PHIL\*6230  Ethics: Age Gates and Life Stages

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Department(s): Department of Philosophy

Location(s): Guelph

Wednesdays, 230-530 pm, MacKinnon 132

This seminar will explore the ethical significance of life stages and the justification of age gates. In this seminar we’ll examine whether and why age makes a moral difference, both in terms of well-being and in terms of rights or moral rules. Why is age a crucial mechanism for organizing roles, rights and responsibilities? We’ll look at the concept of life stages, and at some life stages in particular, including infancy, childhood, young adulthood, middle age and old age. Finally, we’ll spend some time thinking about measuring well-being across the life span, asking if there are better shapes a life can take? Does it matter where life’s goods and bads are distributed? Is temporal asymmetry rational? (If there’s to be bad stuff in my life I’d rather it were in the past, even if results in more bad overall.)

This class will be taught in person, except for one week when I’m away at a conference and we’ll meet on Teams. Students are graded on weekly questions (10%), seminar presentations (30%) and a final paper (60%).

Email me for a week by week breakdown of readings.