

## To Be a Parent...or Not with Samantha Brennan and Sarah Hannan

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**Christiane Wisehart (producer):** Examining Ethics with Andy Cullison is hosted by the Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics

**Sandra Bertin (producer):** This episode of Examining Ethics is sponsored by Oxford University Press.

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**Andy Cullison (host):** There are questions about parenting that we don't usually ask ourselves. I find myself squarely in this camp. I have two children myself, and I don't feel the slightest bit of guilt about my decision to have kids. I suspect almost all of you listening at home with children think the same way, but philosophers are asking super important questions about the permissibility of procreation, that is, the permissibility of having kids. Our decision to have a child has implications for the environment, the world, all existing people, and even the child we'd be bringing into existence. It does seem worth think about the question "Should I have a kid?" Philosophers are also thinking about interesting questions about who should have the right to parent at all and what role the government should play in all of this. It's time I forced myself to think about these things, and I hope you'll join us.

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**Sandra:** So with this episode we want to ask questions about becoming a parent that we don't generally ask ourselves. Andy, what types of things did you consider before having kids?

**Andy:** Not much at all. So, I always liked the idea of eventually having kids. A lot of my thought about having kids was just about how much fun I thought it'd be. I was looking forward to having the kind of relationship that I'd had with my parents. There were people who would say things like "I just don't see how I could bring a kid into this world because it's just... you know, there's so many bad things that happen." But, I was never terribly moved by those kinds of considerations. I knew the world could sometimes be a really bad place, a harsh place, but I thought on balance, it was still worth the risk. Life's still worth living. And so, I was never moved by that. So really, I didn't give it much more thought than that. What about you, Christiane?

**Christiane:** Well, when I found out that I was pregnant with my first son, it was a total surprise to me. So, clearly I had put very little thought to it before I got pregnant. But before that, I had sort of generally talked about with my husband and we had kind of generally agreed that we wanted to have kids. I have to admit after reading the book we're discussing today, *Permissible Progeny*, I came away a little bit ashamed at about how little thought I had put into having kids, which is a really important life decision. Sandra, you don't have children yet. Have you ever thought about it at all?

**Sandra:** Yeah, I've definitely thought about it. Mostly I think about whether I am good parent material. Like what would it be like for a young kid to grow up with all of my flaws surrounding them at all times- it's definitely a scary feeling, and I do worry about negatively influencing my future child.

**Andy:** There are philosophers who are suggesting that this may not be the only important question to ask. There are more questions and more considerations to take into account. Maybe we should be asking questions about being a parent that we don't generally ask.

I interviewed two philosophers about their work on procreation. I was joined by Samantha Brennan, a professor in the department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research at Western University Canada. Sarah Hannan, professor of Political Studies at University of Manitoba spoke with us as well. Together with Richard Vernon, they edited of a new collection of essays called *Permissible Progeny, the Morality of Procreation and Parenting* just out from Oxford University Press.

I should note that they're from Canada, so when they're talking about government policies, they're talking about policies specific to Canada. But the way Canada and the United States treats parenting kinds of laws, I don't think that's going to matter too much for our discussion. The issues are going to generalize if you're listening in the United States.

First, I asked Sarah Hannan what things individuals like you or I should be thinking about before having kids

**Sarah Hannan (guest):** There's questions that we could ask ourselves as individuals, but many of us fail to. The questions that we can ask ourselves as individuals include the basic one is, "Should I become a parent at all?" A lot of times it's just assumed in the natural progression of life that you'll grow up and get married and have a child. Then of course, following from that, how you should have a child. Should you procreate or should you adopt? When to have a child, so at what point in your life, with whom? Then of course, once you have a child, how to parent. There's almost an endless series of questions about how to do that that one could, and perhaps ought to, reflect on.

**Andy:** After discussing what individuals should take into consideration, Sarah brought up questions about having children that we as a society should consider.

**Sarah:** I think some of those questions include; how many new people can we support, perhaps as an individual community, global ly and so forth. On the other hand, you might want to ask how many do we need? People are concerned about both over and under population simultaneity, which is quite interesting. We should ask ourselves how many people we can have on the planet and how many people we should have.

What constitutes good and bad parenting is something we can discuss on a societal level. How can we encourage or support good parenting is things we can ask on a societal level. Should we treat procreative or adoptive parents differently is something that we should ask on a broader scale. Including should we subsidize these practices, so should we make adoption

cheaper for families? Similar questions can be asked about assisted reproduction procedures like IVF. Who should pay for children? These are the kind of questions that seem really relevant for us on a societal and an individual level, and yet we don't have very much public discourse about them.

**Christiane:** Wow, these are all such fascinating questions to think about.

**Andy:** Yeah, and to me, one of the most interesting issues this volume raises is the sort of asymmetry of standards we have in our society between natural birth parents on the one hand and adoptive parents on the other. Samantha Brennan experienced this imbalance herself.

**Samantha Brennan (guest):** My partner and I became foster parents and we had to undergo screening to become foster parents. It was incredibly rigorous, so we had to have counseling, physiological screening, we had to have our home inspected. We had to sign an agreement that nobody would ever smoke in our house. We had to have certain kind of rules about the way we would treat the children in our care. We don't have anything like that for if you just want to procreate the usual way. There's no standards. I think we do have a bit a double standard, a very high bar for who gets to foster and adopt children. All I needed to have my biological children was to show up with a car seat at the hospital. That was it for leaving the hospital.

I suppose if they had reason to suspect drug or alcohol abuse or I failed some blood tests, that might have been the other thing that might have got some attention. Other than that, no parenting classes. No basic screening, nothing. In the case of adoption and fostering, pretty significant screening and pretty significant standards. We had to have a rail on our stairs of a certain sort. We had to have our house fixed up in order to bring children into it, but we would never do that if you're having biological children.

**Sandra:** That's strange to me because so many children in the foster care system are in dire need of being adopted but the strictest standards are placed on parents who want to adopt them.

**Andy:** Yeah, it's so odd to me, that there are such stringent standards for adoption but not for having your own biological children. On the face of it, it's what's the difference? It's a child in either case. So I asked Samantha what her thoughts were to having such a massive asymmetry in that regard?

**Samantha:** Part of it, I think, is the model when we imagine foster parents or adoptive ... Well, foster parents. We're imagining the parental rights are kind of split between the foster parents and the state. The state holds a bunch of the rights still, so you don't get the full set of parental rights. It makes sense that there's only certain things that you can do. What I don't think makes sense is the initial standards for who gets to have a child. We might want to up the standards for who gets to procreate the usual way and maybe lower the standards for fostering and adoption. I'm not sure, but that's certainly a good argument for making those things more even.

**Andy:** And an important oddity that Sarah bring up is that even if we as a society generally agree about what standards should exist with respect to having children, something as arbitrary as luck can get in the way of that.

**Christiane:** Yeah, I can say that I “chose” to have kids, but it was only a choice for me because my body is *able* to have kids in the first place.

**Sandra:** Also, adoption is technically an option to have kids but that doesn’t mean I’ll pass the standards or that I’ll even be able to pay the fees.

**Andy:** When it comes to having children, not everyone has equal access to the same kinds of choices. Our society is certainly not set up that way. Nature isn’t either. Sarah explains.

**Sarah:** You might choose to adopt anyway, which is what I was looking at pursuing but many people don’t have the choice. If you have fertility issues, it looks to me like that’s not a very good measure or a measure at all of whether or not you’ll be a good parent. However, it plays a huge role in the actual world in terms of how easy it is for you to become a parent. That sort of looks like a morally arbitrary factor from a philosophical standpoint, but in the real world it’s a very important determinant of who can parent and how easy it is to become a parent and so forth.

**Sandra:** I think my favorite thing that I’m gleaning from all of this is that the standards we set for foster parents and adoptive parents make it clear that we *do have* clear ideas about how children should be raised and in what conditions... it comes off as very imbalanced because the government is really only able to apply this standards under certain conditions.

**Christiane:** So yeah, it’s odd that via our governments we’ve created all these rules and regulations about who gets to be a parent. But when it comes to having biological children, like Samantha said, all we need is a carseat!

**Andy:** And even if you don’t think that we as a society have a really clear set of standards, we’re certainly presupposing some kind of loose set of criterion about what makes someone fit to have a child. But then, the next tricky issue is if we’ve got this loose set of guidelines, actually legislating those standards and regulating those standards can get us into some rough territory. Sarah told me that people who set standards for who can have kids historically, haven’t exactly been our most celebrated leaders...

**Sarah:** It think though, there’s also been a bad history in this domain with things like eugenics and forced sterilization and the mass removal of children. I think these kind of things, people don’t want to be seen as being on side with some of these practices, understandably. I think there’s concern that talking about the appropriate number of children there should be and who should have them, could make you in bad company with people who have advocated policies like that. I think there’s a concern to avoid that.

**Christiane:** I’m not about to pretend I know who should or shouldn’t have kids!

**Sandra:** It is a very icky topic. I feel like our society is already discussing questions like this albeit in a way that a lot of people find distasteful. Think of memes or stuff online where people bash on welfare moms. It's crude and belittling but the underlying argument is that maybe there should be a minimum income for families to have kids. That's the same question we are discussing today, regardless of whether that is also our conclusion or not.

**Andy:** It doesn't necessarily make the question evil in itself just because some evil people have answered that question and done horrible things. So it might be easier to think about these kinds of questions if we separate the question "Who ought to have children?" and "To what extent should a government enforce our collective views about who ought to have children?" Compare this to freedom of speech. We have all sorts of views about what is or is not appropriate to say, but we're fairly conservative about what kind of speech government can limit.

After the break, we will discuss the work of philosophers who think we shouldn't have kids, or should have less of them. Stay with us after a short word about our sponsor.

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**Sandra:** Oxford University Press has generously provided us the book that we are discussing on the show today. To find out more about Oxford University Press, visit them on the web at [global.oup.com](http://global.oup.com). Oxford University Press has kindly offered to provide you, the listener, with a 30% discount on *Permissible Progeny: The Morality of Procreation and Parenting*. So to get a link for a 30% discount on this book, edited by our guests Sarah Hannan, Samantha Brennan and also Richard Vernon, visit our show notes page at [examiningethics.org](http://examiningethics.org). And thanks again to Oxford University Press for sponsoring today's show.

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**Andy:** Welcome back, so far we have heard from Sarah Hannan and Samantha Brennan about questions we don't ask ourselves about becoming a parent, (but maybe we should). We also talked about the differences in standards of who can become a biological and adoptive parent.

Next, I asked Samantha Brennan what philosophers consider when they make arguments against procreation or for limiting procreation.

**Samantha:** One of the obvious ones is an environmental consideration. What kind of world are you bringing children into and are they going to help or hurt, what's the environmental cost, what's the environmental benefit, what's the world like? When you're trying to decide whether to have children, what the world is like matters. Then what your children can contribute and cost other people. Both sides of that matter, I think.

**Christiane:** When Samantha said “Then what your children can contribute and cost other people,” I found that really thought-provoking. Because at least for me, I never thought, “Oh man, what are my children going to cost the world?” But that’s definitely something to consider, right?

**Sandra:** So are there people out there that think that is wrong to have kids? Like not just for themselves but for everybody?

**Andy:** YUP. There is one philosopher in particular who’s probably most known for defending a view like this. His name is David Benatar, and he was featured in this collection. He genuinely thinks it’s immoral to have a baby.

**Samantha:** He thinks it's morally wrong to reproduce for all of us, anytime. That it's always wrong to bring another person into existence. Before the question was, "Is it permissible, who's forbidden," but his view is the strong view we're all forbidden. It's always wrong. If he's right, than the rest of the papers in the volume don't make any sense. We don't even get to those questions if he's right.

**Christiane:** So what are his arguments? I can’t be the only one who thinks his views are pretty extreme, right?

**Andy:** No, I think a lot of people who think that, but I think it’s worth walking through his arguments to see how he arrived at that conclusion. His earlier work is based on what he calls a philanthropic argument. Philanthropic just means something like love of humanity, and the idea behind these arguments is that they’re all out of concern for the child you might bring into existence. So, people suffer a lot of harms. He cites things like the chances of getting cancer, being sexual assaulted. Even daily hunger, thirst and feeling tired all count as harms that a parent causes their child by bringing them into the world, and he thinks that’s a reason to not consider bringing a child into the world

**Sandra:** That seems really intense to me. As a person who has experienced some bad things including hunger and thirst, I would still say life is worth living even though there are these harms.

**Andy:** I would agree, but what Benatar is going to say is that we are actually blinded by life and we cannot see the true horror that it is. There is a bias towards wanting to be alive once a person is alive, according to Benatar, that clouds our judgement. So since a child cannot give consent to be born in this world before it’s born, and consent after birth doesn’t count for anything because they are blinded by life, he thinks that it still stands that it’s wrong to have kids.

**Christiane:** Wow, wow.

**Sandra:** So, it’s sort of an amped up version of people saying “how could I bring a child into this world, it’s so messed up”

**Andy:** Yeah, it's basically an amped up version of that kind of argument. But Benatar has a new and some would argue stronger reason for why procreation is wrong, which Sarah and Samantha think is even more compelling. It's called the misanthropic argument, and you'll see it's quite a bit different from the philanthropic argument. Sarah elaborates on the details of the argument, which Benatar lays out in the collection they edited...

**Sarah:** The views stressed here is that the misanthropic reason not to procreate is not the harm that that child will experience, but the harms that they'll inflict on others. The three categories he focuses on are the harms that humans inflict on other humans, the harms that humans inflict on non human animals and the harms humans inflict on the environment. The prior work was about reasons not to procreate because it will be bad for the potential child, and these are reasons not to procreate because it will be bad for everyone else. I think that, strangely, those are in some ways harder to defend against because, again, you see the evidence that as a species we're not as nice as we'd like to think. Whereas, in the other case, you could say, "No, we have good lives. My child is happy," and so forth. This one's like, "Okay, you're child's happy, but what are they doing to everyone else?"

**Christiane:** So instead of saying, don't have a child because chances are high that something bad will happen to that child, like they will die in war, the misanthropic argument is saying that it's actually far more likely that they will cause pain to lots of other people.

**Andy:** Yeah and I think that can take form a lot of ways. Like maybe your child becomes the playground bully, or maybe they just don't really care about the environment and they contribute to environmental disaster, or maybe they become Kylo Ren and become the next star killer base.

**Sandra:** Yeah it seems right that even as a person who tries to do moral things, obviously I still hurt people in my life unintentionally and I don't have a zero carbon footprint or anything. Essentially, if you are a person born in this world you definitely cause harm to other people, animals, and the Earth... so the question is not will my child cause harm its more.. how much?

**Andy:** I think what's interesting about the misanthropic argument as compared to the philanthropic argument is with the philanthropic argument, you're just talking about the risk you might pose to one individual, and it's an individual that you've basically committed your life to making sure their life goes well. But the misanthropic argument, it's not that you've just decided to risk harm to a single individual. By having a child, you've decided to risk harm to the rest of the world. Samantha also thinks that this focus on harm makes the misanthropic argument particularly compelling.

**Samantha:** We disagree with him about whether or not we all have lives worth living. Most of us think we're going to disagree with him about the amount of self-deception we have involved. He thinks that we're wrong in our judgement to think our lives are good lives and worth living. If we only paid enough attention to all the ways we're suffering and miserable, we would actually realize that our lives aren't worth living. I think that's easier to disagree with than the arguments about what we do to other people and what we do to the environment.

**Sarah:** A lot of people want to resist his conclusion, but the piece, I think, why it's so powerful is that you can't just sort of cover your ears and say, "On no. Of course we're all good," because he lays out empirical facts, which you have to contend with. You have to say, "We do do all these terrible things and how could procreation ever be permissible in light of this?"

**Andy:** People don't say, "Oh, I'm not going to have a child because I don't want to raise a monster," or something like that.

**Samantha:** If he's right, we're all monsters. The human race are monsters and we shouldn't have more monsters. We should just stop this now. That's a horrifying world view.

**Andy:** Yes.

**Andy:** We're all monsters.

**Samantha:** We're all monsters.

[music]

**Sandra:** Okay. So we've talked a little bit about how children can't consent to being born. And in Benetar's view, being glad you are alive doesn't count as retroactive consent, or consent after the fact.

**Christiane:** Yeah and I've been wondering, can you consent to being a parent? Because in order to give consent, you kind of need to be fully informed. And in my case, before I became a parent, I knew it would be hard. I knew there would be certain things involved, but when I actually became a parent, I had no idea what I was in for. I was definitely not fully informed. But the problem with parenthood is you can't be fully informed until you actually experience being a parent.

**Andy:** We were talking about this and Sarah brought up Meena Krishnamurthy, a philosopher featured in their book who speaks about having children as a transformative experience

**Sarah:** I think this relates in one way to one of the papers as well, where Meena Krishnamurthy speaks about having children as a transformative experience. That can be looked at as a reason to have or a reason not to have children. She says the fact that it's a transformative experience and you don't know certain respects what it's going to be like, that might be a reason, a rational reason to have children. To undergo this transformation, to see what it will be like. Everyone tells you, "It's going to be a transformation," and some people have argued that because it's such a transformation, you can't really know what it's like to have children. You can't make rational decisions about it. Meena argues that, "No, you can, because you can be seeking that transformative experience itself." You won't know what it's going to be like on the other side, but you think, "Hey, I'm going to give this a go." That's an interesting reason that could speak for or against having children, this fear of not knowing what it's going to be like on the other side.



**Samantha:** I think Meena's right to point out that in a way we do, we can get glimpses of what it's like. We watch other people around us change when they have children. Read fiction, we watch movies. It's not completely like becoming some sort of animal species or meeting aliens. It's not totally out of our ken. It's something we can have some idea of what it's like. Though it's transformative, it's not a complete change that we can't evaluate, I think.

**Sandra:** That's really interesting. So essentially because it is such a transformative experience, you could argue it's not possible for people to consent to it.

**Christiane:** Yeah, so say a scientist figures out how to travel to another dimension, but she needs some test subjects to try it out. Her test subjects could give their written consent but many in the scientific world would argue they weren't able to give true consent because it's not possible to know what you were consenting to--we don't know what this other dimension will do to humans.

**Andy:** I think that is a possible argument but it's also important to consider Samantha's last point because she points out it's not really like travelling to a new dimension because as a society we have knowledge of what parenting is like. Though it may be a surprise for an individual, we have enough movies, and personal experiences, and interaction with other people to get a good idea about what it might be like.

**Sandra:** I'm not sure where I fall in this argument, because I was listening to a Dear Sugar podcast where two Mom's talk about how they hate motherhood... they love their children but they hate being a Mom. And before they had kids motherhood was all they wanted. They spent years trying to get pregnant. I wonder if they would say that they weren't able to consent to being a mother.

[music]

**Andy:** Throughout my conversation with Sarah and Samantha, we kept coming back to one very sensitive topic. I asked Sarah, Can we restrict people from having kids? Is it morally acceptable to ever restrict people from having children?

**Sarah:** This links to the question of what it is to be a good enough parent. When we're talking about the permissibility of procreation or parenting, we're not looking to see who's the optimal or the best parent, it's just who's going to do a good enough job? Then of course, you need certain skills or resources to do a sufficiently good job and some people don't necessarily possess those. Just speaking generally, you might think about resources in terms of financial resources or space or time is another big thing. You have to have the time to devote to children. Then there's certain practical skills that you have to possess.

Age, some people think is a factor, so perhaps you shouldn't have children when you're too young or perhaps beyond a certain age, which now science is allowing some people to, in particular, women to have children much later in life. Is that the way to go? Those are some of the questions you might ask yourself. There's difficulties associated with them as well, and so you are asking us to look at both sides. I think some of the very understandable concerns

people have about specifying who can have children in terms of resources or time, is that many people lack resources for reasons of injustice.

So, if we say, "If you don't have X amount," it wouldn't be this crude but, "If you don't have X amount of dollars," or "You don't have a living space of this size," then we're going to be excluding people from parenting on the basis of things that aren't their fault. Especially when it might be societies fault. If there's a past of historical injustice and then we say, "These people ought not to have children," that looks very concerning from a moral perspective. On the other hand, the question still remains, "What about the children that would be born into that situation?"

And so, it's a very tricky question because we want to think about how children are affected in the relationship, but we also want to think about how the adults or would be parents are affected. Of course, there's lots of things we can do to support people with insufficient resources that we ought to do for reasons of justice anyways. If we're not doing that, is it really okay to say, "Some people should or shouldn't procreate?" I think those are just a few of the things that I think are tricky about it.

**Sandra:** This is tricky, because throughout the interview I've been leaning towards OK maybe limiting procreation in some ways might be beneficial. But, the line is here for me. I have a hard time believing that poverty means that your parents were bad and you could never have experienced anything beautiful, or learned something unique from your parents your life wasn't worth it.

**Christiane:** I completely agree with what you are saying, but the fact remains that if you are born into poverty, you're going to have a harder life. I think we need to think about if it's permissible to knowingly allow children (who don't have a choice about where they are born) to be born into such difficult circumstances. I don't think that we should be forcing sterilization in poor communities but I do think it's an issue we have to consider. That's what makes this question so hard.

**Sandra:** I just find it really hard to imagine *who* could decide at what amount of money are you happy enough that your life is worthwhile. I just worry that the poor always suffer first when the government decides to place hard and fast rules on who can do what.

**Andy:** Sandra, it sounds like you're making two important claims about having children if you're in a difficult financial situation. It seems like you think pretty much everyone has a moral right to have children, including people in difficult financial situations, but that also, for those people in difficult financial circumstances, it's not morally wrong either for them.

**Sandra:** Yeah I think I do think that, what is the difference between having a moral right and having a right?

**Andy:** So, a moral right is a right that you have that's grounded in moral reasons as opposed to a legal right that's just whatever the law is. Whatever the law permits you is a legal right. A moral right is something that, independent of what the law is, it would be morally wrong to prevent someone from exercising that right. So, you think people have a moral right in that

sense. It would be wrong to prevent them, regardless of what the law says. And it would be wrong for the law to prohibit that.

But that can be different from it being morally right or wrong. Someone might have a moral right, but it be morally wrong to exercise. So for example, free speech is a good example. A lot of us think we have a moral right to free speech. We have a right to say whatever we want, but it can be morally wrong to say some things and not other things when we're exercising that right

In this case though, it seems like you think we have a moral right to have children, and even in the case of poor, it's not morally wrong to exercise that right.

**Sandra:** Yeah, I think that sounds right.

**Andy:** I'm inclined to agree with you, Sandra. I think it can be somewhat classist for someone who's not in a difficult financial situation to think about the lives of people in poverty and make these sweeping assumptions about what is or is not worthwhile from their perspective. Back to the question about moral rights, I asked Sarah and Samantha if they thought that all people have a moral right to procreate. To mean, limiting it in anyway would probably be off limits.

**Sarah:** One consideration that I think deserves attention, whether or not it works to ground a moral right I'm not sure, but the importance of the relationship that you go on to have with your child seems to be something that's very important to many people and very important to their flourishing and to their having a good life. I think that this idea that the reason many people procreate is in order to raise a child, and in particular to have an intimate and special kind of relationship with that child, that seems like something that's really important to our flourishing, or to many people flourishing, as human beings.

That's a potential reason to think of procreation as morally grounded in this further interest that we have in enjoying the parent/child relationship. Other types of, now again, I'm not sure whether all of these work, but other potential candidates include some people think that the moral right procreate might be grounded in the importance of the perpetuation of the human species. That there are certain things about our lives now that we couldn't value unless our species was going to continue into the future. You could think about that in smaller context like to perpetuate a particular culture or ethnic group and so forth.

**Samantha:** We both think that that right is not unlimited. That is even if you have that right, we both think that that right is constrained by the rights of the child. Once you've had a child, there might be reasons that justify having a child, but once you've had the child, there are particular facts about that person that are going to constrain what you can do and the kind of parent you can be. Those considerations about the relationship might ground the right to parent, but it's not going to be an open-ended right where you get to do whatever you want once you've got the person in front of you because the child, they're going to have their own interests and their own rights that are going to constrain what it is you can do.

**Christiane:** So Sandra, you're still young. Has working on this episode changed the way you think about having children?

**Sandra:** I definitely agree we need to put more thought into whether we should have children or not. If I have kids, I really want to consider what harms my child could cause to the lives around them. But, I'm still not on board with the government imposing regulations, especially if those regulations are intended to limit who is fit to be a parent. But then we are still in a weird place with adoption being so highly regulated and biological birth not regulated at all.

**Andy:** That's the great thing about this book. Some of my favorite questions to consider in philosophy and ethics are the kinds of questions that most people would think at first glance, "these are silly questions to even be thinking about." But, those questions, when you really start thinking about what people have said in response to them, you start realizing it's difficult to say where their arguments go wrong. Those are the kinds of questions I like thinking about. This book is filled with those kinds of questions, and if we're going to be good moral reasoners, these are precisely the kinds of questions I think we should be grappling with.

**Christiane:** That's great, Andy. But I actually did come away with one definitive answer to a question I had about humanity:

**Andy:** We're all monsters.

**Samantha:** We're all monsters.

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**Andy:** Thanks for listening. If you'd like more information about the topics we've discussed today, visit our show notes for this episode at [examiningethics.org](http://examiningethics.org). When you visit, be sure to sign up for our newsletter. You'll be entered into our monthly book giveaway.

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