



Haslanger + Essay Writing

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Haslanger

- Enshrining a ‘right’ to information about biological ancestry sends a message that it is indeed very important
- Perhaps a more tailored approach is better:

“Living under the shadow of the natural nuclear family schema, it is reasonable to provide children with information about or contact with their biological relations, if and when this becomes an issue in their forming a healthy identity. However, if we are to avoid harming our children, then rather than enshrining a schema that most families fail to exemplify and which is used to stigmatize and alienate families that are (yes!) as good as their biological counterparts, we should instead make every effort to disrupt the hegemony of the schema”

Discussion

- Should we settle the 'right to know' on empirical grounds?
- Does Haslanger's more tailored approach
 - Go too far?
 - Not far enough?

Midterm II Long-Answer Questions

Instructions

Answer all questions in exam booklets. Answer **one** of the following questions. As a rough guide, the answer should be approx. 800 - 1200 words.

Questions:

- 1) Explain Millum's account of how parental rights are acquired and explain one problem the view faces.
- 2) Explain why Brake thinks that current child support practices are unjust, and assess the strength of her claim.
- 3) Explain and assess a solution to the non-identity problem. Your answer must substantially engage with at least one reading.
- 4) **(Wild card)** What obligations, if any, do gamete donors have towards their biological offspring? Your answer must substantially engage with at least one reading.



Essay writing guideline + tips

- You need to take a stand on a topic – explain why a particular view is right or wrong
- 1) Provide reasons for why the stance you take is right
- 2) Address counterarguments – especially if relevant ones can be found in the assigned readings

Essay writing guideline + tips

- Have a clear thesis statement
 - “In this paper I will argue that reproduction is morally impermissible”
 - “I will show that if reproducing will not result in severe suffering, then it is ethically permissible”

Essay writing guideline + tips

- You may have been taught not to use the first person - “I will show”, “I think”... There is nothing wrong with using the first person!

It is generally not worth the effort to rephrase sentences to avoid the first person, and often attempts to do so result in awkward sentences.

If your natural writing style involves the first person, go with it!

- A philosophy essay IS NOT a mystery novel

After reading your introduction, I should know what your conclusion will be, and have a general idea of how you plan to get there.

Essay writing guideline + tips

A view held by many authors is that gamete providers can transfer any responsibilities they may acquire towards their biological offspring to the children's intending parent(s). If true, then gamete providers need not be too concerned about what responsibilities arise from assisting in the creation of new life, as any responsibilities that do arise can be transferred to others. In support of the claim that gamete providers' responsibilities are transferable, some authors point to the commonplace outsourcing of various parental responsibilities, such as education and supervision, which are generally thought to be uncontroversial. However, despite their seeming plausibility, I show that these arguments fail to properly distinguish between the transfer and delegation of responsibility. On closer examination, these arguments only support the possibility of the delegation of responsibility. I further argue that there are strong reasons to think gamete providers' responsibilities cannot be transferred to others. Consequently, gamete providers ought to be concerned about the responsibilities they acquire towards their offspring.

Essay writing guideline + tips

Some more detail:

- To show you understand the view you're addressing you need to motivate it
 - What problem is the author trying to solve?
 - Why do they think their view succeeds at solving the problem?
 - What are the main moves of their argument
- What you focus on will depend on the argument you plan to make
 - E.g. Weinberg and the transfer question
- Need to give reasons why we should accept your argument
 - Logical problem in the author's argument
 - Stronger analogy
 - Principle that was overlooked
 - Etc.



Essay writing guideline + tips

Some kinds of arguments you can make:

- Show that the author is wrong
- Defend the author against a reasonable counter-argument
- Provide an alternate argument for a similar conclusion that you think is better
- Offer an alternate solution that you think is better