

ANALYTICAL PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Christopher D. Stone asks us to imagine the *unthinkable*. He tells us:

I am quite seriously proposing that we give legal rights to forests, oceans, rivers, and other so-called “natural objects” in the environment—indeed, to the natural environment as a whole.

Tom Regan goes further:

in order to arrive at the best theory of our duties to one another, we must recognize our equal inherent value as individuals, reason—not sentiment, not emotion—reason compels us to recognize the equal inherent value of these animals and, with this, their equal right to be treated with respect.

And finally, Joel Feinberg argues:

it makes sense to speak of the rights of unborn generations against us, and that given our moral judgment that we ought to conserve our environmental inheritance for them ... from the perspective of our remote descendants it is basically a matter of justice, or respect for their rights.

In our course, we have emphasized the notion of moral and legal standing as a way of understanding and evaluating these claims. ***Your analytical paper should address the broad question of whether trees (really the entire environment), animals, and future generations should have standing.*** You will need to explain the notions of moral and legal standing, and then explain, and critically evaluate, the arguments presented for moral and legal standing for trees, animals, and future generations. Ultimately you will need to defend your assessment of these claims.

Your paper should no longer than 2500 words (double spaced). There is no minimum length, but it's hard for me to imagine that an adequate job on this assignment could come in at less than 1000 words.