

Instructor: Jessica Piazza  
Writing 150  
Health & Healing  
Writing Project #2

## **Writing Project #2: The Case for, the Case Against: Babies**

**Purpose:** For this assignment, as in Writing Project #1, we will continue to develop, refine, and strengthen our prewriting, invention, thesis statements, and organization, in addition to turning our attention to the skills of critical reading and analysis. As we read several articles and essays, we will consider the problems of assumptions, logical fallacies, and agendas in crafting arguments. Effective expository writing carefully analyzes given claims and refuses to take those claims at face value. Therefore, your task in this assignment will be to push beyond the surface—past your first response to an article—to present an insightful discussion of the prompt.

### **Readings:**

Kolbert, Elizabeth, “The Case Against Kids”  
Caplan, Bryan, “The Breeder’s Cup”  
Williams, Joy, “The Case Against Babies.”  
Kelly, Maura, “The Case Against Babies”  
Landsburg, Steven E., “The More the Merrier”  
PODCAST: Let’s Talk About Babies, The Adaptor.

**Premise:** If we examined advertisements showing families, we would see that children are portrayed in varied forms: as angels, cartoon ruffians, innocents, stressed teenagers, demanding mouths, and sweet infants. These images beg several questions: Why do people choose to become parents? What are the ethical considerations involved in choosing to have children? And how are babies and children valued in American society? In this assignment, we’re going to consider some possible answers to these questions by focusing on several articles. In one article, Joy Williams argues that having babies can be seen as a selfish act, while in another Bryan Kaplan argues that *not having* children is economically problematic. And yet, despite these differences, both authors point out that the true value—and costs—of children to society are often poorly considered.

**Writing Task:** In a roughly 6-7 page thesis-driven paper, address the following prompt in conversation with one or more of the assigned readings:

**In our current environmental, social and cultural climate, what is the best ethical / practical position to hold on having babies?**