Contents

Introduction		page 1
I	What Is Moral Status and Why Does It Matter?	9
2	How Is Moral Status Determined?	27
	Empathy	32
	Universalizing Bases for Self-Worth	34
	Awe and Disgust	37
	Is One Basis for Attributing Moral Status Superior?	44
	Deficiencies in Existing Approaches to Moral Status	53
3	Selecting Criteria of Moral Status	61
	Life	63
	Relationship	77
	Contribution to a Community	77
	Reciprocity	82
	Sentience	86
	Higher Cognitive Functioning	95
	Being the Subject of a Life	98
	Rational Moral Agency and Autonomy	107
	Summation	118
	Additional Criteria	118
	Potentiality	119
	Talents and Abilities	122
	Beauty	124
	Venality, Virtue, and Innocence	125
	Species Membership?	129
	Conclusion	130

4	Problems in Applying a Multicriteria Approach	131
	The Invidious Discrimination Objection	132
	The Complexity Objection	140
	Conclusion	143
5	Applying a Multicriteria Moral Status Test	
	to Adults and Children	145
	Life	150
	Relationship	156
	Sentience	158
	Subject of a Life	163
	Higher Cognitive Functioning	163
	Other Criteria	179
	Conclusion	181
6	Legal, Policy, and Moral Implications	
	of Children's Superiority	188
	General Implications	188
	Specific Implications	191
	Family Law	191
	Parentage	192
	Child Rearing	192
	Divorce	193
	Public Policy	194
	Social Life	196
	Conclusion	197
Conclusion		199
Bibliography		203
Index		209