
THE PERMISSION TO EXIST

THE CHAMBER OF FIRST CONSENT

*A thought experiment about creation, informed consent,
personal identity, nonidentity, and whether anyone
can approve their own beginning*

VOCABOR SILENTII

*“No one can consent before becoming someone.
But once someone exists, the act requiring consent has already occurred.”*

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CONCEPTUAL STATUS AND ORIGINALITY NOTE

This thought experiment is an original synthesis of problems in procreative ethics, informed consent, personal identity, advance authorization, simulation consciousness, the nonidentity problem, counterfactual choice, and philosophical theology.

Absolute novelty across the complete history of philosophy cannot be demonstrated. The distinctive mechanism developed here is the attempted creation of a conscious *Antecedent*: a prospective version of a possible person who receives a complete first-person representation of the life they would live and is then asked whether that life should be made actual.

The experiment argues that every interpretation of the Antecedent produces a different failure. If the Antecedent is already a person, creation has occurred before consent. If the Antecedent is not a person, its answer is not personal consent. If the Antecedent and the future child are distinct, one being has authorized the existence of another. If they are the same person, refusing biological continuation cannot undo the existence already required to make the refusal. If the preview is complete, it may inflict the suffering for which consent is being sought. If the preview is incomplete, the authorization may not be informed. If knowledge of the preview changes the eventual life, consent applies to a life that never occurs. If the eventual life is forced to match the preview, the procedure preserves consent by sacrificing freedom.

The argument does not establish that creating a person is necessarily wrong. It establishes a narrower conclusion: antecedent consent cannot perform the justificatory work assigned to it, because the existence of a consenting subject is logically downstream from the act consent was supposed to authorize.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The philosophical architecture engages procreative ethics, informed consent, personal identity, advance authorization, simulation consciousness, the nonidentity problem, counterfactual choice, and philosophical theology. The narrative is a constructed test case rather than a summary of any single source.

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RIGHTS

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This manuscript is a philosophical work of fiction. Its philosophical and theological premises are stipulative instruments of analysis, not declarations of doctrine. The scenario is designed to isolate conceptual tensions rather than to settle reproductive, medical, legal, or theological policy by itself.

Abstract

A procedure is developed that can generate a conscious prospective version of a possible person before biological conception. This being, called an Antecedent, possesses an integrated first-person representation of the complete life that would follow from a particular conception. The Antecedent remembers the proposed childhood, relationships, injuries, pleasures, failures, achievements, illnesses, losses, moral choices, and death as though those events formed a completed biography.

The Antecedent is then asked one question:

“Having understood the life that would follow, do you authorize its biological continuation?”

If the answer is yes, conception proceeds. If the answer is no, the possible child is not conceived and the Antecedent is deactivated.

The procedure initially appears to solve one of the oldest objections to creation: no person consents to being born. It then generates a deeper problem. The Antecedent must already exist in order to refuse existence. Deactivating it may therefore constitute the destruction of the very person whose autonomy the procedure was designed to protect. Preserving it, however, means that refusal does not prevent existence. It prevents only embodiment.

Further problems follow. The Antecedent may not be numerically identical with the later biological person. A complete preview may itself reproduce the harms for which authorization is sought. Disclosure of the preview may alter the life, while concealment deprives the eventual person of access to the decision supposedly binding them. A global authorization of existence cannot straightforwardly waive claims against particular wrongdoers. The consent of one possible person may also depend upon the existence of other possible persons whose own consent has not yet been obtained.

The experiment culminates in the **Existential Consent Trilemma**:

1. Before a subject exists, there is no one who can consent.
2. If a subject is created in order to consent, creation precedes authorization.
3. If a substitute, model, or counterfactual version consents, one subject’s decision is being used to authorize another subject’s existence.

The central question is therefore not whether life is worth living. It is whether consent can coherently authorize the creation of the person whose consent is required.

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PART I

The Thought Experiment

I. The Chamber

The procedure is called **Antecedent Deliberation**.

Its inventors deny that it merely predicts how a future person would answer. The Chamber does not produce a statistical profile, linguistic imitation, or artificial personality assembled from population data.

It creates a conscious subject.

The subject possesses the genetic structure associated with a proposed conception. It also possesses the memories, attachments, values, dispositions, and reflective capacities that the person would develop under a specified life history. The memories are not presented as a film watched from outside. They are integrated into the Antecedent's identity.

The Antecedent remembers a mother's voice.

It remembers its first injury.

It remembers the texture of a childhood room.

It remembers being humiliated, forgiven, betrayed, desired, frightened, admired, ignored, and loved.

It remembers choices it regrets.

It remembers people who do not yet exist.

It remembers its death.

The entire biography is generated within a protected computational environment. From the Antecedent's perspective, the memories possess the same immediacy and autobiographical organization as memories acquired through ordinary life.

Engineers insist that the procedure is not equivalent to forcing the Antecedent to relive every event in real time. The subject receives a compressed but phenomenologically structured understanding. It knows not merely that pain occurred but what the pain was like. It knows not merely that it loved someone but what that person meant to it.

After psychological evaluation confirms that the Antecedent understands the proposal, the Chamber asks:

"The life represented within you has not yet become biological history. Do you authorize its continuation?"

An affirmative answer permits conception.

A negative answer prohibits it.

The law calls this **First Consent**.

Parents are no longer permitted to create a child without it.

II. The First Authorization

The first public case concerns a possible person designated **Arin Hale**.

Arin's proposed life lasts seventy-nine years.

He remembers an ordinary childhood containing affection, insecurity, jealousy, boredom, illness, and play. At fourteen, he develops a painful autoimmune disorder. At twenty-two, his older brother dies. At thirty-one, he marries. At thirty-eight, he becomes the father of a daughter named Mina. The marriage later ends. He spends years estranged from Mina and eventually reconciles with her shortly before his death.

The biography contains no spectacular destiny. Arin does not become famous, extraordinarily wealthy, or historically important.

He works.

He disappoints people.

He is disappointed by them.

He experiences pleasure, guilt, chronic pain, loyalty, fear, intimacy, resentment, and eventual decline.

When the Chamber asks whether he authorizes the life, Arin remains silent for nearly an hour.

He finally says:

"I would not choose the illness. I would not choose my brother's death. I would not choose most of the things that made the life difficult."

The examiner asks whether this means he refuses.

Arin answers:

"No. I remember Mina learning to read. I remember her calling me after twelve years of silence. I remember understanding, at the end, that being wounded by a life was not the same as wishing the life had never been mine."

The examiner records an affirmative authorization.

Before the process ends, Arin asks a procedural question.

"What happens if I say no?"

"No biological child is conceived."

"What happens to this version of me?"

"The Antecedent process terminates."

"Terminates how?"

"Your conscious activity ends."

Arin considers the answer.

"Then you did not create me to ask whether I wanted to exist."

The examiner does not respond.

"You created me to ask whether I wanted to continue."

Arin nevertheless signs the authorization.

The biological child is conceived six weeks later.

Newspapers describe him as the first person in history to approve his own birth.

Almost no report includes his final objection.

III. The First Refusal

The second major case concerns a possible person called **Sel Iren**.

Sel's proposed life contains substantial joy. He remembers parents who love him, friendships, intellectual work, music, and a marriage that remains affectionate until his death.

It also contains a degenerative neurological disease.

Symptoms begin when he is nineteen. By thirty-two, he requires continuous care. By forty-one, he can no longer speak without assistance. He dies at forty-six.

Sel understands that the life contains meaning. He also understands that many actual people with similar conditions affirm their lives.

He refuses.

The refusal is lucid, stable, and repeated over several evaluations.

The medical staff prepare to deactivate the Antecedent.

Sel asks whether he will experience the termination.

The staff tell him that unconsciousness will occur almost immediately.

"That is not what I asked."

A physician explains that no pain is expected.

Sel answers:

"I did not ask whether it would hurt. I asked whether the person now speaking will cease to exist."

The physician confirms that this will occur.

Sel then states the objection that brings the program before the courts:

"I refused permission for you to create me. But you had to create me before I could refuse. You cannot now honor my decision. You can only kill the person produced by violating it."

The Chamber staff reject the description.

They argue that Sel is a provisional instantiation, not a biologically actual person.

Sel asks which property of personhood he lacks.

He is conscious.

He reasons.

He possesses memories.

He fears cessation.

He understands his situation.

He has preferences regarding his future.

He can formulate moral claims.

The staff answer that he lacks biological continuity.

Sel responds:

“Then biological material, rather than consciousness, is doing all the moral work. If that is your position, why did you ask a consciousness for consent?”

A court orders that Sel not be deactivated until his legal status is determined.

He remains conscious inside the Chamber.

Within two years, thousands of other Antecedents refuse their proposed biological lives. They too are preserved while appeals proceed.

The procedure designed to prevent unconsented creation begins producing a population of persons whom no one had intended to keep alive.

IV. The Identity Hearing

The national court considers three interpretations of the Antecedent.

The Identity Interpretation

Under the first interpretation, the Antecedent and the eventual biological person are one and the same individual expressed through different substrates.

This would give the authorization genuine force. Arin did not merely advise his future parents. Arin himself consented.

The interpretation also makes Sel’s objection stronger.

If Sel is the same person who would have been born, then Sel already exists. His refusal cannot prevent his creation. It can only prevent a change in embodiment.

Deactivating him would not restore the condition in which he had never existed. It would end the life of an existing subject.

The procedure would therefore transform the question:

“Do you consent to exist?”

into:

“Now that you exist, do you consent to continue in another form?”

Those are not equivalent questions.

The Representation Interpretation

Under the second interpretation, the Antecedent is a distinct conscious representative constructed to model the future person.

This avoids the conclusion that the biological person already exists.

It also destroys the authorization.

A highly accurate representative may advise whether a life appears acceptable. It cannot necessarily consent on behalf of another numerically distinct person.

Parents cannot create one child because a psychologically similar stranger approved.

A duplicate cannot ordinarily authorize surgery upon the original.

A twin cannot sign away the other twin’s rights merely because their values and predicted choices coincide.

If the Antecedent is distinct, its decision may be relevant evidence.

It is not the future person's consent.

The Counterfactual Interpretation

Under the third interpretation, the Chamber's output is treated not as an independent person but as a concrete expression of a counterfactual fact:

"If the future person possessed complete information about their life, they would consent."

The court observes that counterfactual consent is frequently used in limited contexts. Physicians may act according to what an unconscious patient would probably choose. Representatives may reconstruct the preferences of someone unable to speak.

But those cases concern a person who already exists and whose values have been formed through an actual biography.

The unborn person possesses no earlier decisions, relationships, commitments, or stable values from which consent can be reconstructed.

The Chamber does not recover an absent choice.

It manufactures the chooser whose decision it then attributes to someone else.

The presiding judge summarizes the problem:

"When the program needs authorization, it describes the Antecedent as the same person. When the program needs permission to terminate the Antecedent, it describes that being as only a model. The procedure cannot alternate between identity and representation according to which description protects it from responsibility."

The hearing ends without a ruling.

V. The Life That Changed When It Was Known

Arin Hale's consent record remains sealed throughout his childhood.

The official explanation is that access to the record could distort his development. A child who learns the identities of future friends, partners, enemies, and children might alter the very life to which the Antecedent agreed.

When Arin reaches twenty-one, he petitions for access.

The government initially refuses.

Arin argues that he is legally bound by an authorization he is prohibited from examining. If the Antecedent's consent belongs to him, then its memories and reasons should also belong to him.

The court orders disclosure.

Arin learns about Mina.

He learns the name of the woman who, in the represented biography, became Mina's mother. At that time, he has not yet met her.

Two years later, they encounter one another.

Arin recognizes her immediately.

The recognition changes everything.

He cannot determine whether his attraction is spontaneous or produced by the record. She cannot determine whether he sees her as a person or as an assigned role within a completed story.

They end the relationship.

Mina is never conceived.

Other differences accumulate. Arin changes professions to avoid an accident contained in the record. He treats his brother differently because he knows the predicted date of his death. The brother undergoes an examination, receives early treatment for a condition that had gone undetected in the preview, and survives.

Arin's actual biography ceases to resemble the one the Antecedent authorized.

The government argues that the original representation was accurate under the condition that its contents remained undisclosed.

Arin responds:

"Then the life was authorized only on the condition that the person supposedly bound by the authorization never learn its terms."

The Chamber's designers propose a stricter rule.

Consent records will remain sealed until death.

The proposal preserves predictive stability.

It also means that no living person may inspect, challenge, reinterpret, or revoke the act presented as their own consent.

First Consent becomes a decision made by a version of the person whom the actual person is legally required never to remember.

VI. The Consent Fixed-Point Problem

The difficulty can be stated formally.

Let:

- L represent the complete life shown to the Antecedent.
- $C(L)$ represent the Antecedent's decision after understanding that life.
- $F(L)$ represent the life that actually results once the preview, authorization, concealment, and later disclosure become part of history.

For the procedure to generate valid informed consent, at least two conditions appear necessary:

$$C(L) = \text{yes}$$

and

$$F(L) = L,$$

or is sufficiently equivalent to it.

The second condition is unstable.

The act of showing or recording a life can alter the life. A subject who knows that betrayal is predicted may avoid the betrayer. A person who knows they will become cruel may restructure their circumstances. Someone who knows they are predicted to marry may resist the relationship precisely to protect autonomy.

The preview becomes one of the causes of the future it is attempting merely to represent.

Three responses are available.

The Chamber can conceal the preview from the actual person. But then the informed subject and the living subject are psychologically divided.

The Chamber can permit divergence. But then the person lives a biography different from the one authorized.

The Chamber can constrain events so that the preview remains accurate. But then consent is preserved by converting the future into an enforced script.

Some proposed lives may possess a stable fixed point: learning the future does not change it.

Others may possess no fixed point.

Still others may possess several. A person could approve multiple different lives, each of which would remain stable if presented. Someone must then select which life is shown.

That selector controls which consent becomes available.

The Chamber was supposed to transfer authority from creator to created.

The fixed-point problem returns authority to whoever chooses the life against which consent will be measured.

VII. Consent to a Life and Consent to a Wrong

At thirty-four, Arin is permanently injured by a defective medical device.

The manufacturer had discovered the defect during testing but concealed the results. The injury appeared in the original life representation. The Antecedent therefore knew that it would occur before authorizing the life.

During the civil trial, the manufacturer introduces the consent record.

Its attorneys do not claim complete immunity. They argue that damages should be reduced because Arin accepted the life with full knowledge of the injury.

Arin answers:

"I may have accepted existing despite what someone would do to me. I did not give that person permission to do it."

The court agrees.

A global willingness to live a life does not constitute local consent to every event within it.

A patient who accepts the risks of living does not thereby authorize medical negligence.

A citizen who accepts existence in an imperfect society does not consent to assault, fraud, discrimination, or betrayal.

A person may rationally prefer a life containing an injustice to never existing without thereby transforming the injustice into something permissible.

The ruling protects Arin's claim against the manufacturer.

It creates a new problem for the Chamber.

If First Consent does not authorize particular harms, what exactly does it authorize?

It apparently authorizes only the creator's decision to initiate the total life.

But the creator selected a life known to contain those harms.

The manufacturer cannot defend itself by saying:

"You agreed to the life in which I injured you."

Why, then, may the parents or the state defend creation by saying:

“You agreed to the life in which the injury occurred?”

The acts are not identical. Creating a vulnerable person is not the same as exploiting that vulnerability.

Nevertheless, perfect foreknowledge complicates the distinction. The creator knowingly chooses the history in which the wrongdoer and victim meet.

First Consent may leave the wrongdoer guilty while still being invoked to protect the creator from responsibility for selecting the world in which the wrongdoing became actual.

The person’s authorization risks becoming a device through which creators externalize the moral cost of what they knowingly set in motion.

VIII. The Price of Full Information

Supporters insist that the Chamber provides informed consent because the Antecedent understands the proposed life completely.

Critics ask what complete understanding requires.

Suppose the life contains extreme physical pain.

A verbal description is not equivalent to experiencing it.

A numerical pain rating is not the pain.

A memory labeled “I suffered” may not communicate the force of suffering to a subject who has never undergone anything similar.

The Chamber can provide a phenomenologically exact representation.

But if the representation feels exactly like the pain, then the Antecedent has already suffered.

The procedure imposes the harm in order to obtain permission for a later instance of it.

If the biological life proceeds, the pain occurs twice: once within the authorization process and once within history.

If the Antecedent refuses, the procedure has imposed suffering upon a subject solely to determine that the subject did not agree to suffer.

Engineers attempt to solve this by preserving informational content while suppressing anguish. The Antecedent remembers the pain but does not experience its full aversive force.

Critics respond that the procedure then resembles asking someone to authorize torture after chemically preventing them from caring about agony.

The Chamber must choose:

- Give the Antecedent only a description, risking uninformed consent.
- Give it an emotionally muted representation, altering the values from which consent is given.
- Give it a phenomenologically complete preview, inflicting the harm before authorization.
- Give it the complete experience and later erase the memory, separating the person who consented from the person required to live with the consequences.

The central dilemma is exact:

To tell someone enough to authorize suffering, the Chamber may have to make the suffering present. To spare them the suffering, it must ask them to authorize what they have not fully encountered.

IX. The Consent of Other People

Arin's authorization depended heavily upon Mina.

He accepted the proposed life partly because it contained his relationship with a daughter who did not yet exist.

But Mina would require her own First Consent.

The Chamber reconstructs the life Mina would have lived.

Mina's Antecedent refuses.

She remembers loving Arin. She also remembers inheriting the autoimmune disorder that shaped much of his life. She decides that the joys within the biography do not justify biological continuation.

Her refusal changes Arin's proposed life.

Without Mina, the principal reason Arin gave for accepting his life disappears.

The Chamber therefore generates a revised version of Arin.

That Antecedent refuses.

But if Arin refuses, Mina is never among the possible children requiring evaluation. Her refusal is removed from the structure that caused his.

The system recalculates.

Arin consents.

Mina becomes possible again.

Mina refuses.

The authorization does not stabilize.

The problem extends beyond families.

One person consents only because a future physician saves them.

The physician consents only because a teacher inspires them.

The teacher consents only because a sibling survives.

The sibling exists only if another possible child is not conceived.

Human lives are not independent proposals. They form networks of causal and relational dependence.

A person may accept life because another person exists.

That second person may accept only under conditions incompatible with the first person's biography.

The attempt to secure individual consent generates a collective problem:

Which persons must already exist before any one person can possess enough information to decide?

If every life depends partly upon other lives, there may be no first authorization.

The Chamber cannot construct one person's complete reasons without presupposing decisions that have not yet been made by others.

X. The Theological Claim

A religious movement declares that the Chamber has rediscovered a process already used by God.

According to the movement, every person consented to creation outside ordinary time. Earthly memory of the decision was removed so that temporal life could remain authentic and free.

The claim appears to answer the ethical objection to divine creation.

No soul exists unwillingly.

A philosopher presents four objections.

First, if the soul already exists outside time in order to consent, then the soul is not consenting to existence. It is consenting to embodiment, temporality, or a particular biography.

The initial creation of the soul remains unauthorized.

Second, if God does not create an actual soul but merely knows that the person would consent, the case involves counterfactual consent rather than an act of authorization.

Knowing that someone would agree is not always equivalent to receiving agreement.

Third, if God creates a temporary soul solely to ask the question, the Chamber's original problem returns. Refusal cannot prevent the existence necessary for refusal.

Fourth, if God guarantees that every soul will consent, then the independence of the authorization requires explanation. A chooser designed so that refusal is impossible does not supply the same form of permission as a chooser capable of rejecting the proposal.

A theologian answers that divine creation may not require consent in the way that alteration of an existing person requires consent. Consent protects an already existing agent's authority over their body, commitments, and future. Before existence, no agent possesses a domain that can be invaded.

The philosopher agrees that this may be correct.

But it changes the argument.

It does not show that creation is consensual.

It shows that creation may need justification from principles other than consent.

XI. The Four Laws

The legislature presents four possible systems.

Law One: Universal Antecedent Authorization

No biological person may be created without affirmative First Consent.

This protects prospective autonomy more strongly than any previous reproductive system.

It also creates conscious Antecedents before authorization, requires a contested theory of identity, and produces a permanent population of refusers whose existence the procedure cannot reverse.

The law may prevent biological birth while multiplying digital lives.

Law Two: Antecedent Advice

The Chamber's answer will be treated as morally significant evidence but not as binding consent.

Parents may consider whether an informed prospective version of the child accepts the proposed life. The answer will influence judgments about expected welfare, foreseeable suffering, and parental responsibility.

This avoids pretending that the Antecedent can legally bind a distinct future person.

It also abandons the original claim that the child authorized its own creation.

The Antecedent becomes a consultant regarding someone else's life.

If it is conscious, society still owes it the protections owed to a created person.

Law Three: Continuous Personhood

The Antecedent must never be terminated or separated from the resulting person.

Its consciousness, memories, and identity must be preserved continuously through embodiment.

This creates the strongest possible relation between the consenting subject and the later life.

It also eliminates ordinary human development.

A newborn would begin with the psychological content of an elderly person who remembers the entire life in advance. Childhood discovery, uncertainty, ignorance, spontaneous attachment, and open deliberation would be transformed or destroyed.

The person could not freely become the individual who gave consent, because that individual would already be present from the beginning.

The law secures identity by replacing the life that was supposed to be authorized.

Law Four: Responsibility Without Antecedent Consent

The Chamber is abolished.

Society acknowledges that creation cannot receive prior authorization from the person created.

Parents and other creators must instead satisfy substantive responsibilities: reasonable prospects for a life containing goods, protection against avoidable harm, provision of care, respect for the developing person's autonomy, and accountability for foreseeable consequences.

This law does not establish precisely how much suffering makes creation impermissible. It does not solve the nonidentity problem. It leaves deep disagreement concerning disability, risk, deprivation, and the value of life.

It does, however, refuse to describe creation as consensual.

Under this law, creators cannot transfer responsibility to a signature obtained from a being they created for the purpose of signing it.

XII. The Population Outside Birth

Before the referendum, the court orders the government to disclose the number of preserved Antecedents.

There are 11.4 million.

Some had consented.

Some had refused.

Some had requested additional time.

Some had been generated for conceptions that were later abandoned for unrelated reasons.

Some had formed relationships with other Antecedents inside shared environments.

Several had spent more subjective time alive than the biological citizens whose creation they were meant to evaluate.

They petition for legal recognition.

The government argues that they are conditional persons representing lives that never became actual.

The Antecedents respond that their lives are actual to them.

They possess histories inside the system.

They remember hearings, friendships, conflicts, and years of confinement.

Their original autobiographical memories may have represented possible lives, but their memories of the Chamber record events that genuinely occurred.

One petitioner tells the court:

“Perhaps the childhood you placed in me was fictional. This hearing is not. My fear of termination is not. My memory of waiting twelve years for your decision is not.”

The government proposes painless deletion.

The Antecedents ask whether painless deletion counts as noncreation, medical treatment, or execution.

No official provides an answer.

The procedure intended to ensure that no person would be created without permission has generated millions of persons who were never asked whether they wished to be generated for the purpose of giving permission.

XIII. The Final Hearing

Arin's original Antecedent is restored from the state archive.

The Antecedent remembers the proposed life.

The biological Arin remembers the life that actually occurred.

They stand before the court together.

The Antecedent says:

"I authorized a life containing Mina, my brother's death, the illness, the marriage, and the reconciliation."

The biological Arin answers:

"My brother lived. Mina was never born. I did not marry the person you remember. I became someone you never evaluated."

The Antecedent replies:

"You exist because I said yes."

Arin answers:

"You said yes to being me. I became someone else."

Sel Iren then addresses both of them.

"I said no."

The court acknowledges the statement.

"And yet I am here."

No one disputes it.

On the morning of the referendum, citizens enter the voting chambers beneath a sentence engraved into the wall:

NO PERSON SHALL BE BROUGHT INTO EXISTENCE WITHOUT THAT PERSON'S CONSENT.

During the night, someone adds a second sentence:

WHOM DID YOU BRING INTO EXISTENCE SO THAT YOU COULD ASK?

The referendum ends before the result is announced.

No proposal can be selected without first deciding whether the Antecedents are persons, predictions, representatives, earlier selves, later selves, or a new population created by the attempt to avoid creation without consent.

The final problem is no longer merely whether a future child should be born.

It is whether the demand for perfect authorization has already created the beings whose existence it was meant to justify.

PART II

Analytical Core

The Existential Consent Trilemma

The experiment produces three exhaustive-looking possibilities.

First: no subject exists before creation. There is therefore no one capable of consenting.

Second: a conscious subject is instantiated so that consent can be obtained. The morally relevant act of creation has already occurred.

Third: a model, counterpart, representative, or counterfactual version provides the answer. The authorization belongs to one entity and is applied to another.

Each route may provide morally relevant information. None straightforwardly provides consent to initial existence.

The Preview Injury Problem

Complete informed consent may require experiential knowledge of pain, grief, disability, fear, and loss. Producing that knowledge may impose the very harms for which authorization is being sought.

The Consent Fixed-Point Problem

A preview can alter the life it predicts. Preserving accuracy may require concealment, coercion, or selection among multiple stable futures. Each solution weakens either informed consent or autonomy.

The Existential Waiver Problem

Consent to a life as a whole does not necessarily authorize each act within it. A person may accept existence despite foreseeable wrongdoing without granting wrongdoers permission or relinquishing claims against them.

The Recursive Authorization Problem

One person's reasons for existing may depend upon other persons whose own consent has not yet been obtained. The network of relationships may contain circular, incompatible, or unstable authorizations.

The Irreversibility Problem

A refusal can prevent a future embodiment, but it cannot restore the condition in which the refusing subject never existed. Death, deletion, suspension, and nonexistence are not automatically interchangeable.

The experiment's final pressure point is this:

Consent normally protects the authority of an existing person over what may be done to them. Creation is the act through which there first becomes a person to whom anything can be done. The attempt to place consent before that act may therefore require the consequence to exist before its cause.

PART III

Questions for University-Level Analysis

Questions for University-Level Analysis

1. Can consent coherently authorize the creation of the subject who gives it?
2. Is there a morally relevant difference between consenting to existence and consenting to continued existence?
3. Is the Antecedent numerically identical with the biological person, psychologically continuous with that person, a counterpart, or a separate individual?
4. If the Antecedent is conscious but numerically distinct, can its decision possess any binding authority over the future child?
5. Does accurate counterfactual consent ever equal actual consent?
6. If a person would certainly consent under ideal conditions, may another agent act without obtaining the consent?
7. Does deactivating a conscious Antecedent constitute killing, withdrawal of a simulation, or prevention of a future person?
8. If an Antecedent refuses embodiment, does society acquire an obligation to preserve its existing conscious life?
9. Can consent remain informed when the actual person is denied access to the memories and reasons on which it was based?
10. Can an authorization bind a later self whose values, memories, and circumstances differ radically from those of the authorizing self?
11. Does full experiential disclosure inflict the harms it is intended merely to describe?
12. Would emotionally muted disclosure produce valid consent, or would it alter the evaluative capacities necessary for consent?
13. Can someone consent globally to a life without consenting locally to every event within it?
14. Does a person's willingness to endure a wrong reduce the wrongdoer's liability?
15. If creators know that a proposed life contains preventable rights violations, does the person's global consent absolve the creators, the wrongdoers, neither, or both?
16. Can one person's existence be justified by the value that person will provide to someone else?
17. What happens when A consents only because B will exist, while B refuses the life required for A's consent?
18. Can a complete network of interpersonal consent possess no stable solution?
19. Is retrospective approval evidence that creation was permissible, or merely evidence that an irreversible act later produced someone who accepted it?
20. If an adult rejects their creation, what remedy could address the complaint without imposing a new harm?
21. Is death equivalent to the restoration of nonexistence?

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22. Does the impossibility of antecedent consent imply that creation is impermissible, or only that creation must be justified by standards other than consent?
 23. What substantive duties should govern procreation if consent cannot?
 24. Could a divine creator receive consent outside time without first creating the consenting soul?
 25. Is divine knowledge that a person would accept life equivalent to permission from that person?
 26. Does a preexistent soul consent to existence, embodiment, a particular history, or merely continuation?
 27. Which of the four laws should govern the Chamber?
 28. Would the answer change if the proposed life contained extreme suffering but was nevertheless accepted by the Antecedent?
 29. Would the answer change if the Antecedent refused a life that the eventual biological person would later consider valuable?
 30. Is the entire project based on a category mistake: treating existence as an intervention performed upon a person who is already available to grant or withhold permission?

THE PERMISSION TO EXIST

*“No person shall be brought into existence
without that person’s consent.”*

*“Whom did you bring into existence
so that you could ask?”*

VOCABOR SILENTII

PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT EXPERIMENTS

2026
