



A Theory of Intergenerational Justice Joerg Chet Tremmel

The appeal to 'our obligations to future generations' is one of the most forceful, emotional and effective arguments available to politicians and citizens and is the cornerstone of all modern policies aimed at sustainable development. Yet, the exact nature and extent of these obligations are unclear - who owes what to whom, exactly, and why?

This highly accessible book provides an extensive and comprehensive overview of current research and theory about why and how we should protect future generations. It exposes how and why the interests of people today and those of future generations are often in conflict and what can be done. It rebuts critical concepts such as Parfits' 'non-identity' paradox and Beckerman's denial of any possibility of intergenerational justice. The core of the book is the lucid application of a 'veil of ignorance' to derive principles of intergenerational justice which show that our duties to posterity are stronger than is often supposed. Tremmel's approach demands that each generation both consider and improve the wellbeing of future generations. To measure the wellbeing of future generations Tremmel employs the Human Development Index rather than the metrics of utilitarian subjective happiness. The book thus answers in detailed, concrete terms the two most important questions of every theory of intergenerational justice: 'what to sustain' and 'how much to sustain?'

Ultimately this book provides a theory of intergenerational justice that is both intellectually robust and practical with wide applicability to law, policy, economics, climate change and all other contexts that affect future generations.

Hardback • £65.00 • ISBN 978-1-84407-826-4
November 2009 • 256 pages

'Tremmel has provided us with the most comprehensive map available of the 'no-man's land' of ethical thought: our obligations to future generations. As humans embark on more and more unprecedented 'experiments' with the future of life on earth, this area of ethics becomes ever more urgent. If the human species someday accepts the obvious burdens owed to posterity, they may point back to this extended treatment as the beginning of a new age of morality.'

Prof. Dr. Bryan Norton, distinguished professor of philosophy, Georgia Tech University, USA

'Provides an extensive and comprehensive overview of current research and theory about why and how we should protect future generations. ...An interdisciplinary masterpiece artfully combining practical philosophy, law, economics and social sciences. A "must-read" for anyone interested in the topic!'

Prof. Dr. Ernst von Weizsäcker, Dean, Donald Bren School of Environmental Science & Management, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA

'Tremmel's landmark book presents both a comprehensive survey of the issue of justice to future generations and a meticulously argued original theory of duties to posterity which, he concludes, 'are stronger than is often supposed.' The book thus serves as an essential introduction to the posterity issue and as an indispensable addition to the growing library of philosophical studies in intergenerational justice.'

Prof. Dr. Ernest Partridge, University of Colorado, editor of Responsibilities to Future Generations, USA

'Without question indispensable reading for anyone who laments nuclear proliferation, widening rich-poor disparities, soaring national debts, or catastrophic climate change harms-to name a few of the military, economic, environmental and other legacies that we, the living, appear destined to leave to succeeding generations'

Prof. Dr. Burns H. Weston, Bessie Dutton Murray Distinguished Professor of Law Emeritus and Director, Climate Legacy Initiative, University of Iowa, USA

'Finally, a comprehensive work on justice between generations! Long relegated to the margins of economic, political, and philosophical debate, Tremmel puts the subject of "intergenerational justice" where it belongs: at the very center of our ethical concerns today'

Prof. Dr. Claus Dierksmeier, Stonehill College, Easton, USA

'Tremmel has written a book that enables us to understand both why and how we can exercise responsibility towards the unborn whose lives we impact simply by the way we live today'

Prof. Dr. Jim Dator, Director, Hawaii Research Center for Futures Studies, University of Hawaii, USA

'A theory of intergenerational justice one can actually work with. The questions Tremmel addresses will after all rise in any political context'

Prof. Dr. Marcel Wissenburg, Professor of Political Theory, Radboud University and Socrates Professor of Humanist Philosophy, Wageningen University, The Netherlands

Get a 20% DISCOUNT on all Earthscan books with our New Book E-Alerts

To receive an e-alert announcing new books in your field, and take advantage of offers unique to our members, visit www.earthscan.co.uk and choose the subjects that interest you.