

Adrian C. Armstrong
Here for Our Children's Children?
Why we should care for the Earth

ISBN 9781 8454 0169 6

Imprint Academic, Exeter UK & Charlottesville USA, 2009, 112pp, £8.95,

This book sets out the kind of arguments used in discussions about the environment and why - or why not - humankind should be taking active steps to preserve it so that it is present for future generations.

It attempts to be non-partisan, while indicating a wide range of approaches, though it is written primarily for people whose thinking has been influenced by European philosophy. There is an overview of these influences in brief sections on the Judeo-Christian legacy and Medieval thought, and a slightly longer discussion on natural law. A section on 'values' identifies more recent stances: of no value, hedonistic, utilitarian, consequential, environmental rights, intrinsic and external values, and the Gaia hypothesis. A later chapter combines some of these perspectives in describing some particular issues such as caring for wild animals, UK agriculture and the countryside, human population and climate change. The penultimate chapter is a four-page Personal Statement in which the author, an environmental scientist, identifies himself as standing 'within the Franciscan strand of Christianity'.

This could be a helpful resource for use in schools as a tool for understanding different types of ethical approaches with environmental issues as examples, as it is not a vigorous defence of why or what steps should be taken to ensure that the world is here for our children's children. However, an extensive reference section challenges readers to be better informed and more vigorous in defence of the creation whenever opportunities arise to do so.

Maureen CSF