

Diversifying Syllabi Text Summary and Teaching Tips

Article/Essay Title: Moral orientation and moral development

Author: Carol Gilligan

Readability:

Possible Applications:

Ethics

Care ethics

Applied ethics

Philosophy and psychology; empirical sciences and philosophy

Gender and philosophy

Complimentary Texts/Resources:

Some background in the justice framework and/or care ethics would be helpful

Something by Virginia Held (proponent of care ethics). Perhaps this interview:

<http://www.3ammagazine.com/3am/the-ethics-of-care/>

Short story: *A Jury of Her Peers* by Susan Glaspell

Margaret Little "Why a feminist approach to bioethics?" (to draw out notion of androcentrism)

Cordelia Fine *Delusions of Gender* – for up to date data on apparent gender differences

Thesis:

Key Definitions:

Summary:

Gilligan argues that there are two "moral perspectives" that individuals can take when making moral judgments. The "justice" perspective has been associated with men and is (traditionally) taken as paradigmatic of mature moral reasoning. The "care" perspective, on the other hand, is associated with women, and is taken (by psychologists of the time) as a less mature form of moral reasoning. She argues against this view, and suggests that both perspectives are valuable. Though an individual may only be able to take on one perspective at a given time, they are not mutually exclusive, nor is one better than the other.

This paper has a variety of interesting examples which can be exploited for many pedagogical uses.

Possible Class Activities:

Debates. Choose some case studies, have some students prepare an analysis from the care perspective and other from a justice perspective.

Intuition pumps. Before reading/discussing the article, take a survey of students' intuitions about some of Gilligan's cases.

