

(Library ebook) To Whom Do Children Belong?: Parental Rights, Civic Education, and Children's Autonomy

# To Whom Do Children Belong?: Parental Rights, Civic Education, and Children's Autonomy

*Melissa Moschella*

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## To Whom Do Children Belong?

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and Children's Autonomy

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Most people believe that parents have rights to direct their children's education and upbringing. But why? What grounds those rights? How broad is their scope? Can we defend parental rights against those who believe we need more extensive state educational control to protect children's autonomy or prepare them for citizenship in a diverse society? Amid heated debates over issues like sexual education, diversity education and vouchers, Moschella cuts to the heart of the matter, explaining why education is primarily the responsibility of parents, not the state. Rigorously argued yet broadly accessible, the book offers a principled case for expanding school choice and granting exemptions when educational programs or regulations threaten parents' ability to raise their children in line with their values. Philosophical argument is complemented with psychological and social scientific research showing that robust parental rights' protections are crucial for the well-being of parents, children and society as a whole.

'In one of her most persuasive passages, Moschella offers '[a]n Aristotelian account of the moral prerequisites for autonomy,' in which, drawing not only on Aristotle's Ethics but on modern child development literature as well as recent discoveries in adolescent neuroscience, she argues that genuine autonomy depends upon cultivating moral virtue, the ability to resist impulses and to act thoughtfully, weighing the consequences of one's choices.' James R. Stoner, Jr, Claremont of Books 'Moschella has given us an excellent start. Her well-written and tightly argued book is an important intellectual achievement on an issue to which philosophers have not given adequate attention.' Christopher O. Tollefsen, Public DiscourseAbout the AuthorMelissa Moschellais an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the Catholic University of America, Washington DC. She speaks and writes for both scholarly and popular audiences on topics including marriage, parental rights, reproductive technologies, and religious freedom.