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perspective, the notions of abstract moral relations and moral kinds may seem unacceptably peculiar. Though such things “cannot appear on any naturalist metaphysical map”, this is said to be “a problem for naturalism, not intuitionism” (105). I doubt that naturalists would agree on this point, and Kaspar does not say much to persuade them.

In fairness, he does consider what he calls ‘the convention objection’, according to which we can give a less extravagant account of moral relations and moral kinds in terms of constitutive rules or conventions that regulate our behaviour (118). However, Kaspar argues that conventionalist accounts fail to capture the universality and the ‘inner necessities’ of moral kinds. Promising, for example, is ubiquitous – it is found in every culture (we are told). And “internal to promising is the necessary relations that obtain between any part and the whole of a promise” (118). As Kaspar notes, the conventionalist will offer an evolutionary account of these things (or at least of their appearance). But he thinks such an account will be unsatisfactory, on the basis that it will not be able to explain why promising has the internal structure it actually has.

Assuming that it is true that our particular structured practice of promising is ubiquitous in human societies, I suspect that the conventionalist will simply deny that his or her theory is unable to explain why it is this structure that emerged. He or she may appeal to the common needs, desires and interests of our ancestors in order to give an evolutionary explanation of the emergence of a practice with a particular form. And this does seem a possibility. So even if Kaspar’s manoeuvres show that his position is rationally justifiable, he does not show that the alternative is not so. Given that his original stated aim was to show what a completed intuitionist moral theory would be like, perhaps this is not a serious failing. His theory of moral kinds may not convince those of a naturalist persuasion, but it is an interesting proposal for how to flesh out realism. We will just need independent arguments to persuade us of realism, and to persuade us against anti-realism.

Nonetheless, Kaspar has succeeded in creating a lucid and engaging guide for those unfamiliar with intuitionism. The book will certainly be accessible to undergraduates – its chapter summaries are especially helpful in this regard – so I think it is likely to make a very useful teaching resource. Kaspar draws on both contemporary literature and on the work of important early intuitionists, thereby charting the course that he thinks intuitionism should take. Whether or not moral intuitionism is more successful than its rivals, Kaspar does an excellent job of showcasing its attractions.

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Dennis MCKERLIE. *Justice Between the Young and the Old*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 223 pp.

Dennis McKerlie’s book on the topic of justice between age groups has been long expected within the small academic field of age-group justice, and more generally in the

two wider domains of intergenerational justice and egalitarian theories of social justice. The author sets himself the task of asking a number of crucial questions that have been discussed far too little in political philosophy. Which inequalities between young and old are unfair? Which principles should govern institutions insofar as they affect different age groups differently? The ageing of the elderly will provoke an ‘escalating burden’, McKerlie argues, so is it fair to deny scarce resources to the elderly if this can improve younger people’s prospects? Is it fair if the young decide to ration health care or diminish transfers to the elderly?

McKerlie had already published three key articles on this topic: the pivotal “Equality and Time” in *Ethics* (1989 99/3: 475-491), and later two articles in *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, “Equality Between Age Groups” (1992 21/3: 275-295) and “Justice Between the Young and the Old” (2001 30/2: 152-177). In these articles, he provides a critical assessment of the widespread ‘complete lives’ assumption of most egalitarian accounts of social justice. He also puts forward an alternative theory that he believes more appropriate to questions of justice between young and old: the simultaneous segments view. However, his account was not quite as developed as alternative conceptions of age-group justice, such as Norman Daniels’s prudential lifespan account (*Am I My Parents’ Keeper? An Essay on Justice Between the Young and the Old*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988). As such, McKerlie’s account was promising, but not quite sufficiently articulated and comprehensive to be a serious challenge to complete lives egalitarians. Egalitarian theorists were therefore in need of a fully formed account of what the alternative conception might be. The present review will evaluate McKerlie’s theory of age-group justice as it appears in his new book, in light of the challenges to which his theory was expected to give rise.

From the end of the 1980s, McKerlie took part in a very abstract debate that came to be referred to as the ‘equality through time debate’, which concerned the adequate time unit that egalitarian accounts of justice should adopt. The few theorists who engaged in the debate regretted that philosophers had paid so little attention to this question in the past and that as a result, important questions had been left unanswered. As Laslett put it before the emergence of this debate: “[...] the revival of political theory over the past three decades has taken place within the grossly simplifying assumptions of a largely timeless world” (“The Conversation Between Generations.” In *Philosophy, Politics and Society*. Edited by Peter Laslett and James Fishkin, 36-56 [36]. Oxford: Blackwell, 1979). McKerlie complained that complete lives egalitarianism had established itself as the dominant default answer to the problem yet it was still fraught with difficulties that needed to be revealed. The following diagram by Larry S. Temkin (*Inequality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, 234) helps to illustrate what was at stake.

The diagram represents two individuals A and B’s levels of wellbeing at different moments of their lives – each period T represents 20 years. Here, their respective results are compared in two different ways. In the first case, we look at how they fare comparatively over their complete lives: they are perfectly equal. In the second case, we look at how they fare at simultaneous segments: they are in fact unequal at each segment. This

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illustration shows that, depending on the time unit that we select for equality, we will have different answers to the question ‘Are A and B equal?’. In the diagram, the first approach is the dominant view that McKerlie criticises and the second is the alternative view he himself endorses. According to simultaneous segments egalitarianism, when considering people born at different times, we should not solely consider that they should be equal over their complete lives, but we should also, and perhaps most importantly, focus on how they fare in relation to each other at specific moments in time.

		T1		T2		T3		T4		T5	
Case I:	A	2 + 4 + 6 + 8								=	20
	B	3 + 5 + 7 + 5								=	20
		T1		T2		T3		T4		T5	
Case II:	A	2		4		6		8			
	B			3		5		7		5	
				1	+	1	+	1		=	3

Against complete lives egalitarianism, McKerlie has famously raised a series of challenging examples that he develops again in his new book. One of them is the following: imagine a couple swapping position every 10 years; the husband has all control over his wife for 10 years and in the next 10 years she has all power over him and so on. At the end of their lives they will have equally dominated each other. He argues, if inequalities between complete lives were all that mattered to equality, we should not find this example objectionable. However, he argues, most of us do find this problematic. Phases of domination like these do not cancel out diachronically, they add up and we can argue that the members of this couple are in fact always unequal. This, he explains, is because we also, and perhaps mostly, care about inequalities between simultaneous segments.

This abstract and theoretical debate has crucial implications for our understanding of intergenerational equality. The fundamental distinction between age groups and birth cohorts, the two hidden meanings of the concept of generation, must be highlighted to translate the first debate into the second. Birth cohorts are groups of people born roughly at the same time and aging together (e.g. the baby boomers), while age groups are groups of people at a certain stage of their lives (e.g. the elderly). In Temkin’s diagram, A and B can be replaced by birth cohort A and birth cohort B. If one endorses a complete lives egalitarian view, one will consider that inequalities between birth cohorts are *prima facie* unfair, while inequalities between age groups are *prima facie* unproblematic. Indeed, when considering birth cohorts, we are considering groups of people over their complete lives, while when we focus on age groups we focus on specific segments of

their lives. Complete lives egalitarianism is based on the view that as long as inequalities between age groups are stable over time and do not create inequalities between birth cohorts, they are unproblematic. The simultaneous segments view, on the contrary, registers inequalities between age groups as problematic.

Two main sets of questions were left unanswered by McKerlie's abovementioned articles. First, the most developed and famous account of age-group justice, Norman Daniels's prudential lifespan account (PLA) did not seem to be substantially weakened by McKerlie's anti-CLE critique. Indeed, the PLA is a prudential complete lives egalitarian theory, which does not promote the radical view that whatever happens at given segments is irrelevant to justice. On the contrary, Daniels argues that institutions that distribute resources between age groups should aim at making people's lives go as well as possible. On the PLA, it would not make sense to deny young people, for instance, suitable resources and instead to invest all resources in old age, as this would make their lives go poorly overall. Inequalities between age groups matter derivatively of what ultimately matters, the quality of people's whole lives. Inequalities between age groups are thus *only* permitted given two conditions: (i) they must not create inequalities between birth cohorts, and (ii) they must be prudent.

This suggests that the inequalities seen with the 'changing place couple' can be rejected on prudential grounds, without having to abandon the complete lives egalitarian commitment: one could simply argue that a commitment to the quality of whole lives suffices to explain what is wrong with hypothetical situations where people take turns at exploiting each other. If it turned out that McKerlie's critique and examples were unsuccessful in challenging the dominant existing complete life egalitarian conception of age-group justice, the relevance of McKerlie's account could rightly be questioned. McKerlie did raise some objections against the PLA in the past, including in his 1989 comments on Daniels ("Justice Between Age-Groups: A Comment on Norman Daniels." *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 1989 6/2: 227-234). However, for his critique of complete lives egalitarianism to hold, it must tell us something about non-radical forms of CLE like Daniels's – which do not simply value complete lives *per se* but also the quality of lives as a whole, and derivatively, how people fare at each stage.

The second set of questions that were left unanswered lie within McKerlie's own account. Before now, McKerlie had not produced a fully-fledged account of what his alternative may look like, which weakened considerably his enterprise. How would simultaneous segments egalitarianism work and, perhaps most importantly, should it replace or complement complete life egalitarian approaches? McKerlie seemed to consider that egalitarian accounts must include a segments element in addition to their complete lives principles, but at times it seemed as if his approach rather had to be considered as an alternative. This was of course a key problem. On the later understanding, his account would have had to be tested and most probably rejected on complete lives egalitarian grounds. On the former, we would need principles for deciding when CLE should be followed and when simultaneous segments egalitarianism should be privileged.

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In his new book, McKerlie does shed some light onto these two zones of obscurity, by developing the key parts of his account that deserved most attention. The first three chapters clarify the problem and distinguish between CLE (chapter 2), on the one hand, and the prudential lifespan account (chapter 3), on the other. McKerlie acknowledges the specialness of the PLA and that Daniels does not consider inequalities between age groups to be unproblematic. He provides an individualized assessment of Daniels's account, and explains that what is wrong with the PLA fundamentally relates to what is unsatisfying in complete lives egalitarian accounts in general. In the following two chapters (4 and 5), he spells out the details of his own alternative. His book, therefore, definitely rises to the challenges to which he was expected to respond. The author then engages in discussions of personal identity through time (chapter 6), and then explores two practical problems of lifespan planning: the change in individuals' values over time (chapter 7), and the case of Alzheimer's disease (chapter 8).

In the introduction, McKerlie uses the following example: imagine a city where the elderly live in miserable and overcrowded retirement homes with little prospect for happiness, while younger people live in lovely affluent residences (let us call it the 'Unequal City example'). McKerlie argues that even if younger residents end up in the same miserable homes themselves when they grow old, and even if older residents did enjoy the lovely residences in their past, we should still object to such synchronous inequality. Distributive justice, he argues, does not only apply to complete lives, it also concerns temporal parts of lives. The fact that some are worse off than others at any given time is morally relevant and gives rise to a special claim of the worse-off to various resources, even if they will be better off over their complete lives as a result. This puzzle nicely complements McKerlie's previous changing places examples. The Unequal City example is in fact much more insightful than the changing places examples, because it directly involves age groups instead of being a more intuitively complex case (like the swapping couple example) and also has the merit of being somewhat realistic. Most importantly, this example is more appealing because it poses a real challenge to prudential complete lives egalitarian accounts: if cases like the changing places domination example could be rejected fairly easily by prudential accounts, it is trickier to see how a prudential account could accommodate the Unequal City example.

Indeed, it may be argued that both complete lives equality and lifespan efficiency require the allocation of an extensive amount of resources to the young and decreasingly little to the elderly. In the unequal city example, alleviating the relative hardship of the elderly may generate an inequality with the current cohort of younger people who will have to renounce their current ideal mode of living in order to assist their elderly neighbours, who themselves had the opportunity to experience an ideal mode of living when they were young. In some sense, the elderly will have 'doubly gained' in comparison with the cohort that succeeds them. The diachronic goal of complete lives equality thus seems to require that we do not assist the miserable elderly in the Unequal City example. Moreover, it may be argued that the diachronic goal of lifespan efficiency – making lives go as well as possible – may provide further reasons to attach decreasingly less

importance to later years in life than to earlier years. Most societies follow this basic rule and prioritize younger years over older when they ration very scarce healthcare resources by age. If we only have one organ for two patients, for instance, it seems reasonable to favour the youngest patient, all other things being equal. If we follow the double diachronic commitment of complete life equality and lifespan efficiency, we may be willing to go further along this path. For instance, we may want to encourage more cases like that of McKerlie's Unequal City example, where institutions provide an affluent life for younger citizens, at the price of fewer flourishing opportunities for the elderly. Furthermore, there is always a risk that we may die young. Under the face of uncertainty, we may want institutions to maximize, first, our chances to live a life of normal length that is as fulfilling as possible, and only then to enhance our chances to live a long life, for instance by investing in expansive healthcare resources for the elderly and life-extending technologies. From this perspective, Fleurbaey *et al.*, for instance, argue that if we consider that the worse-off are those who will die young, then we might as well allocate most resources to the young (Marc Fleurbaey, Marie-Louise Leroux and Gregory Ponthiere. *Compensating the Dead? Yes We Can!* CORE: Université catholique de Louvain. 2011).

McKerlie's Unequal City example thus seems adequately to represent the possible implications of complete lives egalitarian accounts, and thereby also to capture what may be wrong with complete lives egalitarianism quite well. At the end of his book, we are left with a substantially stronger challenge to CLE and the prudential lifespan account than before, at least if we agree for a minute that the Unequal City example is a difficult bullet to swallow. McKerlie's account has a strong intuitive force. However, I am not as convinced that *Justice Between the Young and the Old* provides a plausible alternative to complete lives egalitarianism for at least three main reasons.

First, McKerlie assumes throughout his book that egalitarianism is ultimately concerned with wellbeing and not with opportunities, resources, or capabilities: "Egalitarian values should be concerned with what is most important, and well-being is more important than the other items cited" (21). However, one may seriously question the extent to which such an assumption weakens his entire enterprise, not only because he too quickly excludes non-wellbeing oriented egalitarians from the discussion, but also because he risks missing part of the problem, and talking past those he tries to challenge, who are mainly concerned with opportunities. McKerlie's account may, therefore, still be vulnerable to a criticism Daniels raised against his account a few years ago: that it is "[...] irrelevant to concerns about institutional design in the age group problem. [...] McKerlie is talking only about reasons we might have for adjusting the well-being of individuals, not about the design of actual institutions distributing goods over the lifespan" ("Justice Between Adjacent Generations: Further Thoughts." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 2008 16/4: 475-494 [481]). A discussion on how different conceptions of the value of equality may impact our conception of what time unit egalitarians should endorse would have been most welcomed, but is unfortunately lacking in McKerlie's book.

Second, McKerlie seems to envisage a sort of division of labour between complete lives egalitarian principles, which are meant to inform birth cohort justice, and his simultaneous segments principles, which are aimed at informing the field of age-group justice: “There are principles that deserve to be called principles of justice for age groups, and that are established distinct from principles concerned with complete lives” (18). Here, however, one certainly regrets a deeper engagement with the question of how we should handle tradeoffs between the goal of complete lives equality between cohorts and the aim of synchronic equality between age groups. This is a key missing step in the argument because, when there are no tradeoffs, any complete lives egalitarian could argue that synchronic equality is desirable, as it increases our chances to live a life of good quality as a whole. What we want to know is to what extent the simultaneous segments reasons are stronger and trump complete lives egalitarian reasons when we cannot do both. McKerlie does not provide a successful answer to this question, because he does not spell out in full detail the nature of the division of labour he envisages between complete lives egalitarian principles and simultaneous segments ones.

Last, the fundamental reason why McKerlie’s account ultimately fails to challenge complete lives egalitarianism and the PLA is because it tries to express a fundamentally non-distributive problem in distributive terms. McKerlie is right to find the Unequal City example morally disturbing and to hold that synchronic inequalities should concern egalitarians beyond their derivative impact on complete lives equality and lifespan efficiency. However, McKerlie’s view that temporal segments matter morally in and of themselves for distributive justice is implausible. It does not make sense to give moral relevance to temporal segments. Once we have defined the temporal segment that matters morally (say 10 years), then should we consider that inequalities between people that happen within these smaller units of time cancel out? Surely one could always highlight shorter segments, in which case defining the worse-off would become arbitrary. The problem is that there is no justification for specifying that a given segment matters morally more than the previous one. This undermines the distributive anti-complete lives egalitarian enterprise, since there will never be a non-arbitrary segment apart from the complete lives segment.

The best explanation for the intuitive force of the Unequal City example is not really that *shorter segments* matter to distributive justice, but that *overlapping segments* matter to justice. This is really at the core of McKerlie’s arguments and examples, but he is wrong to interpret this problem as an issue for equality, understood as a purely distributive value. The reason why this matters is because of the relational dimension of equality. McKerlie says that we should object to synchronous inequalities because of “[...] the relational fact that one life is better than the other” (“Equality Between Age Groups,” 289), but he simply understands this relational issue as consisting in the fact that some are worse off than others, while it should be understood instead as relating to the fact that this may generate wrongful or objectionable relationships. What the changing places example really points to is not a distributive problem as such, but rather that objectionable relationships pertain. Similarly, McKerlie’s Unequal City example contains signs of

wrongful relationships: the elderly are likely to be segregated and marginalised, which is incompatible with the substantive social egalitarian goal of a community of people standing as equals.

On this understanding, there is thus a relational dimension of equality that seems to be neglected by the complete lives approach. The point of equality, Elizabeth Anderson argues, is precisely to “[...] create a community in which people stand in relations of equality to others” (“What is the Point of Equality?” *Ethics* 1999 109/2: 287-337 [289]). Egalitarians should not only care about complete lives, they should also care about synchronous relational inequalities as an extra constraint on justifiable inequalities. Our reluctance to accept synchronous inequalities is best explained by the relational dimension of equality understood as a social and political value. When we consider inequalities between groups composed of people of different ages at any given time, we should interrogate those inequalities in term of whether they create or do not create objectionable relational inequalities such as hierarchies, domination, exploitation, marginalization, etc. It is a misunderstanding of the point of equality to think that only complete lives equality matters. This conception does not do justice to what equality really is about. If we consider equality as primarily, or at least in large part, a relational notion, then we should side with McKerlie and argue that complete lives egalitarians only account for part of the story. However, unfortunately, McKerlie does not provide a plausible account of the problem faced by complete lives egalitarianism, and his own simultaneous segments view is not likely to be a suitable alternative.

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Ingmar PERSSON and Julian SAVULESCU. *Unfit for the Future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 143 pp.

Humanity is faced with some very serious challenges that are the result of our increased power to shape the world. With the development of weapons of mass destruction, both biological and nuclear, we have created the possibility that one person could destroy all worthwhile life on earth. Furthermore, through the process of industrialization we are changing the climate of our planet and depleting scarce resources. By doing this, we may be undermining the conditions necessary for future life on earth. Climate change might turn out to be disastrous, and extreme scarcity of resources might lead to all-out global war. If we continue along the same path, it is quite likely that we will bring about our own downfall. It is urgent that we act, and act quickly. But we don't. Why? And what can we do?

Persson and Savulescu's *Unfit for the Future* presents a provocative argument about why we fail to act, and what can be done about it. The authors see two central challenges for humankind. The first stems from weapons of mass destruction. The second is anthropogenic climate change and resource depletion. The title of the book refers to the