

Creating frugal citizens. The liberal egalitarian case for teaching frugality.¹

Pre-published version - Published in *Theory and research in education*, November 2015
vol. 13 no. 3 286-307

Danielle Zwarthoed

Postdoctoral Fellow (Swiss National Science Foundation, Chaire Hoover d'éthique économique et sociale) Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium²

Abstract

According to Agenda 21, the UN's action plan for sustainable development, "Governments and private sector organizations should promote more positive attitudes towards sustainable consumption through education, public awareness programmes and other means [...]" (United Nations Environment Programme, 1992, sec. 4.3.). But some wonder whether the cultivation of frugal consumption habits in schools is compatible with basic liberal principles. This paper argues that, in societies like ours, liberal egalitarian theories of justice should permit and even advocate teaching frugality in educational institutions. Liberal egalitarianism expects educational institutions to equip children with the abilities and virtues needed to live well by their own judgment and in compliance with just institutions. The paper examines how frugality could be one of these virtues. First, frugality is conducive to better compliance with our distributive obligations towards the current poor and future generations. Second, frugality enables prospective adults to live well with their fair share of scarce resources, and even with less. Third, frugality increases autonomy and facilitates its exercise. The paper thus concludes that liberal egalitarian institutions should encourage schools to teach frugality.

Keywords

Frugality, education, liberalism, egalitarianism, intergenerational justice

¹ Versions of this paper have been presented at the Mardis Intimes de la Chaire Hoover, at the Disputationes Quadrangulae and at the Vives Seminar, held in the Université Catholique de Louvain in Belgium. I thank all the participants for their insightful questions and comments. I owe a great deal of gratitude to Harry Brighouse, Thomas Ferretti, Axel Gosseries, Hervé Pourtois, two anonymous reviewers and the editor of *Theory and Research in Education* for extremely helpful comments on earlier drafts. All errors are my own.

The work reported on in this publication has benefited from a postdoctoral grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation and from participation in the research networking programme Rights to a Green Future, which is financed by the European Science Foundation.

² Email : Danielle.Zwarthoed@uclouvain.be

Creating frugal citizens. The liberal egalitarian case for teaching frugality.

Introduction

According to Agenda 21, the UN's action plan for sustainable development, “Governments and private sector organizations should promote more positive attitudes towards sustainable consumption through education, public awareness programmes and other means [...]” (United Nations Environment Programme, 1992: section 4.3.). One might wonder whether this demand is compatible with liberal principles. As Wissenburg puts it, “liberal democratic political systems have a *prima facie* duty not to interfere with the genesis of preference” (Wissenburg, 2013: 16). On the other hand, many liberal philosophers have argued that education should cultivate a repertoire of virtues to secure the required behaviours whenever institutions do not suffice (e.g. Callan, 1997; Galston, 1991; Kymlicka, 1997; Rawls, 1993: 157). Their main focus has been political virtues such as civility, tolerance, fairness or solidarity. Recently liberal scholars have advocated the cultivation of environmental virtues (Bell, 2004; Ferkany and Whyte, 2013; Schinkel, 2009). But none of them discuss frugality, even though frugality is directly conducive to sustainability (Sandler, 2007: 48, 82). Van Parijs provides a short defence of frugality and discusses parental education in this perspective (Van Parijs, 2003). The aim of this paper is to provide a comprehensive discussion of the following question: *in societies like ours, is teaching frugality in schools compatible with liberal egalitarianism?*

I argue that, in societies like ours, liberal egalitarianism should permit and even encourage schools to teach frugality to children. Liberal egalitarianism requires institutions to secure individuals' basic liberties and opportunities to live well by their own judgment. The task of educational institutions is to teach prospective citizens the skills, abilities and virtues one may need to live well in compliance with principles of justice within and across generations. This paper's argument is that, in societies like ours, frugality is one of these virtues. Frugality operates as a virtue in three, interrelated, ways. First, frugality facilitates compliance with the duty to leave their fair share to others (including future generations). Second, frugality increases future adults' chances of living well with scarce resources. Third, frugality facilitates the exercise of autonomy; certainly, autonomy is constitutive of the ability to live well by one's own judgment.

Three clarifications are in order before going further.

First, by “societies like ours”, I mean a society characterized by an unjust distribution of resources, a lack of concern for our duties to future generations and a widespread consumerist ethos. A “consumerist ethos” describes an amalgam of desires, value orientations, conducts, habits and ways of living which dispose the agent to acquire goods in ever-greater quantities.

Second, I define “frugality” as follows. Frugality is a combination of knowledge, value orientations, preferences, emotional susceptibility, practical skills and habits. This combination disposes the agent to behave frugally. A frugal agent is capable of living as well as a less frugal one with fewer material resources. This capacity is coupled with a stable disposition for little

consumption. Note that this definition of frugality does not involve a predefined threshold above which consumption would be non-frugal. Specifying this threshold would depend on two further considerations. First, according to liberal egalitarian theories of justice, consumption is excessive if it exceeds one's fair share. So far the available evidence does not precisely determine above which level consumption exceeds our fair share. Second, liberals ought to respect individuals' own appreciation of how much is too much.

Third, even if I make the case that education should shape certain individual dispositions, I do not endorse the claim that individuals are the unique source of social and environmental problems. Two families of approaches provide competing accounts of the sources of environmental problems (Dobson, 2007). *Structuralists* argue that individual (mis)behaviours are driven by political, economic and social structures. According to structuralists, responding to environmental problems by educating individuals to change their consumption habits is pointless (Maniates, 2001). *Voluntarists* argue that individual choices and attitudes at least partly cause individuals to behave as they behave. A naïve voluntarist approach, which would claim that individual choices cause individual behaviours *regardless of the context*, is implausible. I take individual attitudes to be "part of the complex web of influences that causes us to behave one way rather than another" (Dobson, 2007: 277). Egalitarian justice requires institutional changes *and* behavioural changes. For this reason, teaching frugality involves the formation of individual habits; but it also involves raising students' awareness of the social and economic factors that drive their consumption habits.

The paper is structured as follows. The first section specifies under which conditions a liberal egalitarian theory of justice concludes to overconsumption. The second section shows how teaching frugality would be instrumental to secure our willingness to leave their fair share to the current poor and to future generations when institutions do not suffice. As it is easier for frugal individuals to live well within the constraints settled by distributive justice, the third section shows teaching frugality would also enable prospective adults to live well with their fair share or even with less. Hence teaching frugality to disadvantaged children *in unjust societies* is preferable too. The fourth section addresses the objection that frugality is not compatible with neutrality. It shows that what really matters from a liberal perspective is not neutrality, but autonomy. But teaching frugality can be done in an autonomy-compatible way. The fifth section argues that frugality even increases autonomy and facilitates its exercise.

Global justice, intergenerational justice and overconsumption

Since the publication of Rawls's *Theory of Justice* in 1971, liberal egalitarians have extensively addressed the issue of how to distribute scarce resources within and across countries and generations.

To get started, I shall sketch the main features of the liberal egalitarian account of justice this paper assumes. As most liberal egalitarians nowadays, I assume distributive justice concerns three realms: the domestic realm, the international (or global) realm and the intergenerational realm³. Liberal institutions ought to respect individual basic liberties. Institutions should distribute the resources and conditions so as to provide citizens with their

³ See (Barry, 1989; Wissenburg, 2013: 161–177).

fair share of opportunities to live well by their own judgment. Departures from an equal distributions of resources should be justified from the perspective of the most disadvantaged. Thus Rawls's difference principle states that inequalities are just only if they maximize the lifetime prospects of those who occupy the least advantaged social position (Rawls, 2001: 42–43; see also Van Parijs, 2003b, for the formulation).

More and more liberal egalitarians tend to argue that similar principles ought to apply to the *international realm* (Beitz, 1979; Moellendorf, 2002). Even less demanding versions of international distributive justice⁴ – sufficientarianism, for instance – claim wealthier countries ought to provide some kind of assistance to others.

In the *intergenerational realm*, liberal egalitarians have provided specific normative standards for sustainability. Rawls's principle of just savings requires each generation to save enough material resources and conditions to maintain just institutions for its descendants (Rawls, 1999: §44, 2001: §49). To prevent conflicts between inter- and intragenerational justice, some liberal egalitarians defend a principle of strict equivalence: once the material basis of just institutions is secured, each generation should transfer to the next one the equivalent of what it inherited, but no more, so as to avoid opportunity costs for the current poor (Gaspart and Gosseries, 2007; Gosseries, 2014). In a liberal spirit, intergenerational savings could be assessed in terms of future generations' opportunities to live well by their own judgments, rather than in terms of needs or preferences (Barry, 1997). Hence we ought to preserve polyvalent resources and conditions so that future generations will be able to achieve the life plans they have reasons to value.

Any somewhat demanding version of liberal egalitarian justice across countries and generations is likely to require significant departures from the current distribution. Institutions that honour egalitarian justice should not allow some to have access to the appropriation of the resources over which others have a legitimate claim. Consumption habits can be such that they involve the depletion of scarce resources and the degradation of the conditions current and future people may need to live well⁵. According to liberal egalitarianism, these consumption levels are excessive. Hence I will use the term “overconsumption” to describe justice-threatening consumption levels. Institutions are unjust if they allow for overconsumption. By “institutions”, I refer to governmental agencies, legal rules, economic institutions (firms and markets) or conventional morality. Hence justice can require regulations and wealth transfers that might impose significant constraints on individual consumption. Now, are we consuming too much according to justice?

The resources and conditions needed to secure present and future people's liberties and opportunities include just institutions, means of production, manufactured goods, human capital, knowledge, cultural goods, natural resources and a decent environment. Natural resources and environmental goods are among the goods that are the most threatened by

⁴ For an overview of international distributive principles, see (Gilbert, 2010)

⁵ Two other technical factors may alter the resources and conditions needed to secure liberties and prospects to live well, that is, inefficient production and population growth. Addressing these two other factors is beyond the scope of this paper. Let me just stress that technological solutions to decrease the impact of economic activity on ecological system without decreasing the economic output are subject to rebound effects (e.g. Figge et al., 2014). Population reduction policies are highly controversial and raise ethical issues of their own.

overconsumption, partly because they are underpriced. It is worrying because the services ecosystems provide to us are important for liberal egalitarian justice. They enable people to freely pursue the various life plans they value (Stevens, 2014). Worldwide ecosystems provide many valuable resources and conditions to present and future people such as food, fresh water, wood and fibre, fuel. Ecosystems regulate climate, floods and disease. For many populations in the world, ecosystems also have spiritual, recreational or aesthetic value (UN Foundation, 2005: 28).

Experts believe the capacity of ecosystems to provide services to humans is reaching critical levels (UN Foundation, 2005: 834). Increasing consumption and production is, with population growth, an important driver of climate change, nutrient pollution, land conversion and overexploitation of natural resources (UN Foundation, 2005: 831). Resource depletion will make future generations worse off in terms of productive potential, unless we compensate this depletion by investments in alternative technologies⁶ (Barry, 1983). With our current level of consumption, the peak of oil production will probably be reached before 2020 (Sorrell et al., 2010). However, evidence shows many nations in the world (especially the poorest ones) are unable to offset the depletion of natural resources by investments in human capital and technologies (Arrow et al., 2004). And resources depletion in these countries is to be attributed to high levels of consumption in other (often richer) countries, which import these resources (Arrow et al., 2004).

Another instance of justice-threatening consumption is the direct and indirect consumption of fish products. Recent increases in demand for fish products are not only due to population growth. The average world per capita fish supply has almost doubled in the last 40 years, shifting from 9.9 kg in the 1960s to 18.4 kg in 2009 (FAO, 2012). Technological advances, open accessibility of fisheries and government subsidies schemes have allowed the fishing industry to meet and to reinforce this demand (Pauly et al., 2002). As a result, “it is now *well established* that the capacity of the oceans to provide fish for food has declined substantially and in some regions is showing no sign of recovery.” (UN Foundation, 2005: Part 1, 835). Overfishing has degraded coastal and marine ecosystem to the point that they will not be able to provide services in the near future any more. Recovery of the depleted stocks in the far future remains uncertain. From the perspective of intergenerational justice, this means that the future generations will be deprived from access to an important source of food. From the perspective of international justice, overfishing deprives fishers from poor countries (who cannot afford cutting edge fishing technologies) from access to employment and subsistence.

High levels of consumption also threaten the conditions needed to secure peace, basic liberties as well as the least advantaged groups’ prospects to live well. These conditions are already threatened by climate change. Climate change is a factor of sea level rise, meteorological hazards, new diseases, the destruction of ecosystems and biodiversity. Climate change may favour conflicts (Nordås and Gleditsch, 2007). It is now widely accepted among

⁶ Although some technological changes could compensate for the future depletion of resources (Sagoff, 1997; Solow, R.M., 1991), experts remind us that “the degree to which the provision of ecosystem services can be improved and pressure on ecosystem reduced by technologically generated alternatives is highly uncertain” (UN Foundation, 2005, p. Part 2, 455). Ecosystems are highly complex and technological substitution may have unintended undesirable consequences currently available models are not able to anticipate (e.g. Gunderson and Holling, 2002; UN Foundation, 2005, p. Part 2, 446). For now, a risk-adverse stance seems more in line with our intergenerational duties.

experts that climate change is in good part due to human greenhouse gases emissions (IPCC, 2007). Human consumption of food products, fuels, manufactured goods, means of transportation, involves greenhouse gases emissions. To the extent that consumption levels are responsible for climate change and that climate change threatens the achievement of justice, these consumption levels are incompatible with liberal egalitarian principles.

Overconsumption does not only affect the availability of environmental goods. Overconsumption threatens the long-term ability of the welfare state to provide services such as health care, education, social security and pensions. Consider health care. The sustainability of public health insurance depends on the willingness to contribute and on the health expenditures it covers. Tax payers are less likely to be willing to contribute if they prefer maintaining a high standard of living. Health expenditures are more likely to be higher if the insured are habituated to make an unnecessary use of health care services⁷. Overconsumption of health services is becoming an issue in many places (Emanuel and Fuchs, 2008).

Teaching frugality to achieve distributive justice

How should just institutions prevent overconsumption? At least three types of policy strategies can bring about changes in consumption behaviours: legal restrictions, economic incentives and education.

Legal restrictions involve the use of penalties and sanctions to prevent overconsumption. Legal restriction only aim at changing behaviours without necessarily securing citizens' commitments to the rationale behind them. Non-compliance is thus likely to occur without proper enforcement. But enforcement is costly (Batabyal, 1995).

Economic incentives are "softer" than restrictions. They consist in taxes and subsidies to correct prices and generate the appropriate consumption behaviours. The longer the incentive lasts, the more likely it is to make the new behaviours habitual. But incentives are not meant to securing citizens' commitment to the rationale behind them. Once the penalty is removed, or if it can be circumvented, people will return to their original behaviour (Dobson, 2007).

Contrary to restrictions and incentives, education targets the attitudes which commit us to consuming less. The character trait that directly disposes to consume less is frugality. Consuming less is less effortful for frugal persons than for those who endorse materialistic value orientations⁸. Compliance with distributive constraints on consumption is thus less demanding for frugal people's will. This is why teaching frugality is required when legal rules and economic institutions do not suffice to ensure that citizens do not overconsume. Frugality should thus be on the list of the virtues that support just institutions.

Thus far I have argued that teaching frugality is instrumental to secure the behaviours desired for the realisation of distributive justice within and across generations. Now let me discuss two objections that target the effectiveness of this proposal.

⁷ Moreover, some forms of overconsumption are unhealthy or provoke health issues (overconsumption of food, using cars rather than biking or walking characterize unhealthy lifestyles; pollution might be responsible for many health issues, such as respiratory infections, cancers or fertility issues).

⁸ Analyses of empirical evidence in psychology demonstrate that materialistic value orientations are related to weak environmental attitudes and behaviours (Hurst et al., 2013).

It might be objected that virtues such as frugality do not suffice to secure the desired behaviours in any situation. This is the situationist challenge to virtues (McTernan, 2014). This challenge relies on research in social psychology, which suggests that character traits (here, frugality) are unlikely to secure the desired pattern of behaviour (here, lowering one's consumption) in all situations, and especially in those situations which are likely to induce the opposite behaviour (say, walking in a shopping mall). This “value-action gap” problem is documented by empirical evidence on environmental behaviours (Heberlein, 2012; Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002). In response, let me emphasise that I take that the way frugality is being taught should take these problems into account⁹. That is, there are different ways to teach frugality. Some ways secure firmer dispositions to adopt frugal conducts in our societies than others. To mitigate the value-action gap problem, the way frugality is taught should be designed so as to ensure (whenever it is possible) that children acquire as *firm and stable* frugal dispositions as possible. Educators should choose the methods that are the most likely to enable children to overcome easily the gap between their frugal ideals and their actual life choices (some educational proposals are outlined in more details in the last section).

Another objection would claim frugality strategies are hampered by consumption rebound effects (Alcott, 2008). The mechanic of rebound effects starts with (frugally educated) consumers reducing voluntarily their absolute level of consumption of non-renewable resources (say, fossil fuel). This creates a drop in demand, which lowers the price of fuel. The demand of marginal consumers rises. Marginal consumers have a low purchasing power and are initially frugal by necessity rather than by choice. The good news is that such transfer of purchasing power from the more affluent to the less ones is welcome from the perspective of global justice. The bad news is that the resulting intergenerational savings are *ceteris paribus* lower than the savings initially expected from our frugal education policy. The “rebound effect” refers to these lost savings. A rebound effect is of 20% when 20% of the initially expected savings resulting from frugal behaviours have been offset by the increased consumption of marginal consumers. This means that, as long as the rebound effect is lower than 100%, the frugality strategy remains effective to some degree. Now, two conditions are required for rebound effects to occur (Alcott, 2008):

1. There should be some left demand from marginal consumers
2. There should be some left profit for suppliers.

Two key variables are thus needed to assess rebound effects for the consumption of a resource R: the reaction of marginal consumers to the decrease of the price of R and the price elasticity of R. Given this, rebound effects will not happen in any circumstances. Firstly, marginal consumers will not necessarily adopt a classical economic behaviour. Vegetarian Hindus will not buy more of cheaper meat. Moreover, if it is true that desires for consumption actually reflect the desire to imitate those who are deemed “rich” or “successful” rather than the desire to enjoy more (Veblen, 1899: Chapter 4), then those who have less purchasing power might come to desire to live frugally like their models. Finally, frugal ideals are part of many

⁹ These details are not meant to constitute a comprehensive discussion of the situationist challenge. Such discussion is beyond the scope of this paper.

cultures in the world. If the global society manages to preserve or restore existing frugal cultures all over the world, marginal consumers will behave frugally too.

Secondly, it is not always the case that a reduction of demand leads to a decrease in prices. Another possible effect of frugality strategies is a “double-sufficiency effect”, that is, the voluntary limitation of consumption by some leads to an increase of prices and thus constrains others to limit their consumption too (Figge et al., 2014: 220). This happens when supplying larger quantities of goods involves decreasing marginal costs (when producers make economies of scale). Flying an empty plane involves little less costs than flying a full plane. If some potential passengers decide not to fly, then the marginal costs have to be shared by a smaller number of passengers and the price of the ticket increases, leading the other (non-frugal) passengers to renounce to fly. As the process goes by, some routes would be suspended. Here, the resulting savings are higher than the one expected from the frugality strategy.

Teaching frugality to live well with scarce resources

Liberal egalitarianism requires institutions to secure present and future generations’ opportunities to live well. Educational institutions are thus required to secure prospective adults’ sense of justice and the dispositions needed to secure compliance with justice principles. But justice also requires educators to ensure that prospective citizens will enjoy significant opportunities to live well by their own judgments (Brighouse, 1998). Opportunities to live well depend on the resources and goods one has access to, but also on being equipped with certain skills (Brighouse, 1998). Prospective adults need a repertoire of mental abilities and internal resources to live well. In the previous section, I have argued that liberal egalitarians should advocate teaching frugality in schools to facilitate compliance with distributive justice. I now examine whether teaching frugality could be advocated on the grounds that frugality is part of the mental equipment needed to live well.

Frugality would threaten children’s prospects to live well if their well-being were to depend on how much they consume. But empirical evidence shows that, in the long-term, a higher rate of economic growth and the associated higher availability of material goods do not result in an increase in happiness (Easterlin et al., 2010). Empirical research in psychology even suggests individuals who have materialistic values enjoy lower levels of personal well-being and suffer greater distress than those who devote more time and energy to social relationships and self-realization (Cohen and Cohen, 1996; Kasser, 2003). Therefore, studies in happiness economics and in psychology tend to support the view that (at least above a threshold of vital needs), frugal consumption patterns should not result in a decrease in well-being.

The kind of equipment (material or mental) one needs to live well depends to a fair extent on the circumstances one lives in. In a *just order*, the range of life plans one is allowed to pursue is restricted by the constraints settled by the egalitarian distribution of resources and advantages within and across generations. An egalitarian distribution does not allow anyone to enjoy an unlimited access to scarce resources. To live well, citizens must be able to be content with their fair share. Hence it does not come as a surprise that some liberal egalitarians view expensive preferences as a handicap or a misfortune (Cohen, 2004; Dworkin, 2000: 288). An expensive preference, in the technical sense, is not a desire for expensive goods when one is

equally satisfied with cheaper ones. An expensive preference results from the incapacity to reach the same level of satisfaction as others with the same resources. If this “handicap” results from education, and if expensive tastes worsen one’s opportunities to live well with one’s fair share, educators should make sure children do not develop expensive tastes. Teaching frugality, that is, the ability to be satisfied with less, is thus in the best interest of children.

Frugal people are more likely to comply with justice principles because it requires less sacrifices from them. A parallel between teaching frugality and a system of compulsory taxation can be made here. Nagel argues that a system of compulsory taxation is better than an appeal to contribute to the eradication of poverty on a voluntary basis, because, even if it worked, the second system would make “excessive demands on the will” (Nagel, 1975). Excessive demands on the will diminish our well-being because they constrain us to regularly make difficult trade-offs between the obligations of justice we acknowledge and the personal preferences we desire to satisfy. Therefore, teaching frugality secures prospective well-being in another, more subtle way. By securing our capacity to fulfil our obligations of justice, frugality allows citizens who have a developed sense of justice and who are aware of their obligations to enjoy the good of being able to live in accordance with their deep moral commitments, without feelings of shame and guilt and the associated loss of self-respect.

At this point, one might object this is all very well, but most educators in the world will have to prepare children to live in an imperfectly just world (at best). Does the principle that educators ought to equip children with the skills needed to live well hold in that case? And, if it holds, does this principle still require teaching frugality? The answer to both questions has to be positive. Even if we cannot expect realising a just order in the near future, educators can still do something to improve the prospects of the worst-off. In unjust societies a minority of children does not need to be frugal. They can realistically expect to be able to consume whatever they might fancy. But most children, and the worst-offs in particular, will get much less than their fair share. Hence teaching frugality helps them.

First, teaching children to become frugal is, in some way, giving them an income-generating education. As Van Parijs puts it, frugally educated children will develop a “propensity to consume less than their income (and access to credit) will allow. In terms of the lifelong level of comfort one will be able to achieve, there is a world of difference between consuming 90% and 110% of one’s income at an early age.” (Van Parijs, 2003a). As required by the difference principle, frugality maximises the prospects attached to the worst social position, even when a satisfactorily just redistribution is not feasible.

But frugality also renders the worst-off less vulnerable. Frugality increases bargaining power. A frugal person can afford refusing demeaning, hazardous and degrading jobs for some time. Frugal workers can undertake longer strikes to obtain better conditions. Frugality helps to deal well with financial complexity. Frugal consumers are less vulnerable to the exploitative practices of credit cards companies and other lenders, especially when bankruptcy law does not protect consumers well (Sullivan et al., 1999). In the absence of a reliable Welfare State, unconsidered expenses have worrying long-term effects on disadvantaged citizens’ access to property, education, health care and retirement and on the economic, social and educational prospects of their children.

Frugality also secures disadvantaged people's well-being, self-respect and psychological health. Frugality limits frustrations. Being frugal reduces the risk of developing compulsive shopping addiction. Research shows compulsive shopping behaviours stimulate the dopamine reward system exactly like nicotine, cocaine or heroin (Hartston, 2012). Compulsive shopping addiction creates mental distress and suffering. It is a factor of poverty, family breakups, and loss of self-respect. The risks of developing shopping addiction are higher in an environment where sophisticated advertising techniques, the possibility to buy at any hour and easy access to credit strongly encourage ever-ending shopping.

Frugality is indeed an asset for disadvantaged people in unjust societies. Now, consider two objections to this particular claim.

First, one could be worried frugal children would be too "countercultural" to live happily in our societies. Living well certainly includes relationships with others (Brighouse, 2005b: 45). And sharing our peers' tastes and values facilitates relationships. But, in societies characterised by a consumerist ethos, frugal children do not share most of their peers' values and tastes. At best, no one will be interested in befriending the children or the adolescents who do not even have a cell phone. At worst, these children will be ostracized.

This objection is valid only if teaching frugality in schools ends up being only sparingly effective. But we can be confident that public schools enjoy some authority to impose norms and values. Schools have been quite effective in promoting values such as religious tolerance, human rights or gender equality, which have become standards in our societies. Schools might have the power to enrol an entire society in frugality. Now, some adjustments are probably needed to prevent the unpalatable consequences of a frugal education policy that would only work in a "patchy" way. Teaching additional skills might help frugal children to cope with peer pressure. Children could learn the ability to code-switch (in the context of social interactions), that is, "the ability to adapt one's behaviour as a response to a change in social context much like bilingual speakers switch language in response to a change in linguistic context" (Morton, 2013). Frugal children could also learn some *contrepied* strategies (Van Parijs, 2003). *Contrepied* strategies consist in taking with assurance a stance opposite to what peers would expect them to take, being cool in being different.

Second, a reader concerned with justice could be worried with the "doom and gloom" tone of my proposal. An objector could point out that the proposal amounts to caution injustices. It might even evoke the disturbing phenomenon of adaptive preferences (Nussbaum, 2001; Sen, 1985). Adaptive preferences are unconsciously formed in response to deprivation and consist in dismissing options the agent would have preferred in more favourable circumstances (Elster, 1982). But the similarity should not be exaggerated. Learning to be frugal is not the same process as adapting one's preferences. The frugally educated person is not frugal because of some psychological process that occurred behind her back. She is aware of her reasons for preferring less, and she remains mentally capable of upgrading her expectations if she sees it fit.

Be that as it may, the objector might point out that a liberal egalitarian perspective cannot consider that lowering disadvantaged people's expectations is equivalent to deliver their fair share. Why? Because a society which teaches frugality to disadvantaged children *in place*

of (and not *in addition to*) giving them their fair share does not treat them as equals to other citizens (that is, the citizens who do not have to endure this situation).

I would agree with the objector that the two solutions are not equivalent. But this does not invalidate the case for teaching frugality in unjust circumstances. First, if educators do not expect the realisation of a just order in the near future, the only way to secure their disadvantaged pupils' long-term well-being is to teach them frugality. Secondly (except perhaps in appalling circumstances such as slavery), teaching frugality does not prevent educators from instilling in disadvantaged children a sense that they are being wronged. They would teach them the skills needed to be frugal, but they would not prepare them to enjoy the situation. Now, children might need more than frugality to live well while being aware that they are victims of injustices. Educators could help them by coupling the education to frugality with an education to fortitude¹⁰. Fortitude is the capacity to endure a painful situation without flinching (Scarre, 2010). Fortitude, writes Scarre, is valuable as a virtue because it is the "strength required for the preservation of the self" (Scarre, 2010: 86). Disadvantaged children for whom it is better to lower their expectations might need fortitude to be able to both recognize they are being wronged and still develop the motivation to struggle against these injustices.

Ceteris paribus, teaching frugality to children will make them better off in the long run in just and in unjust societies because frugality enables one to achieve a given level of satisfaction with fewer resource. In just societies, being frugal makes one better off because it renders compliance with distributive justice less demanding for the will. In unjust societies, being frugal makes one less vulnerable to exploitative practices and to mental distress. Coupling education to frugality with the cultivation of other dispositions, such as fortitude or of the ability to code-switch, reinforces the contribution of frugality to children's prospects for a good life in imperfectly just societies.

Teaching frugality in liberal institutions: neutrality, pluralism and autonomy

Teaching frugality in schools is a controversial proposal. So far many educational policies aiming to change consumption habits have triggered polemics. In Germany, the Green Party's proposal to offer vegetarian meals at schools was followed by a dramatic fall in the polls (Connolly, 2013). In the United States, the Montana School Board opposed the screening of Annie Leonard's documentary "The Story of Stuff" in classrooms (Kaufman, 2009). From a liberal perspective, these controversies raise an important issue. If the State actively promotes frugality, it acts in a non-neutral way. Is teaching frugality authorized by basic liberal principles?

Many contemporary philosophers argue that neutrality is a distinctive feature of liberalism (Dworkin, 1978: 127; Larmore, 1987: 42–43; Rawls, 1993). A plausible version of the neutrality doctrine affirms public institutions should avoid intentionally promoting one controversial conception of the good life over others. This should apply to publicly run schools

¹⁰ I owe this idea to an anonymous reviewer.

too. If frugality embodies a controversial conception of the good life, one might wonder whether value-neutral liberalism is compatible with teaching frugality at schools.

Now, does frugality really embody a controversial conception of the good life? A controversial conception of the good life involves a more or less structured comprehensive doctrine about what a good life is. Frugal habits have been and still are promoted by a plurality of otherwise divergent conceptions of the good life, such as Stoicism, Epicureanism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, voluntary simplicity, to name a few. But frugal *behaviours* do not presuppose by themselves one specific *doctrine* of the good life. Frugality may be valued independently of these doctrines. To highlight how it may be so, let us make an analogy between frugality and efficiency, that is, efficiency of means. Efficiency is the capacity to produce a given output with a limited amount of resources, time or energy. Efficient behaviours optimize the output/input ratio. Frugality is the capacity to achieve a given level of satisfaction with a low level of material consumption. Frugal behaviours optimize the satisfaction/consumption ratio. Both frugality and efficiency describe the ratio of an outcome to the resources involved to achieve this outcome. It seems thus possible to value them irrespective of the value of the outcome (a product or a level of satisfaction) they contribute to achieve. One could be tempted to infer from the analogy that, all things considered, frugality is actually a somehow neutral way of going about life.

Yet this tentative conclusion must be qualified. For there is an important respect in which frugality and efficiency are dissimilar. Even if frugal *behaviours* can be valued independently of the conceptions of the good that encourage them, frugality as a stable disposition, that is, as a *character trait*, involves certain evaluative dispositions. For frugality to be a character trait, the agent needs to take certain kinds of ethical considerations to have more motivational force than others¹¹. A frugal person cannot have materialistic value orientations. She cannot prioritize the ever-growing acquisition of material goods over other goals. Whereas efficient behaviours do not involve specific value orientations. Not only efficiency can be valued independently of the ethical value of ends, but even the efficient person herself can remain efficient while being indifferent to the ethical value of the ends she pursues¹².

Teaching frugality is not bringing about occasional frugal behaviours. As I have argued above, this would defeat the efficacy of this part of education. Teaching frugality is cultivating frugality as a stable disposition to behave frugally, that is, frugality as a character trait. But if frugality as a character trait affects the frugal agent's values, then frugality is not a neutral way of going about life. That being said, frugality allows for more than one conception of the good life. Even if it is not neutral, frugality is compatible with moral pluralism. Frugally educated children remain free to form many conceptions of the good life which might be incompatible with each other. The only kinds of conceptions of the good life they are not (or less) encouraged to pursue are conceptions of the good life which are incompatible with frugal dispositions.

Perhaps another strategy is needed to make the case for frugality within a value-neutral liberal framework. We might appeal to neutrality of justifications, perhaps the most plausible version of the neutrality doctrine, for this purpose. Neutrality of justification requires that public

¹¹ My account of character relies on Sandler's discussion of virtue (Sandler, 2007: 13).

¹² For this reason Setiya argues that general efficiency, the disposition to act to achieve efficiently ends, whatever these ends are, is a defect of character (Setiya, 2005).

policies should be justified independently of an appeal to the intrinsic superiority of a controversial conception of the good over others (Arneson, 2003; Larmore, 1987: 44; Rawls, 1993: 190–195). Teaching frugality is compatible with liberal neutrality if the reason for teaching frugality does not appeal to a controversial conception of the good and thus is acceptable for reasonable citizens who otherwise disagree about the good. Liberalism can endorse education to frugality on the instrumental ground that actual consumptions patterns threaten just institutions. This is precisely what I have argued for in the previous sections. However, neutrality of justification does not only require philosophers to provide arguments for teaching frugality. It also requires reasonable citizens to agree with the argumentation offered. But, at least on a not too demanding account of reasonableness, we cannot exclude that reasonable citizens deny climate change and/or embrace consumerist values. Therefore, neutrality of justification is not likely to suffice to legitimise the cultivation of frugal dispositions in publicly run schools¹³.

At this stage, it is important to emphasise that a liberal view on education does not have to be value-neutral. Major liberal thinkers have denied that liberalism is committed to the neutrality doctrine (Arneson, 2003; Galston, 1991; Raz, 1986: 107–162; Sher, 1997; Wall, 2012). Liberal neutrality is generally justified on the ground that, by being neutral, public institutions express respect for adult citizens' rational capacities. These rational capacities comprise the skills and abilities one needs to examine and revise one's own conception of the good life. They are constitutive of autonomy. But children do not possess fully developed rational capacities yet. Hence the conceptions of the good they affirm, when they affirm one, is not the product of the exercise of their autonomy. Therefore, the State does not express disrespect towards them when it seeks to promote a conception of the good. Furthermore, the norm of respect for adult citizens' rational capacities does not entail the State ought to be neutral. It rather requires the State to *justify* its support for controversial views such as frugality by presenting valid (not necessarily neutral) reasons to autonomous adult citizens for promoting these views (Wall, 2012).

Expressing respect for adult citizens' autonomy is thus the rationale underlying the neutrality principle. But this rationale has educational implications too. It requires teaching children autonomy-related skills and abilities. Because frugality is cultivated among children before they fully acquire these skills, their frugal value orientation is acquired in a non-autonomous way. But this is not a problem so long as they are enabled to critically scrutinize their frugal value orientations once they reach adulthood. Even if at a first stage (childhood) frugal value orientations are acquired non-autonomously, at a second stage (adulthood) they can become autonomous if the agent subjects them to rational criticism and chooses to endorse them (or not). Frugal education is authorized provided that, in due course, children will be enabled to criticize frugal value orientations and to reject them if they deem it appropriate. Educators thus have the duty to explain and justify the reasons for their teaching frugality. Hence they have the duty to teach children the skills needed to subject these reasons to rational criticism.

¹³Paying too much attention to neutrality in upbringing might also be problematic for children's long-term welfare. See (Fowler, 2010).

To conclude, if neutrality is not at issue there, children's prospective autonomy is. But there are ways to teach frugality that are perfectly compatible with the development of critical thinking and other autonomy-related skills. Hence teaching frugality is permissible from a liberal perspective.

Teaching frugality to increase and facilitate autonomy

The preceding section has shown that teaching frugality is compatible with autonomy. My aim in this section is to strengthen my case for frugality and to show that frugality increases and facilitates the exercise of autonomy. For this purpose let us recall that most versions of liberalism require education to cultivate autonomy-related skills and abilities.

Number of liberal political philosophers have argued that autonomy is necessary to ensure that citizens support just institutions (Callan, 1997; Gutmann, 1987). However, autonomy might exceed what the stability of just institutions requires (Brighouse, 1998: 729; Fowler, 2011). But there is another compelling reason for liberals to value autonomy: autonomy enhances our prospects to live well by our own judgment. Autonomy helps us to discern which way of life is good for us and to endorse the choice of pursuing this way of life rather than another. Autonomy is particularly suited to our modern societies, where we are supposed to choose many important aspects of our lives (our occupation, our relationships, our religious or ethical commitments...) and where moral pluralism and scientific change continuously challenge our previously held beliefs (Raz, 1986: 390–395). But being autonomous biases us towards certain choices rather than others (Callan, 2002). Is it a problem? Perhaps not, as the ways of life autonomy inclines us to choose might be better indeed (Callan, 2002). The ways of life autonomy inclines us to choose are, unsurprisingly, autonomous ways of lives. Autonomous ways of life are possibly better in the following sense: exercising autonomy, being self-governed makes us to relate to our life as our own and this is conducive to self-respect (Young, 1982).

In the following discussion, I take autonomy to be the capacity and the disposition to reflect on one's higher-order goals, to revise them if needed, and to act accordingly. Autonomy of course comes in degrees. But autonomy may also be conceived as a pure matter of rational capacities or also as a matter of character. I take autonomy to be a matter of capacity *and* character. If the capacity of autonomy is not supported by character, autonomy will not be effective in environments that are not by themselves conducive to its exercise (Callan, 2002). Autonomy as a capacity involves certain cognitive and reflective skills. Autonomy as a character also involves affective and emotional dispositions which enable the agent to exercise her autonomy in all sorts of circumstances (Callan, 2002). Could frugality be one of these dispositions?

In what follows, I shall argue that teaching frugality facilitates autonomy in three ways. First (1), teaching frugality in consumerist cultures facilitates the critical assessment of options by exposing children and adolescents to genuinely alternative ways of thinking and living. Second (2), frugality increases the variety of the set of options one can choose from by diminishing the costs of reorienting one's lifestyle. Third (3), frugality as a character trait

facilitates self-direction in consumer societies by helping agents to resist impulses and insistent solicitations to give way to immediate desires.

1. Education for autonomy requires that children should learn to reflect critically on the respective value of the various ways of living they can pursue. Their reflection will be deeper and more enlightened if they can compare genuinely different alternatives and appreciate the reasons one can have to pursue a way of living that is radically different from the one they are immersed in. Schools can contribute to this by exposing children to values and lifestyles that differ from mainstream culture. Hence schools should have a “discontinuous ethos” (Brighouse, 2005b). Teaching frugality is in line with the discontinuous ethos of schools. Frugally educated children are more likely to learn to think autonomously since they enjoy the real opportunity to reflect about ways of living that are alternative to the dominant consumerist ethos.

2. The argument above strengthens the case for frugality, but it is not an argument for teaching frugality *as such*. It is an argument for schools to use their influence to expose children to the most varied set of options possible. The underlying rationale is that children have a “right to an open future” (Feinberg, 1980; Raz, 1986: 204). Because it is impossible to prevent children from being exposed to influences that will shape their habits and their future choices, the best thing to do is to multiply the influences they are exposed to. This argument is attractive, but I doubt it is relevant for consumption-related choices. Shaping consumption habits is not only a matter of brief exposure. It is a lengthy process of habits formation and of adhesion to certain value orientations. Education is unlikely to secure stable frugal dispositions if children are asked to behave frugally every other day, and to give way to consumerism the rest of the time. This implies that, with respect to consumption habits, educators have to choose between enrolling children in frugality or in materialism, so to say (the latter option might not require much effort, since private companies and advertising campaigns already take care of it). But being frugal and being materialistic impact differently on the accessibility of varied options. Being frugal renders more options accessible because *being frugal increases one’s real opportunities to exit from a life plan to pursue another*. A frugal person is more able to undertake important lifestyle changes because she is able to save resources in prevision of the future. For example, a person who wants to quit her present employment to go back to university will be more able to achieve this revision of her conception of the good if she has savings.

Being non-frugal also increases the psychological costs of revising one’s conception of the good. Shifting from a frugal way of life to a more materialistic one involves less costs in terms of personal effort than the reverse shift. It is probably easier for children to revise their frugal habits once grown up and to increase their consumption level, than the reverse. It is more painful and frustrating to renounce to comfort than to get used with it. And the less costly (be it in terms of external resources or in terms of personal effort) a lifestyle change is, the more it enables one to exit and thus to secure an “open future” for her.

Educators cannot know in advance which conception of the good children will come to value the most. To secure children’s autonomy, they should thus take into account the material and psychological costs of revising one’s conception of the good life. *Ceteris paribus*, they should make sure that these costs will be as low as possible. If the costs of revising one’s conception of the good are higher for materialist persons, educators are better to enrol children

in frugality¹⁴. Therefore, educators concerned with children's access to an open future should seriously consider teaching children to be frugal.

3. Finally, there is an additional, perhaps more compelling autonomy-based case for teaching children to be frugal. Frugality facilitates the exercise of autonomy and thus may be a component of the character an autonomous agent should have.

To be able to direct her life and to effectively pursue the conception of the good she cherishes the most, an agent needs to relate to her future in a certain way. She must be fully aware that her life extends over time. She must be able to envisage to pursue her higher-order goals in the long-term and succeeds at it. This does not mean her preferences must be rigid. But this means changes in her preferences should be meaningfully related to the agent's higher-order goals, or that they should result from a thoughtful reorientation of her major commitments. Preference changes should not result from impulses or manipulation. Autonomous persons tend to have a coherent and fairly stable set of goals they achieve successfully, despite the external and internal obstacles they encounter.

Paradoxically, even if it is better to be autonomous in our societies (as people must take themselves most of their major life decisions), social structures do not facilitate the exercise of autonomy. Therefore, educators should cultivate autonomy as a character and not as a motivationally ineffective capacity. Autonomy as a character enables agents to behave autonomously in autonomy-threatening circumstances. Autonomy involves the possession of specific character traits: a strong desire to form and pursue a conception of the good one endorses, the willingness to investigate the truth of the claims one encounters, the habit to prioritise one's goals, a certain indifference to peer pressure or the ability to postpone short-term gratifications. Do these character traits suffice to secure the exercise of autonomy in our societies?

Engrained features of consumer societies threat autonomy (Schinkel et al., 2010). The media and advertising industry in consumer societies promote a consumerist ethos. The consumerist ethos consists in prioritizing the acquisition of material goods, regardless of the compatibility of an endless acquisition of material goods with the pursuit of the agent's higher-order goals. The consumerist ethos glorifies those who give way to impulses, instant gratifications and ephemeral euphoria rather than those who embrace self-control, long-term planning and the conscious prioritisation of their commitments (Schinkel et al., 2010: 281–282). Those who live in consumer societies are surrounded by a culture that discourages them to pursue the conception of the good they had reasons of their own to choose. Furthermore, the consumer culture discourages the inhabitants of consumer societies to seriously reflect on life choices and to robustly adhere to any kind of coherent value orientation (Callan, 2002). Hence consumer societies might well wreck our very capacity to, first, develop a conception of the good and, second, pursue it successfully.

There is another way in which consumer societies may affect autonomy. Consumer societies promote materialistic value orientations. Empirical evidence shows that materialistic value orientations are negatively correlated with intrinsically motivated experiences (Kasser,

¹⁴ Clayton (Clayton, 2006: 108) offers a general discussion of what taking into account the costs of revising one's conception of the good implies for child-rearing.

2003: 7). Intrinsically motivated experiences occur in activities the agent considers worthy, interesting, fulfilling or gratifying by themselves, and not because of the advantages it brings about (such as money or praise). Intrinsically motivated experiences are constitutive of autonomous lives. An agent who chooses and pursues a life plan she has reasons of her own to value will interpret her activities and her experiences as being part of this life plan. Even if some of the activities she pursues are only meant to secure resources, these resources are used to pursue projects the agent deems intrinsically valuable. But people who endorse materialistic values tend to choose activities focused on external rewards (money and praise) rather than intrinsically motivated activities (Kasser, 2003: 77–80). They are more concerned with how they appear to others (Kasser, 2003: 80–81) and thus more emotionally dependent. They themselves feel pressure and coercion. They more often report feelings of shame, guilt and anxiety (Kasser, 2003: 82–85). These data show that materialistic values erase intrinsic motivations. But it is very hard to be autonomous if you are incapable of being intrinsically motivated by at least your most important life goals, if you are incapable of doing things for their own sake.

Given these observations, I venture that autonomy can and should be facilitated by the cultivation of certain character traits that are not directly related to autonomy. Frugality is an autonomy-facilitating character trait, even though frugal persons can be non-autonomous. Relying on the observations Kasser and Schinkel make, we can anticipate the functional relationship between frugality and autonomy to work as follows. First, frugality increases the agent's capacity to resist the pressures consumer societies put on autonomy. A frugal person does not spend time in shopping malls and on commercial websites. She thus exposes less herself to solicitations to consume and to give way to short-term rewards. When she happens to be exposed to advertising and peer pressure, she is less likely to give way to consumption. She knows that she can be satisfied without commercial objects she did not want before. Frugal value orientations secure the psychological resources needed to resist the incessant stimulation of desires characteristic of consumerist societies. Second, a frugal person positively values frugal ideals. She genuinely believes material consumption does not bring about flourishing. She values non-materialistic goods, such as friendship, family life, education and learning, art, sport, politics or religion. Many of the activities these goods involve are considered intrinsically rewarding. A frugal person is more likely to choose her occupation in reason of its intrinsic worth than in reason of monetary rewards. She attaches value to doing things for their own sake. In that sense, frugality facilitates autonomous ways of living.

Conclusion: how to teach frugality

This article has defended the hypothesis that, in our societies, frugality is one of the virtues prospective citizens need to live well and autonomously in compliance with justice. Other things being equal, frugal citizens are more willing to leave their fair share to the world poor and to future generations. They are happy with their own limited fair share. Financial problems, psychological obstacles to preference change and the consumerist ethos do not hamper their capacity to form, revise and successfully pursue a conception of the good.

Throughout the article I have made various remarks on how frugality should be taught to fulfil these purposes without violating basic liberal requirements for education. The way educators teach frugality should take social, political, economic and psychological factors into account so as to enable agents to behave frugally whenever they see it fit. In some contexts, educators should consider coupling teaching frugality with the cultivation of fortitude and code-switching abilities. Perhaps more importantly, teaching frugality should be coupled with the inculcation of autonomy-related skills and the cultivation of an autonomous character.

To conclude, I shall translate these recommendations into a few concrete educational proposals.

First of all, including frugality in the curriculum will not be effective if commercial advertising and commercial objects are not banned from schools. A striking example is the case of Channel One Brighthouse discusses (Brighthouse, 2005b). Channel One gives pupils free access to television equipment under the condition that they watch 12 to 13 minutes of their programmes every day. But more subtle marketing practices occur in French schools and elsewhere (Rodhain, 2008). In general, advertising campaigns aimed at a young audience should be banned¹⁵(Curren, 2009: 50–51). Schools should consider banning commercial objects such as toys or cell phones children bring in schools. They might also impose school uniforms, if uniforms are successful in preventing children to develop too much interest for brand clothing and to feel pressure if their outfit is not fashionable.

By the same token, schools should avoid habituating children to luxuries. I have mentioned the German Greens' proposal to introduce vegetarian meals in schools. Schools may also limit school supplies and school trips. Instead, they could develop frugal tastes, like tastes for reading library books, DIY, gardening, hiking or contemplating sunsets. Sharing books, school supplies and other things should be strongly encouraged. Schools should also offer a basic course in money, spending and saving to teach children how to budget, how to save and how to plan their finances in the long term, as Dutch schools already do (Schor, 1999: 157).

Children and adolescents should be taught the body of knowledge we have on the effects of consumption. History and geography courses might pay specific attention to past and present conflicts due to competition for scarce resources such as water or oil (Curren, 2009). The curriculum should also include an introduction to economics and to environmental studies. Ethical reflection on global injustices and sustainability should be encouraged.

Kasser suggests parents should talk with their children about materialism (Kasser, 2003: 106). His proposals may be adapted to civics classes. Pupils and students could have an interactive course on consumerism, peer pressure and the social and economic consequences of excessive indebtedness. Critical thinking courses could teach children and adolescents to watch advertisings with a critical eye, to identify the hidden messages they convey and the tricks they use to create wants. Children should learn how to spot and reconstruct the fallacies underlying commercial headlines.

A pedagogical experiment is worth mentioning as a possible exercise of frugality. This is the “Not Buying It” educational project proposed by sociologists Liz Grauerholz and Anne Bubriski-McKenzie (Grauerholz and Bubriski-McKenzie, 2012). Note that the primary purpose

¹⁵ Children's influence on family spending decisions has increased since the last thirty years. In 2002, American four to twelve years old children spent 30 billion dollars a year, and, in 2003, American twelve to nineteen spent no less than 112.5 billion dollars a year (Schor, 2005).

of this project was not to be a component of a whole programme designed to create frugal citizens. This project was part of an introductory course in sociology and was initially designed to raise students' awareness about the connections between their personal consumption and larger social forces. But even if the primary purpose of the project was to enhance students' sociological imagination, Grauerholz and Bubriski-McKenzie report some students undertook lifestyle changes afterwards (Grauerholz and Bubriski-McKenzie, 2012: 344). The project went as follows. Students read excerpts from Judith Levine's book *Not Buying It* (Levine, 2007). Then they were proposed to refrain from buying things, except the "essentials", for a given period (three to seven days). Students were asked to determine themselves what they deemed as "essential" and to justify it ("Indeed, this [was] one of the most illuminating parts of the assignment", according to Grauerholz and Bubriski-McKenzie). Students were not graded on how successful they were in avoiding buying things, but on how seriously and thoughtfully they took the project and on the quality of the final paper. I venture that this project has features that would fit quite well with a frugal education programme. It involves practicing frugality, but also personal reflection on what is essential and what is not, and raises awareness of the social and institutional factors that drive overconsumption.

References

- Alcott B (2008) The sufficiency strategy: Would rich-world frugality lower environmental impact? *Ecological Economics* 64(4): 770–786.
- Arneson R (2003) Liberal Neutrality on the Good: An Autopsy. In: Klosko G and Wall S (eds), *Perfectionism and Neutrality*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Arrow K, Dasgupta P, Goulder L, et al. (2004) Are We Consuming Too Much? *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18(3): 147–172.
- Barry B (1983) Intergenerational justice in energy policy. In: MacLean & Brown (ed.), *Energy and the Future*, Totowa: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Barry B (1989) *Theories of justice*. Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Barry B (1997) Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice. *Theoria* 44(89): 43–64.
- Batabyal AA (1995) Leading issues in domestic environmental regulation: A review essay. *Ecological Economics* 12(1): 23–39.
- Beitz CR (1979) *Political Theory and International Relations*. Princeton University Press.
- Bell DR (2004) Creating Green Citizens? Political Liberalism and Environmental Education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 38(1): 37–8211.
- Brighouse H (1998) Civic Education and Liberal Legitimacy. *Ethics* 108(4): 719–745.
- Brighouse H (2005a) Channel One, the Anti-Commercial Principle, and the Discontinuous Ethos. *Educational Policy* 19(3): 528–549.

- Brighouse H (2005b) *On Education*. Routledge.
- Callan E (1997) *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy*. OUP Oxford.
- Callan E (2002) Autonomy, Child-Rearing, and Good Lives. In: Archard D and Macleod CM (eds), *The Moral and Political Status of Children*, Oup Oxford, pp. 118–141.
- Clayton M (2006) *Justice and legitimacy in upbringing*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen GA (2004) Expensive Taste Rides Again. In: *Dworkin and His Critics: With Replies by Dworkin*, Blackwell Pub.
- Cohen P and Cohen J (1996) *Life Values and Adolescent Mental Health*. Psychology Press.
- Connolly K (2013) Worst policy ever? German ‘Veggie Day’ plan leaves Greens trailing. *The Guardian*, 13th September. Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/german-elections-blog-2013/2013/sep/13/german-election-worst-policy-veggie-day-greens> (accessed 24 January 2014).
- Curren R (2009) Education for sustainable development: A philosophical assessment. *Impact* 2009(18): 1–68.
- Dobson A (2007) Environmental citizenship: towards sustainable development. *Sustainable Development* 15(5): 276–285.
- Dworkin R (1978) Liberalism. In: Hampshire S (ed.), *Public and Private Morality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dworkin R (2000) *Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality*. Harvard University Press.
- Easterlin RA, McVey LA, Switek M, et al. (2010) The happiness–income paradox revisited. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 107(52): 22463–22468.
- Elster J (1982) Sour grapes. Cambridge University Press. In: *Utilitarianism and Beyond*, Sen, Amartya and Williams, Bernard.
- Emanuel EJ and Fuchs VR (2008) The perfect storm of overutilization. *JAMA* 299(23): 2789–2791.
- FAO (2012) *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture*. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- Feinberg J (1980) The child’s right to an open future. In: *Whose child*, pp. 124–153.
- Ferkany M and Whyte KP (2013) The compatibility of liberalism and mandatory environmental education. *Theory and Research in Education* 11(1): 5–21.
- Figge F, Young W and Barkemeyer R (2014) Sufficiency or efficiency to achieve lower resource consumption and emissions? The role of the rebound effect. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 69: 216–224.
- Fowler T (2010) The Problems of Liberal Neutrality in Upbringing. *Res Publica* 16(4): 367–381.

- Fowler T (2011) The Limits of Civic Education: The Divergent Implications of Political and Comprehensive Liberalism. *Theory and Research in Education* 9(1): 87–100.
- Galston WA (1991) *Liberal Purposes: Goods, Virtues, and Diversity in the Liberal State*. First Edition edition. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gaspart F and Gosseries A (2007) Are generational savings unjust? *Politics, Philosophy & Economics* 6(2): 193–217.
- Gilbert P (2010) Global Justice. In: *Encyclopedia of Political Theory*, Sage.
- Gosseries A (2014) Nations, Generations and Climate Justice. *Global Policy* 5(1).
- Grauerholz L and Bubrski-McKenzie A (2012) Teaching about Consumption The ‘Not Buying It’ Project. *Teaching Sociology* 40(4): 332–348.
- Gutmann A (1987) *Democratic education*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Hartston H (2012) The Case for Compulsive Shopping as an Addiction. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 44(1): 64–67.
- Heberlein TA (2012) *Navigating Environmental Attitudes*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hurst M, Dittmar H, Bond R, et al. (2013) The relationship between materialistic values and environmental attitudes and behaviors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 36: 257–269.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2007) *Climate change 2007: Synthesis report*.
- Kasser T (2003) *The High Price of Materialism*. MIT Press.
- Kaufman L (2009) Video Warning of Pitfalls of Consumption Is a Hit in Schools. *The New York Times*, 10th May. Available from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/11/education/11stuff.html> (accessed 24 February 2014).
- Kollmuss A and Agyeman J (2002) Mind the Gap: Why do people act environmentally and what are the barriers to pro-environmental behavior? *Environmental Education Research* 8(3): 239–260.
- Larmore CE (1987) *Patterns of moral complexity*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Levine J (2007) *Not Buying It: My Year Without Shopping*. Reprint edition. New York: Atria Books.
- Maniates MF (2001) Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World? *Global Environmental Politics* 1(3): 31–52.
- McTernan E (2014) How to Make Citizens Behave: Social Psychology, Liberal Virtues, and Social Norms. *Journal of Political Philosophy* 22(1): 84–104.
- Moellendorf D (2002) *Cosmopolitan Justice*. Westview Press.

- Morton JM (2013) Cultural Code-Switching: Straddling the Achievement Gap. *Journal of Political Philosophy*: n/a–n/a.
- Nagel T (1975) Libertarianism without Foundations. *The Yale Law Journal* 85(1): 136–149.
- Nordås R and Gleditsch NP (2007) Climate change and conflict. *Political Geography, Climate Change and Conflict* 26(6): 627–638.
- Nussbaum M (2001) Adaptive preferences and women's options. *Economics and Philosophy* 17(01): 67–88.
- Pauly D, Christensen V, Guénette S, et al. (2002) Towards sustainability in world fisheries. *Nature* 418(6898): 689–695.
- Rawls J (1993) *Political Liberalism*. Columbia University Press.
- Rawls J (1999) *A theory of justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rawls J (2001) *Justice as fairness : a restatement*. Kelly E (ed.), Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Raz J (1986) *The Morality of Freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Rodhain A (2008) En France, la publicité est interdite à l'école. In: Pezet A and Sponem S (eds), *Petit brévière des idées reçues en management*, Paris: La Découverte, pp. 268–276.
- Sagoff M (1997) Do we consume too much? *The Atlantic Monthly* 279(6): 80.
- Sandler RL (2007) *Character and Environment: A Virtue-Oriented Approach to Environmental Ethics*. Columbia University Press.
- Scarre G (2010) *On Courage*. London ; New York: Routledge.
- Schinkel A (2009) Justifying Compulsory Environmental Education in Liberal Democracies¹. *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 43(4): 507 – 526.
- Schinkel A, Ruyter D de and Steutel J (2010) Threats to autonomy in consumer societies and their implications for education. *Theory and Research in Education* 8(3): 269–287.
- Schor JB (1999) *The Overspent American: Why We Want What We Don't Need*. Édition : 1st HarperPerennial Ed. New York: William Morrow Paperbacks.
- Schor JB (2005) *Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture*. Reprint edition. New York: Scribner.
- Sen A (1985) *Commodities and capabilities*. Amsterdam; New York; New York, N.Y., U.S.A.: North-Holland ; Sole distributors for the U.S.A. and Canada, Elsevier Science Pub. Co.
- Setiya K (2005) Is Efficiency a Vice? *American Philosophical Quarterly* 42(4): 333–339.
- Sher G (1997) *Beyond Neutrality: Perfectionism and Politics*. Cambridge University Press.

- Solow, R.M. (1991) Sustainability: An economist's perspective. In: *The Eighteen J. Seward Johnson Lecture.*, Woods Hole, M A: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.
- Sorrell S, Miller R, Bentley R, et al. (2010) Oil futures: A comparison of global supply forecasts. *Energy Policy*, Special Section on Carbon Emissions and Carbon Management in Cities with Regular Papers 38(9): 4990–5003.
- Stevens D (2014) Creating Greener Citizens: Political Liberalism and a Robust Environmental Education. *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 33(5): 545–562.
- Sullivan TA, Westbrook JL, Warren E, et al. (1999) *As We Forgive Our Debtors: Bankruptcy and Consumer Credit in America*. Washington, D.C: Beard Books.
- UN Foundation (2005) *The Millenium Ecosystem Assessment*.
- United Nations Environment Programme (1992) *Agenda 21*. United Nations.
- Van Parijs P (2003a) Frugal Tastes and Frugal Conduct. *Ethical Perspectives* 10(2): 151–155.
- Van Parijs P (2003b) The Difference Principle. In: Freeman S (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Rawls*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 200–240.
- Veblen T (1899) *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Oxford University Press, UK.
- Wall S (2012) Perfectionism in Moral and Political Philosophy. Winter 2012. In: Zalta EN (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Available from: <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/perfectionism-moral/> (accessed 28 December 2014).
- Wissenburg M (2013) *Green Liberalism: The Free And The Green Society*. Routledge.
- Young R (1982) The Value of Autonomy. *Philosophical Quarterly* 32(126): 35–44.