chapter 1

John O'Neill, "Future Generations, Present Harms," *Philosophy* 1993, 35-51

2 Reciprocity, Community or Humanity?

Hugh McCormick, "Intergenerational Justice and the Non-reciprocity Problem" *Political Studies* 2009 451-8.

Avner de-Sahlit, *Why Posterity Matters?* Routledge 1995, chapter 1

Wilfrid Beckerman, "Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice," in Andrew Dobson ed, *Fairness and Futurity*.

3. Saving for the future

John Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, 1971 edition, 284-93

Jane English, "Justice Between Generations," *Philosophical Studies* 31 (1997), 91-104.

Roger Padon, "Rawls's Just Savings Principle and the Sense of Justice," *Social Theory and Practice*, 1977

4. Ruling the future.

Michael Otsuka, *Libertarianism Without Inequality* Oxford 2003, chapter 7

Stephen Holmes, *Passions and Constraint* University of Chicago Press 1995, chapter 5

Munoz-Fraticelli, "The Problem of the Permanent Constitution," in Axel Gosseries and Lukas Meyer eds., *Intergenerational Justice* Oxford University Press 2009.