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Grey, William, "Possible Persons and the Problems of Posterity"

Grey, William. “Possible Persons and the Problems of Posterity.” *Environmental Values* 5, no. 2 (1996): 161–79. doi:10.3197/096327196776679366 .

The moral status of future persons is problematic. It is often claimed that we should take the interests of the indefinite unborn very seriously, because they have a right to a decent life. It is also claimed (often by the same people) that we should allow unrestricted access to abortion, because the indefinite unborn have no rights. In this paper I argue that these intuitions are not in fact inconsistent. The aim is to provide an account of trans-temporal concern which resolves the prima facie inconsistency between commonly held intuitions about our obligations to future persons. I argue that our intuitions can be reconciled provided that we explicate obligations to the future in terms of impersonal principles subject to retroactive person-affecting constraints. (Source: The White Horse Press)

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