

Think

Date of delivery: 06-07-11

Journal and vol/article ref:

thi

THI1100019

Number of pages (not including this page): 5

page 1 of 2

This proof is sent to you on behalf of Cambridge University Press.

Authors are strongly advised to read these proofs thoroughly because any errors missed may appear in the final published paper. This will be your ONLY chance to correct your proof. Once published, either online or in print, no further changes can be made.

This proof is sent to you on behalf of Cambridge University Press.

Please print out the file and check the proofs carefully.

Make any corrections necessary on a hardcopy and answer queries on each page of the proofs.

Please then scan the corrected hard copy to produce a pdf file and return that within 3 days of receipt. Please return them by email, quoting both page and line number.

1. Your corrected proof should be returned to: Adam Ferner, Email: assistant@royalinstitutephilosophy.org
2. Your transfer of copyright form should be returned to:
Nicki Marshall, Production Editor (Journals), Cambridge University Press, University Printing House, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8BS, UK. Email: nmarshall@cambridge.org
3. If you have no corrections to make, please email: **assistant@royalinstitutephilosophy.org**

Please note:

- You are responsible for correcting your proofs. Errors not found may appear in the published journal. Corrections which do NOT follow journal style will not be accepted.
- The proof is sent to you for correction of typographical errors only. Revision of the substance of the text is not permitted, unless discussed with the editor of the journal. Only one set of corrections are permitted.
- Please answer carefully any author queries.
- A new copy of a figure must be provided if correction of anything other than a typographical error introduced by the typesetter is required.
- If you have problems with the file please contact: **nmarshall@cambridge.org**

Think

Please note:

- The proof is sent to you for correction of typographical errors only. Revision of the substance of the text is not permitted, unless discussed with the editor of the journal. Only **one** set of corrections are permitted.
- Please answer carefully any author queries.
- Corrections which do NOT follow journal style will not be accepted.
- A new copy of a figure must be provided if correction of anything other than a typographical error introduced by the typesetter is required.
- If you have problems with the file please contact **nmarshall@cambridge.org**

Please note that this pdf is for proof checking purposes only. It should not be distributed to third parties and may not represent the final published version.

Important: you must return any forms included with your proof.

Please do not reply to this email

NOTE - for further information about **Journals Production** please consult our **FAQs** at http://journals.cambridge.org/production_faqs

Journal transfer of copyright

Please read the notes overleaf and then complete, sign, and return this form to **Royal Institute of Philosophy, 14 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0AR, UK** as soon as possible. Please complete both **Sections A and B**.

Think

In consideration of the publication in **Think**
 of the contribution entitled:

by (all authors' names):

Section A – Assignment of Copyright (fill in either part 1 or 2 or 3)

1 To be filled in if copyright belongs to you Transfer of copyright

I/we hereby assign to Royal Institute of Philosophy, full copyright in all forms and media in the said contribution, including in any supplementary materials that I/we may author in support of the online version.

I/we hereby assert my/our moral rights in accordance with the UK Copyright Designs and Patents Act (1988).

Signed (tick one)

- the sole author(s)
 one author authorised to execute this transfer on behalf of all the authors of the above article

Name (block letters)

Institution/Company

Signature: Date:

(Additional authors should provide this information on a separate sheet.)

2 To be filled in if copyright does not belong to you

a Name and address of copyright holder

b The copyright holder hereby grants to Royal Institute of Philosophy, the non-exclusive right to publish the contribution in the Journal including any supplementary materials that support the online version and to deal with requests from third parties.

(Signature of copyright holder or authorised agent)

3 US Government exemption

I/we certify that the paper above was written in the course of employment by the United States Government so that no copyright exists.

Signature: Name (Block letters):

Section B – Warranty and disclosure of conflict of interest

I/we warrant that I am/we are the sole owner or co-owners of the contribution and have full power to make this agreement, and that the contribution contains nothing that is in any way an infringement of any existing copyright or licence, or duty of confidentiality, or duty to respect privacy, or any other right of any person or party whatsoever and contains nothing libellous or unlawful; and that all statements purporting to be facts are true and that any recipe, formula, instruction or equivalent published in the Journal will not, if followed accurately, cause any injury or damage to the user.

I/we further warrant that permission for all appropriate uses has been obtained from the copyright holder for any material not in my/our copyright including any audio and video material, that the appropriate acknowledgement has been made to the original source, and that in the case of audio or video material appropriate releases have been obtained from persons whose voices or likenesses are represented therein. I/we attach copies of all permission and release correspondence.

I indemnify and keep Cambridge University Press and Royal Institute of Philosophy, indemnified against any loss, injury or damage (including any legal costs and disbursements paid by them to compromise or settle any claim) occasioned to them in consequence of any breach of these warranties.

Name (block letters)

Signature Date

(one author authorised to execute this warranty statement above and conflict of interest statement below on behalf of all the authors of the above article)

Please disclose any potential **conflict of interest** pertaining to your contribution or the Journal; or write 'NONE' to indicate you declare no such conflict of interest exists. A conflict of interest might exist if you have a competing interest (real or apparent) that could be considered or viewed as exerting an undue influence on you or your contribution. Examples could include financial, institutional or collaborative relationships. The Journal's editor(s) shall contact you if any disclosed conflict of interest may affect publication of your contribution in the Journal.

Potential conflict of interest

Notes for contributors

1 The Journal's policy is to acquire copyright in all contributions. There are two reasons for this:

(a) ownership of copyright by one central organisation tends to ensure maximum international protection against unauthorised use; (b) it also ensures that requests by third parties to reprint or reproduce a contribution, or part of it, are handled efficiently and in accordance with a general policy that is sensitive both to any relevant changes in international copyright legislation and to the general desirability of encouraging the dissemination of knowledge.

2 Two 'moral rights' were conferred on authors by the UK Copyright Act in 1988. In the UK an author's 'right of paternity', the right to be properly credited whenever the work is published (or performed or broadcast), requires that this right is asserted in writing.

3 Notwithstanding the assignment of copyright in their contribution, all contributors retain the following **non-transferable** rights:

- The right (subject to appropriate permission having been cleared for any third-party material) to post *either* their own version of their contribution as submitted to the journal (prior to revision arising from peer review and prior to editorial input by Cambridge University Press) *or* their own final version of their contribution as accepted for publication (subsequent to revision arising from peer review but still prior to editorial input by Cambridge University Press) on their **personal or departmental web page**, or in the **Institutional Repository** of the institution in which they worked at the time the paper was first submitted, or (for appropriate journals) in PubMedCentral or UK PubMedCentral, provided the posting is accompanied by a prominent statement that the paper has been accepted for publication and will appear in a revised form, subsequent to peer review and/or editorial input by Cambridge University Press, in **Think** published by Cambridge University Press, together with a copyright notice in the name of the copyright holder (Cambridge University Press or the sponsoring Society, as appropriate). On publication the full bibliographical details of the paper (volume: issue number (date), page numbers) must be inserted after the journal title, along with a link to the Cambridge website address for the journal. Inclusion of this version of the paper in Institutional Repositories outside of the institution in which the contributor worked at the time the paper was first submitted will be subject to the additional permission of Cambridge University Press (not to be unreasonably withheld).

- The right (subject to appropriate permission having been cleared for any third-party material) to post the definitive version of the contribution as published at Cambridge Journals Online (in PDF or HTML form) on their **personal or departmental web page**, no sooner than upon its appearance at Cambridge Journals Online, subject to file availability and provided the posting includes a prominent statement of the full bibliographical details, a copyright notice in the name of the copyright holder (Cambridge University Press or the sponsoring Society, as appropriate), and a link to the online edition of the journal at Cambridge Journals Online.

- The right (subject to appropriate permission having been cleared for any third-party material) to post the definitive version of the contribution as published at Cambridge Journals Online (in PDF or HTML form) in the **Institutional Repository** of the institution in which they worked at the time the paper was first submitted, or (for appropriate journals) in PubMedCentral or UK PubMedCentral, no sooner than **one year** after first publication of the paper in the journal, subject to file availability and provided the posting includes a prominent statement of the full bibliographical details, a copyright notice in the name of the copyright holder (Cambridge University Press or the sponsoring Society, as appropriate), and a link to the online edition of the journal at Cambridge Journals Online. Inclusion of this definitive version after one year in Institutional Repositories outside of the institution in which the contributor worked at the time the paper was first submitted will be subject to the additional permission of Cambridge University Press (not to be unreasonably withheld).

- The right to post an abstract of the contribution (for appropriate journals) on the Social Science Research Network (SSRN), provided the abstract is accompanied by a prominent statement that the full contribution appears in **Think** published by Cambridge University Press, together with full bibliographical details, a copyright notice in the name of the journal's copyright holder (Cambridge University Press or the sponsoring Society, as appropriate), and a link to the online edition of the journal at Cambridge Journals Online.

- The right to make hard copies of the contribution or an adapted version for their own purposes, including the right to make multiple copies for course use by their students, provided no sale is involved.

- The right to reproduce the paper or an adapted version of it in any volume of which they are editor or author. Permission will automatically be given to the publisher of such a volume, subject to normal acknowledgement.

4 Cambridge University Press co-operates in various licensing schemes that allow material to be photocopied within agreed restraints (e.g. the CCC in the USA and the CLA in the UK). Any proceeds received from such licenses, together with any proceeds from sales of subsidiary rights in the Journal, directly support its continuing publication.

5 It is understood that in some cases copyright will be held by the contributor's employer. If so, Cambridge University Press requires non-exclusive permission to deal with requests from third parties.

6 Permission to include material not in your copyright

If your contribution includes textual or illustrative material not in your copyright and not covered by fair use / fair dealing, permission must be obtained from the relevant copyright owner (usually the publisher or via the publisher) for the non-exclusive right to reproduce the material worldwide in all forms and media, including electronic publication. The relevant permission correspondence should be attached to this form.

7 Cambridge University Press shall provide the first named author with offprints or/ and a final PDF file of their article, as agreed with sponsoring Society.

If you are in doubt about whether or not permission is required, please consult the Permissions Manager, Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK. Fax: +44 (0)1223 315052. Email: Inicol@cambridge.org.

The information provided on this form will be held in perpetuity for record purposes. The name(s) and address(es) of the author(s) of the contribution may be reproduced in the journal and provided to print and online indexing and abstracting services and bibliographic databases

Please make a duplicate of this form for your own records

Author Queries

Journal: THI (Think)

Manuscript: S1477175611000194jra

No Queries

Typesetter Queries

1. In the affiliation we have square box, before and after the word Reader in philosophy so we ignore the square box. Please check and advise.

ON FUTURE PEOPLE

Rupert Read

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38

It is no longer socially-acceptable to exhibit prejudice against ethnic minority people on grounds of their ethnicity, women on grounds of their gender, or working-class people on grounds of their class. The last bastions of discrimination are being overcome: such as prejudice against gay and lesbian people, and against disabled people. ...Or, is there one more, crucial bastion of discrimination still strongly in place?

Take this kind of remark, that I have heard on an alarming number of occasions in casual or dinner-party conversation, and perhaps you have too: 'I don't really care about what happens after I'm dead and gone.' We might dismiss this as the attitude just of some old curmudgeon, and think that it is of no moral or political consequence. But: *it directly implies not caring about future people*, the next generation(s). How would we react if someone said to us, 'I just don't care about what happens to black people' or 'I just don't care about what happens to disabled people'? I take it that we would be singularly appalled.

Philosophy can explain why, quite simply. If we ought to care as much for people separated from us only by identity, or by space, then the same is true for people separated from us only by time. Future people count, too. Their lives matter just as much.

Of course, most readers of THINK probably wouldn't dream of endorsing the extreme remark cited above. But what about this: 'No-one is going to infringe on my rights! I can drive or fly as much as I like. That's freedom!' This kind of sentiment, in one way or another, is widespread these days; you can find it all over the blogosphere at the

drop of a hat. It is a product of the extreme individualism of our times. Now think what it implies: Because of an unwillingness to tolerate ‘infringements’ on one’s own ‘liberty’, one is willing to take many things that future people might need. We don’t any longer tolerate stamping on the life-chances – effectively, on the faces – of black people, working-class people, disabled people... Why then do we have any respect at all for the person who prizes their own ‘freedom’ above the right of future people to have a decent life, or indeed any life at all?

I suggest that the answer is: because we haven’t fully *thought through* yet that future people deserve to be well-treated and must be decently provided for, just as children and severely disabled people (and so on and so forth) must be. Just because we can’t hear the cries of anguish of our descendants yet to come, doesn’t mean that they don’t count... On the contrary – it just makes it all the more urgent that we make the effort to think and care about them...

Yes, we have got somewhat better about caring about people who are *spatially* distant from us – people in the ‘developing’ world. The increased power of broadcast media technology has been helpful here. But: there just ain’t any such thing as beaming pictures back to us from the future. *That* has to be left up to films such as ‘The Age of Stupid’ or ‘Children of Men’. We are still just not good enough about caring about people who are *temporally* distant from us. Future people.

Nor is this even just a failure of the political Right. Many ‘socialists’ too seem markedly more interested in the poor of the ‘developing’ world and in the working class (and in enriching them materially) than in future people. But if equality – the central value of socialism – is to *mean* anything at all, then it must apply to future people too. Industrial-growthism is no good, if it means by implication that we fail to take the rights and needs of future people seriously. We should treat them *as our equals*. So it is now clear: any real socialism *must* be an eco-socialism.

77 I think that the considerations above explain some of the
78 current epidemic of manmade-climate-change denialism,
79 which is a striking phenomenon now especially on the pol-
80 itical right (e.g. in Britain: in UKIP, the BNP, the DUP, and
81 across swathes of the Tory Party) and in the right-wing
82 media (e.g. the *Mail*, the *Express*, the *Telegraph*). The
83 debate over manmade climate change is a proxy for a
84 debate over differing visions of society: for the green move-
85 ment, of a better, more localised world; for the ‘conserva-
86 tive’ Right, of unabated ‘freedom’ now (whatever the
87 consequences for future people?). But it is vital to note that
88 the ‘conservative’ vision is rarely honest with us: few ‘con-
89 servative’ politicians dare openly to acknowledge that the
90 consequences of unmitigated uncaring ‘freedom’ (to burn,
91 to consume, to fly, etc) now *are* highly likely to be mass
92 disaster later. And so they hide behind a tragic refusal to
93 acknowledge the climate science that greens (and most of
94 the left), by contrast, can and do honestly embrace. Thus:
95 the simple reality is of course that the science in practice
96 does support one side in the debate, and not the other.

97 And even those benighted readers who have not
98 grasped the nettle of our breaching of the limits to growth –
99 first with CFCs, and now much more consequentially with
100 CO₂ – must accept at least this: that if we fail to act pre-
101 cautionarily on reining in manmade climate change, then we
102 are at least, without doubt, imposing systemic *uncertainty*
103 on future people. Imposing on them unacceptable uncer-
104 tainty and insecurity about their future, and about whether
105 they (and *their* children) will even have a future. . .

106 Some philosophers (famously, Derek Parfit) think that,
107 because we don’t know exactly what future people there
108 will be, then we cannot wrong them. My answer to Parfit’s
109 famous objection is: just because future people are in
110 some sense amorphous, doesn’t mean that they aren’t in
111 another sense perfectly concrete. They will exist (unless
112 we commit the greatest crime of all) – we just don’t know
113 exactly *who* ‘they’ are yet. . . But just because you don’t
114 know who the victims of a crime will be, doesn’t mean that

the crime is any less. And if the potential victims are in your care – as our children are, and as future people are – then that makes any such crime even worse, even more contemptible. Not to be contemplated. . .

The next great leap forward in seeking justice in this world, and seeking to put in place an ethic of real responsibility and care, will be to take seriously the claims of the future ones. It is no longer possible in the courts to treat other human beings as property, to ignore their rights: slavery is long gone. In countries such as Spain, Switzerland, and New Zealand, such real rights and protections (not mere welfarist gestures – See <http://www.abolitionistapproach.com/> – which keep animals’ property-status in place) are now being extended to great apes, and to some extent to other animals. There has even been weighty discussion, for over a generation now, of the strong arguments in favour of giving legal standing – real rights – to plants and (more generally and more crucially) to ecosystems and some actual movement in this direction this year, in Ecuador.

We will not flourish as a species unless our ecosystems flourish. I believe that it is high time for future people to be given the kinds of rights and protections that present people – black or white, gay or straight, abled or disabled – already take for granted. *Our human descendants* need to be granted legal standing. This will protect them, and will offer some significant protection – probably, much better protection than any we currently have in place – for ecosystems.

A tentative start has been made, for instance in Hungary with their bringing in a Commissioner for Future Generations, a sort of ombudsman with the interests of future people in mind. But this is only the most tentative of starts. . .

For, if you are against prejudice against ethnic minority people, women, etc. – and you surely are – then it is time to take up the same attitude toward the people of the future. If you believe in justice, if you care about people – and you

153 certainly do – then it is time to get behind the idea of being
154 unprejudiced against future people. Let us not take refuge,
155 tacitly or explicitly, in this prejudice, ever again. Ending this
156 prejudice will mean a revolution in our practices. It will save
157 our civilisation.

158 Future people are coming; and when they arrive, if we
159 haven't created a decent world for them, boy are they
160 going to be mad... Future people may bite back – our chil-
161 dren and grandchildren may seek financial restitution from
162 us, if we let them down catastrophically...

163 But that isn't why we should take future people seriously.
164 We should take them seriously because it is only right to
165 do so, and anything less is not just unjust, it is uncaring,
166 and unworthy of us... The Existentialist philosopher and
167 novelist Jean-Paul Sartre warned us during a previous
168 great crisis – the rise of Nazism – against seeking for a
169 'reprieve' from facing up to our responsibilities. We need to
170 stop hoping for a reprieve. There will be no reprieve; every
171 delay just makes things worse for the future people, and
172 (by extension) for us.

173 We need to start fighting the climate war now. Anything
174 less simply connotes an unjust discrimination against future
175 people. Philosophers should lead the way, in making clear
176 that prejudice against future people can be acceptable no
177 longer.

178 And: this might just be the most powerful rhetorical tool
179 at our disposal yet to have emerged... For when you talk
180 this through with ordinary people, they *get* it. No-one wants
181 any more to be prejudiced. If we can get folk to see that to
182 be the unprejudiced 'liberal-minded' people they want to
183 think of themselves as being, they have to start treating the
184 future – future people – very differently, then another world
185 really may be possible...

186
187
188
189 *Rupert Read is Reader in Philosophy at the University of*
190 *East Anglia. r.read@uea.ac.uk*