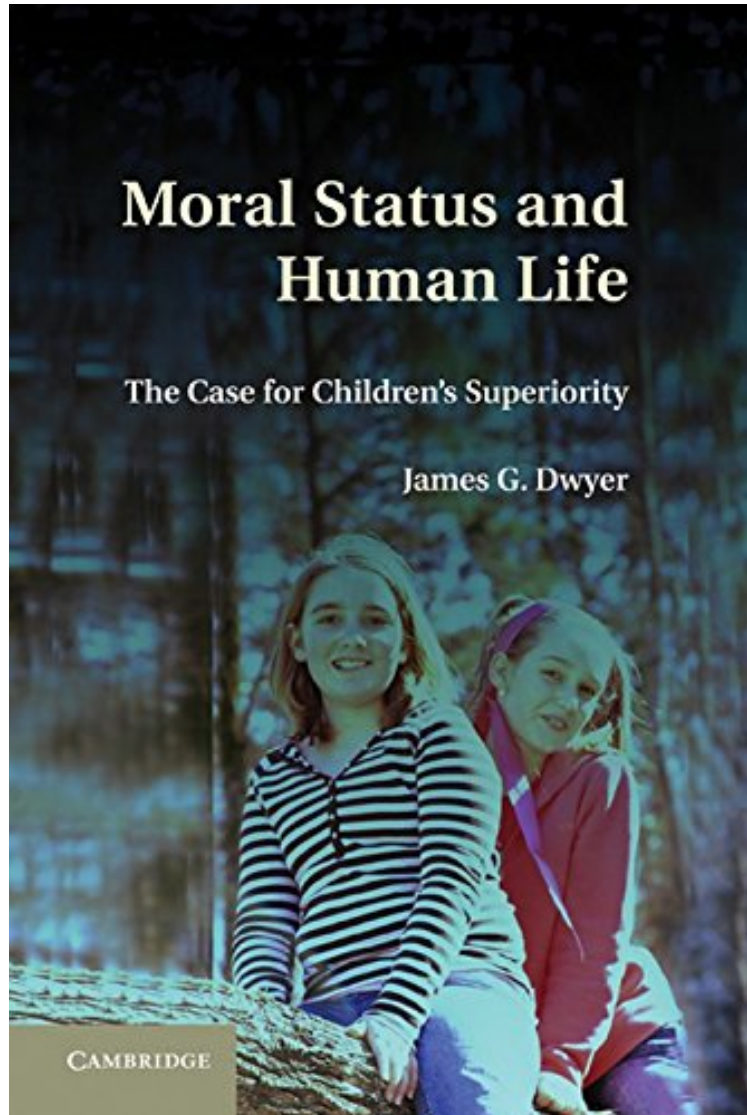


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Moral Status and Human Life: The Case for Children's Superiority

James G. Dwyer

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James G. Dwyer : Moral Status and Human Life: The Case for Children's Superiority before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Moral Status and Human Life: The Case for Children's Superiority:

Are children of equal, lesser, or perhaps even greater moral importance than adults? This work of applied moral philosophy develops a comprehensive account of how adults as moral agents ascribe moral status to beings - ourselves

and others - and on the basis of that account identifies multiple criteria for having moral status. It argues that proper application of those criteria should lead us to treat children as of greater moral importance than adults. This conclusion presents a basis for critiquing existing social practices, many of which implicitly presuppose that children occupy an inferior status, and for suggesting how government policy, law, and social life might be different if it reflected an assumption that children are actually of superior status.

"This is an engagingly written book that tackles a topic of vital interest not only for moral philosophers but also those having general academic, law and policy-making concerns with the status of children and the role of the family. Dwyer's style is direct, concise and philosophically literate and his overall conclusions are original and provocative." Harry Brighouse, University of Wisconsin

"Traditionally, children have been thought to be an example of such "hard cases". Their abilities to reason seem modest compared to those of adults', they are less able of autonomy and, at least up to a certain age, their sense of morality is not fully formed ... The most remarkable feature of James Dwyer's book is that it turns this picture on its head. The author argues that, far from thinking that they are less morally considerable than adults, we should regard children as having higher moral status than adults." Anca Gheaus, *Metapsychology Online*

About the Author James Dwyer is a Professor of Law at the College of William and Mary. He previously taught at the University of Wyoming and Chicago-Kent. He received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Stanford University in 1995 and a J.D. from Yale University in 1987. Dwyer has written three other monographs on the rights of children and parents in connection with child rearing, as well as numerous law journal articles on child welfare issues. He serves on the board of several child advocacy organizations and has advocated for children in court proceedings.