Call for Papers: “Philosophy of Childhood: Exploring the Boundaries”

2014 American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Annual Meeting
Special Symposium of the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children
December 27-30 at the Downtown Marriott in Philadelphia, PA

Overview: As a field of inquiry, philosophy of childhood is both old and new. Its origins can be found in various inquiries into mythology, religion, spirituality, art, and cultural practice (e.g. Jung & Kerenyi, 1969). Although it has always played some part in philosophical discourse (Turner & Matthews, 1998), its emergence as a field of postmodern theory follows the rise, in the late 19th century, of psychoanalysis, for which childhood is a key signifier. Also, in the mid 20th century Philippe Aries seminal work *Centuries of Childhood* (1965) introduced the master-concept of childhood as a social and cultural invention, thereby weakening the strong grip of biological metaphors on imagining childhood. Today, while philosophy of childhood per se is a relatively boundary-less field, it is one in which philosophy is present in both foreground and background. In the foreground, expressions of childhood as ontological signifier are found in J-F. Lyotard’s (1992) “abject,” Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s (1980) “becoming child,” and Walter Kohan’s (2012) “aionic child.” Gareth Matthews’ *The Philosophy of Childhood* (1996) explores the field from the idea of the child as philosopher. David Kennedy’s *The Well of Being* (2006) undertakes a philosophically grounded analysis of the history of childhood, the history of adulthood, and their interrelationship. In the background, the new constructivist sociology of childhood (Jenks, 2005) and the child as represented in cultural studies are strongly tinged with philosophical concepts. Legal and juridical perspectives, particularly the extensive literature on children’s rights (Ladd, 1995), are grounded in philosophical speculation on personhood (Cassidy, 2007). In addition, texts and inquiries with philosophical elements and dimensions abound in the history of childhood, anthropology of childhood, childhood and psychoanalysis, film, literature and the arts, and childhood and education.

Call for Papers: The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) is calling for papers on philosophy of childhood that further explore the shapes and boundaries of this emergent field of inquiry, and the possibilities for mediating encounters between its multiple sectors. Accepted papers will be presented at the IAPC group session of the 2014 American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Annual Meeting, December 27-30 at the Downtown Marriott in Philadelphia, PA. Presented papers will also be considered as part of a proposal for an edited book collection.

Possible Topics Include:
- The philosopher’s child
- Childhood as signifier
• Childhood and post-modernity
• The child as philosopher
• Children and "childhood"
• Childhood in film, literature and the arts
• Children's art
• Children and activism
• Childhood and the life cycle
• Childhood across the disciplines
• Childhood and education

Abstract Submissions: Abstracts should be sent in MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) by May 15, 2014 to David Kennedy at kennedyd@mail.montclair.edu. Authors will be notified by email by May 31, 2014.

Paper Submissions: Authors of accepted abstracts should submit full papers by August 31, 2014. Papers may not exceed 3,000 words in length. Submissions should include a word count and 150 word abstract (not counted in total word count) on the title page. Papers should not contain any information identifying the author of the submission. In a separate title page document, please submit the following: title of the paper, abstract of the paper, author’s name, affiliation, e-mail address and phone number.

Presentation: As requested by the APA, all papers will be posted on the IAPC website prior to the conference (www.montclair.edu/iapc). Presenters will be required to pay the conference registration fee, and APA members are encouraged to maintain their APA memberships. APA members are also encouraged to submit papers to the main program, in addition to participating in this group session. At the group session, a laptop and projector will be provided. Presenters who wish to use PowerPoint slides must submit them to kennedyd@mail.montclair.edu no later than December 5, 2014.

Questions or Comments: David Kennedy, Montclair State University, kennedyd@mail.montclair.edu

REFERENCES


