

Towards a Theory of Propositional Curriculum Content

JOHN TILLSON

This article addresses two questions. The first question is this: 'when ought teachers to encourage or discourage students' belief of a given proposition on the one hand (call this 'directive teaching'), and when ought teachers to simply facilitate students' understanding of that proposition, on the other (call this 'non-directive teaching') (cf. the work of Michael Hand)? The second question is this: 'which propositional content should curricula address?' An answer to these questions would amount to what I will call a 'theory of propositional curricula content', by providing both a means for choosing content, and a directive for teaching that content. While the answer that I give to the second question is unlikely to prove exhaustive, I still consider that it would form an important part of the answer, hence the title a 'towards a theory of propositional curricula content'.

INTRODUCTION

This article begins with an outline and discussion of Michael Hand's 'Possibility of Truth' argument for compulsory Religious Education (RE), from which this article takes its impetus (Hand, 2004). It then goes on to explain how the theory of propositional curricula content here advocated is a natural extension of Hand's argument. Next, a theory of propositional curricula content is elaborated via a few steps: a) outlining the duties of truthfulness that motivate occasions for directive and non-directive teaching,¹ b) outlining a conception of *moment* that motivates a proposition's inclusion on the curriculum, c) discussing acceptable means of influencing students' beliefs, and, finally, d) refining the notion of what degrees of rational support are required to decide between the directive or non-directive teaching of a momentous proposition. The article concludes by summarising, and addressing a few styles of criticism which it may attract.

MICHAEL HAND'S 'POSSIBILITY OF TRUTH' ARGUMENT

The theory of propositional curricula content that I want to develop is a natural extension of Michael Hand's 'possibility of truth' argument for

compulsory RE. Hand argues that a discrete, compulsory, non-directive subject focused on the critical examination and evaluation of religious beliefs should form part of pupils' education. The argument is this: some religious propositions (about God, salvation, life after death, and so on): (a) 'are sufficiently well supported by evidence and argument as to merit serious consideration by reasonable people', (b) 'matter, in the sense of making some practical difference to people's lives', and (c) require 'a facility with distinctive kinds of evidence and argument' in order to evaluate their plausibility appropriately. Hand concludes that children are entitled to being enabled to make rational judgments about the truth or falsity of these propositions (*ibid.*). That is to say, the premises motivate a curriculum element whose aim is to enable children to make rational judgments about the truth or falsity of religious propositions, a curriculum being 'a planned programme of learning' (Hand, 2010, p. 49).² It is very reasonable to think that a planned programme of learning is precisely what would be required to enable one to make rational judgments about the truth or falsity of religious propositions. Hand calls this the 'possibility of truth argument'. While one might take issue with its premises, I think that the form of the argument is valid, and it is this which I want to build on.³

Hand thinks of the argument as motivating a compulsory, discrete subject for children. I want to observe that the same entitlement would exist for adults as much as for children, but admit further that one might reasonably hope to satisfy each person's entitlement during childhood and early adulthood. It is also worth observing that one's entitlement cannot justify one's compulsion to receive that entitlement all by itself. More naturally we would think of justified compulsion as requiring some good for others: we think of ourselves as having obligations to others rather than ourselves, or at least of having the right veto our own obligations to ourselves and others' obligations to us, but no right to veto our own obligations to others. To take an example I heard given by Jonathon Wolff during a conference keynote address: a more compelling reason to wear seatbelts in cars than to avoid doing damage to oneself, is to avoid doing damage to someone sitting in the seat in front; this example was used in a UK public advertising campaign in which a young boy without a seatbelt crushes his mother's chest when he is flung forward into her seat during a collision, while he himself comes off comparatively unscathed. Concordantly it raises few eyebrows when it is suggested that criminal offenders ought to be compelled to undergo a process of rehabilitation in order to reintegrate into civic society. To motivate compulsion to receive entitlements, plausibly we should begin by contrasting wards and wardens. If one ever properly has wardenship over somebody else, one's ward, rather than being entitled to have their own decisions regarding their own wellbeing respected completely, one has a responsibility to commit their ward to what one thinks best for them. This might well take the form of compelling one's ward to benefit from an entitlement. Certainly it is an interesting question as to when one ever properly has wardenship over another, and the concordant right to compel them to benefit from what one takes to be in their interests. In this article I

am more interested in the matter of entitlement and less interested in the further idea of compulsion.

EXTENDING HAND'S ARGUMENT

It seems to me that the validity of Hand's possibility of truth argument would imply the validity of what I shall call the 'certainty of truth argument', that were some religious propositions certainly true, while satisfying the other premises, this would motivate their compulsory, directive teaching. Were some religious beliefs certain, as opposed to merely plausible, then this, together with their epistemic distinctiveness and moment, would motivate a discrete and directive, or confessional, compulsory subject. Let us call propositions that 'matter, in the sense of making some practical difference to people's lives', 'momentous propositions'. Suppose now that some momentous religious propositions were neither plausible nor certain, but supported by little to no evidence and argument, or even conflicted with such evidence and argument that they could not reasonably be believed at all. It seems that educators should include the matter of the truth of such propositions on curricula only on an *ad hoc*, as opposed to systematic, basis, when they have reason to think that their students believe such propositions, so as to dissuade them—otherwise the curriculum is in danger of becoming a museum of curiosities, to the exclusion of plausible and certain, momentous propositions (Tillson, 2011).

We should notice that these arguments apply quite generally to any momentous propositions that are susceptible of plausibility or certainty, and not just religious propositions. We may look on this as the beginnings of a theory of propositional curriculum content. It is important to notice that these argumentative mechanisms can be accepted without accepting Hand's judgements on the plausibility of religious propositions, or indeed any other judgements about the state of knowledge. This should be regarded as one of the strengths of the position. I do not think that if the premises of the arguments from certainty and possibility are met, that their conclusions are guaranteed. Instead I think of each as defeasible arguments, because 'there is always an (open) list of defeating conditions any of which might rule out' their conclusions, instead the premises are sufficient 'unless some feature is present which overrides or voids them' (Sibley, 2001, pp. 7–8). For instance one ought not to equip others with criminal *modi operandi* if the large difference that this information would likely make is the student's committing crimes or bringing harm to others.

THE NEED FOR INTERVENTION

As mentioned, Hand thinks of his argument as justifying a compulsory, discrete subject, and it seems to be his 'distinctive kinds of support' premise which motivates RE's being a discrete subject. While the organisation of propositional curriculum content is a supplementary issue beyond

the scope of this article, this is not all the work that the ‘distinctiveness’ premise does. Additionally, it suggests that the intended learning outcome of students being able to understand and evaluate the truth of religious propositions would not be achieved without this intervention, that is to say, the endeavour is not superfluous to—and indeed, is the best method of—satisfying its own aim. To a first approximation, what matters for a proposition’s inclusion within curricula, is that it satisfies one of the following three sets of predicates:

- 1) (a) That it is momentous; (b) that it might well not be believed without intervention; (c) that it is certain.
- 2) (a) That it is momentous; (b) that it might well not be understood and rationally evaluated without intervention; (c) that it is plausible.
- 3) (a) That it is momentous; (b) that it might well be believed without intervention; (c) that it is false or unfounded.

Where the first set of premises applies to a given proposition, teachers ought to promote students’ belief of that proposition. Where the second set of premises applies to a proposition, the teacher ought only to facilitate students’ understanding of that proposition, and the arguments available for evaluating its truth. Where the third set of premises applies to a proposition, the teacher ought to discourage students’ belief of that proposition. It should be noted that a certain value of truthfulness has been presupposed throughout, and it is this that I will make explicit in the next section, before going on to critically elaborate the notion of momentousness from Hand’s phrase ‘making some practical difference to people’s lives’.

TRUTHFULNESS

Rational beings, as rational beings, have a duty, it seems, to believe the truth, and to disbelieve falsehoods, or, more accurately, to believe and disbelieve only on rationally adequate grounds.⁴ They have a duty to pursue the truth, and correct their false beliefs. They have a practical reason to tell others the truth and to correct their false beliefs, namely the mutual epistemic benefit gained from this activity. Since pursuit of the truth requires sensitivity to the sorts of considerations which render a proposition more likely true or more likely false, the further duty to sensitize ourselves to such considerations is entailed by the duty to pursue the truth, and a practical reason to sensitize others to such considerations. Call these the duties of truthfulness. Children come to recognise and observe these duties chiefly through the guidance of their parents or carers and those who act in *loco parentis*. Adults have a duty to promote the duties of truthfulness in the children for whose development they are responsible.⁵

It seems that the duties of truthfulness have the following implications for determining and teaching propositional content: in the absence of defeating conditions, teachers ought to attempt to *impart* a given belief to

children where it is known to be true, and ought to *make it known* to them as *possibly* true, where it is thought to be a reasonable possibility. On the question of when beliefs should be taught to be false or unfounded, it seems that the educator is only *entitled* to do this where they know the belief to be false or unfounded, but should only *bother* to do it when it is something that they know the child believes (cf. Tillson, 2011). Thus, on the assumption that Young Earth Creationism (which takes Genesis to be literally true) has been decisively falsified, it may still have a place in the science classroom just insofar as its inclusion enables any student adherents to come closer to a more scientific understanding, and to leaving behind their false beliefs (cf. Reiss, 2007, 2008). The question ought to be raised as to whether it is particular people's beliefs set, or something more impersonal and encyclopaedic that we ought to have in mind when we speak of imparting beliefs which are known to be true, the question is crucial since it will have implications as to the universality or teacher-relativity of the content of education. If it is personal knowledge that we have in mind, then one might wonder whose estimation of the truth is to be drawn on, and, very arguably, it is the educator themselves who has the responsibility of making the judgement call as to what is known. For an educator to teach anybody else's estimation of the truth would seem to be a dereliction of the duties of truthfulness, and inauthentic. Of course, this encumbers them with a heightened onus to adopt and revise their beliefs rationally. On the other hand, that onus may be too high and expertise as pedagogue in no way guarantees subject matter expertise sufficient to make robust judgements oneself. However, it should be noted that this theory goes a significant distance towards taking the sting out of the question 'who should decide on which propositions curricula should address, and which propositions should be taught directly or non-directively?' by emphasizing a procedure for *how* the decisions ought to be made.

Underlying the above account of the duties of truthfulness, there is one obvious and important question for the curriculum which we ought to address: namely, whether we should seek and promote the truth about everything. What is worth correcting people on, informing other people about, and testing our own beliefs about? Some things are true, but are trivial and not worth knowing. Indeed, there may be some mistakes which are not worth correcting. Whether or not I have 73 hairs on my left eyebrow should be the least of anybody's concerns.⁶ Thus we need a criterion of importance. In the next section, I will develop and defend the following criterion: In order to decide *how important* it is that a particular proposition appears on curricula, educators ought to ask: How much of a practical difference would it make to the student's life if they were *not correctly informed* about that proposition's truth (if they were wrong, or had no opinion, for instance)? Supposing that Christianity were true, it would obviously make a practical, if eschatological, difference to their lives if children are not *correctly informed* about whether Christianity is true, just as much as it makes a practical difference if children are not right about how to ensure their physical health. The more 'foundational' a piece of information is, the more of a practical difference it is likely to make in the following

ways: to undermine or re-cast much of what is already believed, or to provide a platform for the future assimilation and interpretation of further information. In the sciences for instance, evolutionary theory is foundational in just this sense for much of biology, zoology and anthropology.

MOMENT

For any proposition, a person may take one of the following (mutually exclusive) attitudes: belief, disbelief, or agnosticism. They may also take no attitude at all—at least in that case that they are unaware of the proposition. In what follows, the key distinction to bear in mind is that between belief and non-belief (which captures all the other attitudes and non-attitudes). To determine a proposition's moment, we ask what difference it would likely make if a person failed to be correctly informed.

A paradigm example of a highly momentous proposition is that smoking dramatically increases one's risk of cancer. Knowing this may not stop everyone from starting to smoke, or make all existing smokers give up, but everyone for whom smoking is an available habit ought to know it all the same—because it could well feature in their decision of whether or not to smoke. Indeed, suppose that it were only known that smoking causes cancer by doctors and that a heavy smoker with ailing health goes to see one who, after conducting the relevant tests, informs him that he has lung cancer. Devastated but also surprised, the man asks how this could be so. In response the doctor informs him that the cancer is very probably a result of his smoking. Again, the man is surprised: 'but nobody told me smoking causes cancer', 'you never asked', replies the doctor. The appropriate response is to feel that those in the know were guilty of a moral failing in not spreading the word. Moment in this case has to do with the avoidance of one's own serious harm, but this is not the only grounds on which a proposition, if believed, would likely (or should) make a huge difference to the way one will act or live. This example should motivate us to accept that there exists an ethical duty to not only share, but to volunteer, and disseminate information or 'spread the word' in the case of momentous propositions, as well provide a very striking illustration of a momentous proposition.

What criteria have we for determining a proposition's moment? We ought not to say that 'a proposition is momentous if people would change their lives as a result of knowing it', since clearly the fact that smoking causes cancer is something that the medical profession, at least, has a duty to raise awareness of and yet many who are made aware do not even try to give up smoking. Alternatively, I could say 'a proposition is momentous if people should change their lives as a result of knowing it'. Alternatively still, I could say that 'a proposition is momentous if it constitutes a reason for people to change their lives'.⁷ The point is to equip people with information that is relevant to making decisions that will affect their lives, information that they would likely have wanted to know prior to making decisions, this is likely to include information pertaining to the wellbeing of themselves and of others.

Some would point out that information alone is not enough to motivate people to change their lives: meeting people on a cancer ward is more likely to motivate change in addition to information, than information alone. Indeed, simply recognising that one's phobia is irrational does not make it go away, hence the existence of various kinds of therapies to help do this. This should not be seen as an objection to the theory advanced here, rather this consideration should at most be seen as leaving the door open for a supplementary, motivational aspect to curricula.

Moment admits of degrees: of maximal moment, there are eschatological motivations to live in certain ways in the 'here and now' (for fear of damnation, for instance), of minimal moment, there are propositions such that it would make little difference to anyone whether they believed it, disbelieved it, had no opinion on the matter, or never even realised there was a matter to have an opinion about. The relevant question here is what difference it would make if someone were not right about a matter, whether it is worth taking some pains to be right about it.⁸ Additionally, the moment of some propositions is local, and the moment of others is more ubiquitous: it is quite local that the password to some particular computer network is, say, 'qwerty'. The moment of other propositions is not so local: 'germs cause human illnesses'; 'God exists as described by the Qur'an'; 'human beings are invulnerable'. Finally there is a contrast between propositions such that it is momentous for everyone that just someone or just a few people should believe them (call this 'specialist moment'), and propositions such that it is momentous for each individual that they should believe them themselves (call this 'general moment'). Consider the proposition that nothing can exceed the speed of light. While it might make some difference to me that physicists know it, it doesn't seem to make much difference to me that I know it. This distinction is an arguable basis for a contrast between general education and specialised education: whereas general curricula would be interested in propositions of momentous importance for each individual to know, more specialised curricula would concern themselves with propositions which it is of momentous importance to society that at least some people know.

In this article, I will have in mind propositions of ubiquitous, general moment as a factor in determining propositional curriculum content in general, universal education (as opposed to specialist education and locally-peculiar education). Some such propositions are supported by such evidence and argument that they cannot be reasonably denied, and others by such evidence and argument that they can reasonably be doubted. Yet others are supported by little to no evidence and argument, or even conflict with such evidence and argument that they cannot reasonably be believed at all. It is here that the duties of truthfulness, discussed in the previous section, play their part in determining and whether teachers ought to promote students' belief of that content on the one hand, or just facilitate their understanding of that content, on the other, or discourage students' belief of that content.

It is not the purpose of this article to argue that any particular propositions satisfy the criteria for inclusion within the propositional content

addressed by curricula, it is the skeletal theory and not any particular application of that theory that this article hopes to recommend. Additionally, qua philosopher of education, I would not know well enough what propositions are momentous and true or probable, so as to recommend their inclusion on the curricula, that is a matter for subject experts to determine. Certainly the theory could be combined with judgements about the state of knowledge so as to determine propositional content addressed by curricula—indeed, that is what is hoped will happen—but such a level of detail would certainly go beyond the scope of a single journal article. That said, it may be helpful to give a few suggestive lines of thought along which the theory could be applied to contemporary curriculum theory debate. As I have said, propositions of ubiquitous, general moment are the stuff of propositional curriculum content in general, universal education (as opposed to specialist education and locally-peculiar education), they would comprise, it would seem, a basic curriculum in that they would be propositions which it is everyone's right to be aware of, together—in so far as they are capable of understanding this—with the considerations which grant them their degree of plausibility. In liberal democracies, it is of great moment as to what effects politicians' proposed policies are likely to have if adopted. Other likely examples of momentous propositions to constitute a basic curriculum involve information that bears on social conscience—about fair trade and work conditions, and information that bears on personal health and safety—about sexual health, recreational drug use and road safety. Clearly the theory would cash out differently when applied to different contexts; for instance in a world without tobacco, it would not be a momentous proposition that smoking tobacco causes cancer. Having discussed the nature of propositions' moment in this section, I go on in the next section to discuss acceptable means of influencing students' beliefs, before going on to refine the notion of what degrees of rational support are required to decide between the directive and non-directive teaching of a momentous proposition.

INFLUENCING STUDENTS' BELIEFS

The most important constraint on transmission is that it be done rationally. But what is this rational/ non-rational distinction? To borrow Hand's elucidation, 'Held non-rationally', when said of a belief, means held 'without regard for the evidence', thus 'held rationally' would mean 'held with regard for the evidence' (Hand, 2002, p. 545). Thus being rational is a tendency, not just capacity, to form and revise beliefs in light of available reasons. We should follow Hand in allowing that beliefs can be transmitted in two rational ways. First, 'Where beliefs are known to be true, they can be imparted by means of rational demonstration' (*ibid.*). Second, 'other things being equal, when a person perceived by others to be an intellectual authority [on a relevant matter] asserts that a proposition is true, she places them under a rational obligation to accept her assertion. She imparts a belief to her listeners, and she does so by appealing to their reason. But she does not prove her assertion' (*ibid.*, p. 551).

This is fairly intuitive: the acquisition of a belief can be warranted either by reliable testimony, or by acquaintance with the stuff being testified to. If one thinks that it is important that children become adults whose beliefs track the truth, one should agree with Hand that we ought to equip children to rationally form and revise their judgements, and so worry about anything which damages their ability to do so. So far I have spoken of the ‘certainty of truth’ and ‘possibility of truth’ arguments. In the next section, I show that more accurately, I should be speaking of the ‘supported by sufficient probative force to warrant serious consideration’ and ‘supported by sufficient probative force to make denial irrational’ arguments.

CERTAINTY AND POSSIBILITY OF TRUTH

Heeding the classic work of David Hume, Jim Mackenzie has pointed out that law-like statements, such as ‘all men are mortal’, cannot be verified by any number of observations, since a counter example could always yet come to light, thus no amount of evidence could possibly decisively determine their truth (Mackenzie, 2004, p. 649). In the philosophy of science, this is known as the problem of induction since it seems to undermine the evidential authority of law-like scientific theories. On Karl Popper’s understanding, such theories are seen as more or less reliable depending on how often they open themselves up to falsification without being falsified. ‘On Popper’s account scientific theories, since they are not known to be true, cannot be imparted by the presentation of proof or decisive evidence, but to use a form of leverage other than the force of evidence seems to be necessarily indoctrinatory. Perhaps Hand hopes that teaching currently accepted scientific theories can also be justified by using our perceived intellectual authority’ (ibid.).

It seems that Hand will have to argue that evidence can prove law-like statements (and overcome the age old problem of induction), or say that we should not teach law-like statements to be true, or argue that they be imparted by perceived intellectual authority. It seems to me that admitting that law-like statements cannot be proved true might be the best option, but to add the challenge ‘who wants to bet that the sun will not rise tomorrow?’ The idea behind explanatory and predictive science (and probability in general) is to make the best bet, and some bets are clearly much better than others. Thus we ought to absorb ‘best bets’ into our taxonomy of education. One could directly teach that ‘this theory is our best bet’. If one were very worried about misleading children about the relative certainty of a proposition, they could build some epistemology into the curriculum to discuss the confidence with which different statements can reasonably be invested given their supporting evidence and argument. Of course, in many cases, a best bet may still not be a strong enough bet to warrant directive teaching, and in such case it would instead warrant non-directive teaching were it momentous. While it would be more correct to switch from describing ‘possibility of truth’ and ‘certainty of

truth' arguments to describing 'supported by sufficient probative force to warrant serious consideration' and 'supported by sufficient probative force to make denial irrational' arguments, to avoid clogging my prose with such unwieldy formulations, I have elected to use the former terminology as a *façon de parler*, while asking that the reader bear in mind that it is only that.

CONCLUSION

The notions of truthfulness and moment, combined in the ways which we have seen above, supply a systematic approach to determining which propositional content curricula should contain and whether teachers ought to promote or demote students' belief of that content on the one hand, or just facilitate students' understanding of that content, on the other. As we have seen, what matters for a proposition's inclusion on curricula, is the applicability of one of the following sets of premises:

- 1) (a) That it is momentous; (b) that it might well not be believed without intervention; (c) that it is certain.
- 2) (a) That it is momentous; (b) that it might well not be understood and rationally evaluated without intervention; (c) that it is plausible.
- 3) (a) That it is momentous; (b) that it might well be believed without intervention; (c) that it is false or unfounded.

Where the first set of premises applies to a given proposition, teachers ought to promote students' belief of that proposition. Where the second set of premises applies to a proposition, the teacher ought only to facilitate students' understanding of that proposition. Where the third set of premises applies to a proposition, the teacher ought to discourage students' belief of that proposition. More than merely helping pupils to understand, and believe or disbelieve momentous propositions, teachers should—in so far as is practicable—aim to acquaint students with arguments for and against propositions and induct them into the practice of assessing the soundness of those arguments.

While it might turn out that this theory is incomplete—since my argument fails to motivate the appearance of a particular proposition on curricula, while a further argument does motivate it—the existence of such further arguments will not serve to undermine the theory that I elaborate here, but to supplement it.

Some might accept the argumentative mechanisms, but claim that nothing is so well known as to justify directive teaching. However, this seems much too sceptical. Students ought to be taught directly, because the history of free enquiry has accumulated a wealth of wisdom. It seems unduly sceptical that school students should start from scratch; that they should have to reinvent wheels, re-falsify dead theories, or worse, remain captured by them (one recalls the words of Newton 'If I have seen further than others, it is because I was standing on the shoulders of giants'). It

seems unduly sceptical that the four humours theory should be considered as equally credible as modern medicine in a science classroom.

Correspondence: John Tillson, VA303A, DCU Postgraduate Residences, Ballymun Road, Dublin D9, Ireland.
Email: johntillson@hotmail.com

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NOTES

1. I take the terms 'directive' and 'non-directive' from Michael Hand (2007, 2008). Two clarifications are in order. First, speaking strictly, non-directive teaching would include acquainting students with, and inducting them into assessing the soundness of, arguments for and against propositions, as well as merely understanding them. Secondly, we should not confound the distinction between directive and non-directive teaching, with that between the open and closed-ended discussions. In open-ended discussions, the teacher allows students to discuss questions as though no answer were known to be true. Eamonn Callan (2011) has argued that open-ended discussion may be warranted as a pedagogical last resort in settled matters, while the educator is still hoping to impart a belief to the students. The cases which he has in mind are those in which students advocate 'liberal heresies', such as favouring slavery and the censorship of political dissent: that is, undesirable political or moral attitudes and beliefs. Michael Reiss (Reiss, 2007, 2008) has suggested that absurd beliefs have a place in the classroom, where they belong to students, as means to bring them to at least understand more robust beliefs, and the grounds which warrant them.
2. This formulation has the benefit of acknowledging the similarity of all courses of learning, and the similarities between the sorts of ethical considerations that could motivate their existence, whether they be news programmes, programmes of learning for citizenship tests for immigrants, rehabilitation programmes for criminal offenders, or educational television series like *Planet Earth* and *The World at War*. It also acknowledges the variety of vehicles of provision which programmes of learning can be facilitated by.
3. There are at least two anti-epistemic approaches to challenging Hand's argument. One is to argue with Pascal that we can have non-epistemic motivations to believe that something is true; another is to argue that, for instance, religious language is non-propositional anyway. We can leave these controversies safely to one side here, although I would refer readers to J. L. Mackie (1982) for a persuasive critical discussion of both approaches.
4. This claim is denied by David Papineau, who argues that there are no doxastic norms, but he allows that we still have moral reasons not to misinform others which seems to create a drip-down moral obligation to avoid believing falsely so as to avoid misinforming unknowingly (Papineau, 2013).
5. It is an interesting question as to how one acquires responsibility for a child's development. It is commonly assumed that a child's parents assume primary responsibility, which can be delegated somewhat from there, if not easily abdicated. At the same time, it seems the responsibility of others to relieve parents of their charge if, for instance, they are abusive. It is plausible that it is the obligation of the parent to ensure the satisfaction of the entitlements defended in this article, which is likely to require their outsourcing its satisfaction to experienced pedagogues. Where parents are unable to ensure the satisfaction of this entitlement, it is plausible that help ought to be provided by the wider society, and where they are unwilling to satisfy it that intervention ought to be provided by the wider society.

6. This is not to deny that my belief about how many hairs constitute my eyebrow could be so wildly off, that the processes, or lack of processes by which this belief was formed, affect the formation of beliefs on more serious matters.
7. For a critical discussion of whether reasons for action ought to be characterised by reference one's motivational set, or by something outside of that, see Finlay and Schroeder, 2012.
8. This matter is often not something that we can determine without knowing the answer. For instance, it would be worth knowing whether things are carcinogenic if they in fact are carcinogenic, and not nearly as worth knowing if they were not. The fact that time and energy invested into some ventures yields information of less value than the resources invested is a worry faced by researchers and explorers alike.

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