

Introduction: On Intergenerational Justice

By Monique Rooney

IN HIS ESSAY 'ON INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE', JOHN FROW DESCRIBES A CONTRIVANCE OF certain Victorian novels hinging on 'a will that controls the lives of the heirs, frequently through a codicil that has been kept secret or suppressed and that endangers the life of the one who inherits'. While this plot device facilitates exploration of the role of the law in perpetuating the 'grip of the old and the dead upon the young', fictional treatments of the 'postmortem transfer of assets' frequently end in failure. Turning from Victorian fiction to our current situation, Frow extends the motif of 'intergenerational injustice' beyond the transfer of wealth to consider what it means to pass on our 'world' and 'planet Earth' to posterity.

This *Australian Humanities Review* forum explores the topic of 'intergenerational [in]justice' in the light of Frow's definition of it as 'the [failed] actions taken by one generation to transfer a world in an enhanced state to those who come after'. Contributors Fiona Allon, Danielle Celermajer, Amelia Dale, Tom Ford, Barbara Holloway, Alexandra Kingston-Reese, Julieanne Lamond and Nicole Rogers were invited to use Frow's essay as a springboard for thinking about the role and meaning of various themes as these relate to climate change and environmental catastrophe. Together their essays engage with climate change and the law;

multispecies justice; colonial legacies and environmental damage; injustice of inherited wealth and its redistribution according to generational developments; disciplinary and intellectual inheritances; historical discontinuity, political disorganisation and the negation of inheritance; posterity and responsibility to past, present and future life.

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