

Statements by readers:

Tremmel has provided us with the most comprehensive map available of the 'no-man's land' of ethical thought concerning 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

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
Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, USA
Editor of 'Responsibilities to Future Generations' (Prometheus Books, 1981)

The appeal to 'our obligations to future generations' is one of the most forceful, emotional and effective arguments available to politicians and citizens; it is, for example, 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? While the great moral philosophers of the 20th Century acknowledged the importance of just relations between generations, attempts to further specify the idea, defend and support it philosophically, let alone make it applicable to political, ecological and economic practice, have so far mostly resulted in confusion.

A text like Dr Joerg Tremmel's *A Theory of Intergenerational Justice* was therefore long overdue. Tremmel offers a fairly complete, systematic overview of the scattered literature in economics, political science, ethics and the environmental disciplines - perspectives that have rarely been combined in one volume. He manages to show - among many other things - how even the seemingly most absurd philosophical debates like that on the so-called Non-Identity Problem are practically relevant and do have a deep impact on the structure, nature, object and, most importantly, justification of all future-oriented policies. Yet all the while, Tremmel never gets lost and never leads the reader astray: thanks to his surprisingly accessible style, the line of his argument remains clear and convincing. The result is a theory of intergenerational justice one can actually *work* with.

A Theory of Intergenerational Justice is an important step forwards in turning the mostly static theory of social justice into a more dynamic whole, and it is essential reading even for those who are less charmed by ideas like social justice or collective obligations; the questions Tremmel addresses will after all rise in any political context.

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

In all his work, Dr. Tremmel profits from his competences in various academic disciplines. His philosophical dissertation shows that he is well-versed in all areas of research related to the field of future ethics, and in a position to make important and original contributions to each of them. In many respects, his work transcends the present state-of-the-art and is throughout highly thought-provoking. Differently from many scientists whose scientific motivation is rooted in their political engagement, Dr. Tremmel's work is surprisingly matter of fact. His method is analytic, with rigorous clarification of concepts and careful arguments, and devoid of the rhetoric common in controversial political domains. The same matter-of-factness is a characteristic of his preferred conception of future ethics, which keeps clear of catastrophe scenarios and expresses a profound trust in the capacity of modern societies to master the challenges of environmental and climatic crisis with the support of technical progress and increased education.

*Prof. Dr. Dieter Birnbacher
PhD advisor
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Heinrich-Heine University of Düsseldorf, Germany*

Dr. Joerg Tremmel's *A Theory of Intergenerational Justice* is 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 absent some uncommonly wise and heroic intervention that can save us from ourselves. A *vade mecum* of multidisciplinary probes and insights into what has been heretofore essentially an esoteric fascination of moral philosophers, this treatise, rich in theoretical analysis, contributes nonetheless mightily to the empowerment of those who would make the future and its reinvention Everyman's and Everywoman's ethical and legal province in the "real world". It gives renewed life to the truism that there is nothing more practical than a good theory. No economist, lawyer, political scientist, or sociologist, no educator or mature student, no policy-maker or decision-maker can fail to heed its call to take the future seriously and, with it, the practical responsibilities that attend it. Befitting the founder of the German-based Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations, this penetrating and comprehensive adventure is presently without peer.

*Burns H. Weston
Bessie Dutton Murray Distinguished Professor of Law Emeritus
Senior Scholar, UI Center for Human Rights (UICHR)
Director, Climate Legacy Initiative (CLI)
The University of Iowa, USA
and
Distinguished Professor of International Law and Policy
Director, Climate Legacy Initiative (CLI)
Vermont Law School, USA*

“a comprehensive, solid, even superior work“

*Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Otfried Höffe,
Research Center on Political Philosophy
University of Tübingen, Germany*

Tremmel's second doctoral thesis, on intergenerational justice, is even more impressive than his first one. The volume provides an extensive and comprehensive overview of current research and theory about why and how we should protect future generations. It highlights that interests of individuals living today and of future generations can massively clash. It undertakes to rebut critical concepts such as Beckerman's denial of any possibility of intergenerational justice or Parfits' 'non-identity' paradox. Tremmel's approach demands of each generation to consider, if not improve future generations' wellbeing, using the ambitious Human Development Index instead of utilitarian subjective happiness. Maybe the core of the study is the lucid application of a 'veil of ignorance' to derive principles of intergenerational justice. Tremmel's second PhD thesis can be seen as an interdisciplinary masterpiece artfully combining political philosophy, law, economics and social sciences. A "must-read" for anyone interested in the topic!

*Prof. Dr. Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker
Vice President, Club of Rome*

Finally, a comprehensive work on justice between generations! Long delegated 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. At a time, where we hold it in our hands to wipe out life on earth as we know it, or to eradicate the diseases and destitution that forever plagued humanity, the importance of the question what exactly we owe to future generations can hardly be overrated. Tremmel's *Theory of Intergenerational Justice* provides the right insight at the right time. Joerg Tremmel is uniquely qualified to take on this intricate and vast subject. He has spearheaded research on the topic for many years now, and through advocacy and manifold interdisciplinary studies gained an expertise in the field that is second to none. Weaving together important insights from economics, psychology, sociology, political science and moral philosophy, he brings his reader to one forceful conclusion: "Our duties to posterity are stronger than is often supposed." Tremmel is absolutely right: We owe "intergenerational justice as enabling advancement" to all future humans, and it is high time that we begin to act accordingly.

*Prof. Dr. Claus Dierksmeier
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Recognizing the ethical and legal obligations that present generations have towards future generation is an idea whose time as finally come. For the last century, many problems in the present have been "solved" simply by passing them on to future generations to deal with. Those "solutions" have finally caught up with us. Among the more salient current examples are the collapse of the global economic system; the imminent end of oil before equivalent energy sources come online; and a myriad of environmental challenges rushing towards us. Yet we respond to the financial crisis simply by further indebting future generations. It is time to put an end to such irresponsibility. Fortunately, Joerg Chet 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.

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