

Treating Young People As Equals: Intergenerational Justice in Theory and Practice

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Abstract

Contemporary egalitarianism has largely developed in abstraction from the basic fact that time passes, people age, and so any given society comprises several overlapping generations. As a result, few normative tools are available to assess claims made about the fairness of time-sensitive distributions. The field of intergenerational justice has emerged to fill this gap, but its theorists have primarily focused on the question of what we owe to future generations. My thesis contributes to egalitarian thought and intergenerational justice by providing an egalitarian account of justice between co-existing generations. It answers the question of which inequalities between age groups, on the one hand, and birth cohorts, on the other hand, matter; and it offers a framework to establish what counts as a suitably egalitarian treatment of young people.

The thesis is in two parts: the first establishes the theoretical framework, and the second makes explicit its implications for two policy discussions. In Part I, I highlight the generational implications of the dominant diachronic view of equality through time – complete lives egalitarianism (CLE). While it provides key insights into birth-cohort justice, CLE cannot account for why some cases of age-group inequalities are unjust. I then propose two complements to CLE to overcome its limitations: a prudential diachronic approach grounded on Daniels’s theory of age-group justice, and a synchronic alternative inspired by McKerlie’s work. From the first three chapters, I derive three principles of equality between overlapping generations: (1) approximate cohort equality, (2) prudential lifespan planning (lifespan sufficiency and efficiency), and (3) relational synchronic equality. I then draw on these principles to establish what ‘treating the young as equals’ means. In Part II, I put forward an intergenerational egalitarian case for basic income. I then consider whether we should be concerned about the absence of young people in parliaments, and propose the introduction of youth quotas.

Table of Contents

Abstract	3
Table of Contents	5
List of Tables	8
List of Figures	9
Acknowledgements	10
Author’s Declaration	11
INTRODUCTION	13
Social, Discursive and Political Context.....	13
Research Aims.....	18
Methodology: Philosophy of Public Policy.....	21
Structure of the Thesis.....	24
PART I – THEORY	26
CHAPTER 1 - Complete Lives Egalitarianism and Its Implications	26
1.1. Between Whom Does Intergenerational Justice Apply?	27
1.1.1. Intra-generational and intergenerational justice	28
1.1.2. Overlapping and non-overlapping generations	30
1.1.3. Age groups and birth cohorts	32
1.2. The Equality Through Time Debate and Its Implications	35
1.2.1. Equality through time	35
1.2.2. Age groups, birth cohorts and equality.....	38
1.3. The Case for Complete Lives Equality	40
1.3.1. Explaining the intuitive pull of CLE.....	41
1.3.2. The moral significance of inequalities between birth cohorts	44
1.3.3. What makes age special?.....	45
1.4. Conclusions.....	47
CHAPTER 2 - Daniels's Prudential Lifespan Account and Its Limits	49
2.1.The Features of the PLA.....	50
2.2.The Outcomes of the PLA	56
2.2.1. The lifespan sufficiency principle: ensuring there is enough at any point.....	56
2.2.2. The lifespan efficiency principle: maximizing diachronic benefits.....	62
2.3.Three Objections to Intrapersonal Prudence	66
2.3.1. The longevity objection	67
2.3.2. The demographic objection.....	72
2.3.3. The impartiality objection.....	76
2.4. Age-group Issues Are Not Residual.....	81
2.5. Conclusions.....	86

CHAPTER 3 - A Relational Alternative to McKerlie's Segments View	88
3.1. Evaluating McKerlie's Egalitarian Theory of Age-group Justice	89
3.1.1. The simultaneous segments view: an alternative?	89
3.1.2. Three objections to simultaneous segments egalitarianism	93
3.2. An Alternative Approach: Synchronic Relational Equality	100
3.2.1. The dispute between relational and distributive conceptions of equality	100
3.2.2. The synchronic relational egalitarian explanation	103
3.3. Distributive Objections to the Relational View	105
3.3.1. The prudential lifespan objection	106
3.3.2. The sufficiency objection	107
3.3.3. The currency objection	109
3.4. Conclusions	110
CHAPTER 4 - Treating the Young as Equals: What Does It Mean?.....	113
4.1. Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Equality Through Time	113
4.2. Lifespan Sufficiency: Ensuring Young People Have Enough to be 'Normal'	117
4.3. Lifespan Efficiency: Regulating Diachronic Clustering	124
4.3.1. Diachronic clustering of disadvantage	124
4.3.2. Toddlers and children as pre-distributive priorities	127
4.3.3. In defence of prudential investments in young adults	129
4.4. Approximate Cohort Equality: Mitigating Scarring Effects	132
4.4.1. Treating young cohorts equally: three problems	132
4.4.2. The scarring effects of youth unemployment.....	134
4.5. Synchronic Relational Equality: Ensuring the Young Are Able to Stand As Equals.....	136
4.6. Conclusions: Four Responses.....	139
PART II – POLICIES.....	143
CHAPTER 5 - Basic Income vs Basic Capital: A Temporal Perspective	144
5.1. Which One Is Most Diachronically Prudent?	149
5.1.1. A dilemma: efficiency with BC or sufficiency with BI?	149
5.1.2. In defence of basic income as lifespan-efficiency promoting.....	153
5.2. Which Policy Promotes Complete Lives Equality Best?	157
5.2.1. Social inequalities between life courses	157
5.2.2. The goal of approximate cohort equality	161
5.3. Which Is Best for Synchronic Relational Equality?.....	164
5.4. Conclusions.....	168

CHAPTER 6 - Youth-ing Parliaments: The Hopes of Youth Quotas	173
6.1. Substantive Representation: What can YQs Do for Deliberations.....	177
6.1.1. Narrowing the scope of the substantive representation argument ..	178
6.1.2. Preventing the exclusion of youth interests from the party packaging of political ideas	180
6.1.3. Increasing the chance of more vigorous advocacy on behalf of the young... ..	182
6.1.4. Opening up a fuller range of policy options and instigating change..	183
6.1.5. Youth quotas, policies and intergenerational justice	185
6.2. Symbolic Representation: Promoting a Community of Equals	188
6.2.1. The demonstrative symbolic value of YQs.....	189
6.2.2. The symbolic instrumental value of YQs.....	193
6.3. Age or Cohort Quotas?	195
6.4. Conclusions.....	202
CONCLUSION	205
Summary of the Thesis	205
Avenues for Future Research.....	208
Research contributions	210
List of Abbreviations	213
Bibliography	214

List of Tables

Table 1 - Between whom does intergenerational justice apply?.....	27
Table 2 - Intergenerational implications of the equality through time debate	80
Table 3 - Three diachronic interpersonal objections to the PLA.....	80
Table 4 - BI versus BC: a summary	169

List of Figures

Figure 1 - Intra and Inter-generational justice (Tremmel 2006, 5)	28
Figure 2 - Age and time in perspective	33
Figure 3 - Temkin's diagram on equality through time (Temkin 1993: 234).....	36
Figure 4 - Case I in Temkin's diagram.....	90
Figure 5 - Case II in Temkin's diagram.....	91
Figure 6 - The time-specific priority view	95
Figure 7 - Case II in Temkin's diagram.....	98
Figure 8 - A modified version of Temkin's diagram	98
Figure 9 - Range of possible changes to democratic systems (Berry 2012, 45)...	175
Figure 10 - French MPs by age (Assemblée Nationale 2012).....	196
Figure 11 - Elderly bias in social spending (Vanhuysse 2013, 27)	201

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Author's Declaration

- Some of Chapter 2 was published as an Open Peer Commentary entitled 'In Defence of the PLA' in the *American Journal of Bioethics* in 2012.
- A large part of Chapter 3 is currently under consideration under the title 'Making Sense of Age-Group Justice: A Time for Relational Equality' by the journal *Ethics*.
- Part of Chapter 3 has also been published as a critical book review of McKerlie's 2013 book *Justice between the Young and the Old* in the journal *Ethical Perspectives*.
- I also published a peer-reviewed article entitled 'Short-sightedness in Youth Welfare Provision: the Case of RSA in France' for the *Intergenerational Justice Review* in 2012. The last section of this article contains a short discussion of some of the material in Chapter 4.
- An earlier version of Chapter 6 was published online in Autumn 2013 on the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations' website as the 2012/2013 Demography Prize winning essay.
- A shorter version of Chapter 6 will be published as a book chapter for an anthology on the topic of Youth Quotas edited by Joerg Tremmel (under contract with Springer forthcoming in 2015).
- A policy proposal that reproduces some of the more policy-oriented material of Chapter 6 and focuses on the question of whether young MPs can act as 'proxies for future generations' will be published as a book chapter as part of a book on long-termism edited by Iñigo González-Ricoy and Axel Gosseries (under contract with OUP forthcoming in 2015).
- Some of the material in this thesis has also been used to write the conclusion of a special issue on 'The Precariat' published by the journal *Global Discourse* in 2013.
- A critical review on the topic of basic income for the *Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economy* was also published in 2013 and includes two paragraphs of Chapter 5.

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the University of York's regulations on plagiarism and academic misconduct. I declare that this thesis is my own work.

INTRODUCTION

Like 'The Terminator', justice between generations is an idea that will not go away.
(Moody 2007, 125)

This thesis offers an intergenerational egalitarian response to the question 'what does it mean to treat young people as equals?'. The introduction that follows is divided into four parts. First, I highlight the triple political context that frames and motivates my research project: the urgency of youth unemployment, poverty and exclusion; the prevalence of anti-youth discourses and policies; and the ambiguity and disconnectedness of existing intergenerational discourses. Against this backdrop, I state my research questions and specify some of the research gaps in the literature addressed by this thesis. I then introduce my methodology - Philosophy of Public Policy - before presenting an overview of the thesis' structure.

Social, Discursive and Political Context

According to The Prince's Trust, "If we lined up Britain's unemployed young people, the job queue would stretch from London to Middlesbrough" (Martina Milburn in The Prince's Trust 2013). The Joseph Rowntree Foundation reports that unemployment rates in the UK are 21% for young people between 16 and 24 years old and 6% for 25-64 year-olds (MacInnes et al. 2013, 38). Unemployment rates for young adults are always likely to be higher than for older age groups, but the gap is widening as unemployment rates for the young rise. In 1992, the unemployment rate of the young was twice as high as for the rest of the population, now it is four times higher (MacInnes et al. 2013, 38). Long-term unemployment is also increasing: the number of young people who have been without a job for more than 24 months has increased by more than 330% in the past decade (The Prince's Trust 2013). The consequences of youth unemployment can be disastrous for the individuals involved. For instance, long-term unemployment is often connected to depression: 25% of young people who have been unemployed for longer than 6 months have been prescribed anti-depressants (The Prince's Trust 2014, 8). A study conducted by the Prince's Trust estimated that more than 20% of long-term

unemployed youth felt like “they have nothing to live for” (The Prince's Trust 2014, 14).

At the European level (EU28), the rate of unemployment amongst those 16-24 is 23%, approximately twice the overall rate (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions 2011, 1). There are important differences from one European country to another. The European countries that are doing best in terms of youth unemployment are currently Germany, Austria and the Netherlands - with youth unemployment rates lower than 10% - while the worst countries for youth unemployment are Spain and Greece - with youth unemployment rates of more than 55% (EU Committee of the House of Lords 2014, 20). According to one of the largest studies conducted on Youth Unemployment by the Eurofound, there are approximately 14 million young people who are not in employment, education or training across the EU: 7.5 million between 15 and 24 years old and a further 6.5 million between 25 and 29 years old. The Eurofound estimates that the economic costs associated with the resulting state welfare and lost production could be as high as 153 billion euros a year (Eurofound 2012).

Even when they do have jobs, young people are disproportionately likely to be in precarious positions. As Guy Standing argues, although many other groups make up what he calls ‘the precariat’, “the most common image is of young people emerging from school and college to enter a precarious existence lasting years, often made all the more frustrating because their parents’ generation had seemingly held stable jobs” (Standing 2011, 18). Precarious jobs are defined as insecure positions that do not allow for the construction of an occupational identity (Standing 2011, 16). They are more likely to be temporary and involve fewer hours. There is also the relatively new phenomenon of an army of interns, only half of which are paid the minimum wage in the UK (Lawton 2010, 6). At the European level, a recent study by the European Youth Forum estimates that half of all interns receive compensation for their work, although a further half of this group said they were not paid sufficiently to cover their day to day expenses (Dyrnes 2011, 15).

Despite this context of job scarcity and the structural precariousness they have to face, the young are often regarded with little sympathy. Media and politicians alike tend to emphasize personal desert and render young people responsible for their own situation. The generation born in the 1980s – Generation Y - has been described as the ‘entitlement generation’, ‘generation me’ (or GenMe), and even

the ‘dumbest generation’ (Twenge 2006, Bauerlein 2008). Discourses on youth often revolve around their alleged laziness, bad attitude, and strong sense of entitlement (Jones 2011, Buckingham 2012). A recent study commissioned by Women in Journalism has shown that the best chance young boys have to be portrayed positively by the media is if they are dead (Bawdon 2009, 12). Young people are asked to “stop whingeing, stop complaining, and just get on with it” (Howker and Malik 2010, 2) and to take on their responsibilities, or “we should cut all your benefits and starve you into going back to work” (Lord Digby Jones in Howker and Malik 2010, 67).

As the writers of *Jilted Generation* argue, there seems to be a resurgence of a Victorian ideology that sees laziness where there is poverty and disadvantage, and lack of personal responsibility where there are structural and systemic issues (Howker and Malik 2010, 69). These feelings towards younger cohorts are quite widespread. In the US, 70% of Americans believe today’s young people are less virtuous and industrious than their elders (Taylor et al. 2009, 8). The Intergenerational Foundation recently published a report on the perception of young people in European countries: “When asked to rate overall how positively or negatively people felt towards those in their 20s, respondents from the UK gave its younger people the lowest score of any country, coming 29th out of 29 countries” (Leach 2011, 3). It does not come as much of a surprise that some 85% of young boys under 20 years old in the UK feel that they are unfairly portrayed by the media (Bawdon 2009).

If young people are portrayed and perceived as lazy, self-serving and unwilling, when as a group they are none of those things, then there is at least some reason to worry that youth policies may be inadequate. If policies are driven by group representations and prejudices of the kind, they may miss the urgency of youth poverty and unemployment, and not take young peoples’ interests seriously enough (Buckingham 2012, Howker and Malik 2010). In France, for instance, until 2010, the guaranteed minimum income scheme introduced in 1988 excluded young citizens under the age of 25 years old. The newly reformed scheme, however, is so restrictive that at the end of 2011, only 10,000 young people were receiving income benefits, while over a million people aged between 18 and 25 lived under the poverty line (Landré 2011). The primary reasons given by the French government for the age-based differential treatment were that the young should be taught the right values, and that they should not be given something for nothing (Bidadanure 2012). Similarly, in the UK, some have argued that the young

unemployed are often the first age group to be threatened with loss of their benefits or pushed into workfare programmes (Malik 2011, 2012a). Given the current situation of young people across European countries, the need to reflect seriously upon what societies owe their young citizens cannot be overestimated.

Taking on this challenge, some groups have condemned what they claim are clear instances of injustice. In the UK, there is a growing interest in issues of intergenerational justice. Think tanks (Demos, Intergenerational Foundation), journalists (Shiv Malik, Ed Howker), activists (Clare Coatman) and politicians (David Willetts) have voiced, all in different ways, their concerns for intergenerational fairness. They complain that some generations – in general younger and future generations – are getting fewer resources, benefits or entitlements than others, and that such inequalities are morally objectionable. For instance, some argue that it is not fair that (a) the generation of young people today will end up having paid “a higher share of their incomes to their governments for a lower entitlement to services and benefits from their governments” (Coyle 2011, 103). Others claim that (b) it is unfair that the government’s spending per elderly person is several times higher than the amount spent per child and that “of the NHS [annual] budget of about £100bn, half goes on the over-65s” (Willetts 2010). Some also complain that (c) the young are entitled to a lower minimum wage than older adults, while others stress the fact that (d) the unemployment rate of the 16-25 years old age group is twice as high than for the rest of the population. Many also find it unjust that (e) the young today have to pay so much in tuition fees to study towards higher education while the generation before them – the baby-boomers – did not have to pay for the same services when they were young themselves.

Commentators often assume that intergenerational inequalities such as (a-e) are self-evidently wrong. As Rainer Forst argues: “when persons are treated unequally that always seems to feed the corrective desire for justice, the desire to put an end to such inequality” (Forst 2011, 190). But inequalities between generations may not all matter equally. For instance, it seems that the claim (b) - that it is *prima facie* unfair that the elderly consume a much larger share of healthcare resources than other age groups - is mistaken, and I think that most egalitarians would agree. As we age, we need more healthcare resources to function as equals in terms of capabilities, welfare or wellbeing. Assuming we think of the right distribution of healthcare resources in some other way than mere equality of resources (for example, in terms of responding to healthcare needs), then the elderly are likely to consume a very large share of those resources. Many egalitarians would agree that

there is something wrong with claim (b), but there are few theoretical tools to explain what makes some inequalities between generations unfair and others legitimate.

Sociologists, politicians and journalists do not always spell out the normative assumptions that underpin their condemnation of intergenerational inequalities. The available understandings of intergenerational fairness are thus often confused. At best, intergenerational fairness is becoming a buzzword loosely signifying “forward-looking” or “promoting the interests of younger and future generations”; at worst, it has come to equate with “leaving a bank balance as close to the black as possible” and eventually with economic austerity (Little 2012). The cost of not burdening future generations with increasing levels of debts is thus often understood as the slashing of the very services that disproportionately benefit the bottom of the income distribution. From this angle, the requirements of intergenerational justice thus seem to sometimes contradict the requirements of social equality and solidarity.

Such an understanding of intergenerational justice, as a reduction of the per capita debt passed on to the next generation, results in the following paradox: even the drastic decreasing of the benefits aimed at young people such as the higher education budget, youth jobseeker allowances, or youth housing benefits is defended in the name of younger and future generations, because the debt passed on to them must be lowered. Thus although the debt-ridden interpretation of the requirements of intergenerational justice is only one conception of intergenerational justice amongst others, as Shiv Malik argues, it has rendered egalitarians suspicious and eventually driven them away from intergenerational justice:

Intergenerational justice – the main trunk of generational enquiry – is still viewed with suspicion by those on the traditional left. For a start, it apparently holds all the wrong antagonistic qualities when compared to class warfare – why fight the vested interests of your parents when you should be fighting those of the upper classes? Or to put it another way, how does fighting the baby boomers stop the fat cats from making off with society’s plunder?

(Malik 2012, 7)

This suspicion of intergenerational justice on the left can be traced back to the recent history of intergenerational discourses. In the 1980s, ‘generational equity groups’, whose leader was AGE (Americans for Generational Equity) and which Harry Moody (2007) refers to as “the nightmare of gerontology”, radically changed the terms of the policy debate around the unaffordability of ageing: “AGE pushed

forward the idea that population aging was unaffordable and that the old were gaining benefits at the expense of the young” (Moody 2007, 131). Its members argued that the ageing of the population was threatening the equity in benefit ratios between the young and the old, and as a response, advocated the privatization of social insurance schemes. From their perspective, if each generation was responsible for itself and saved accordingly, then problems of inequity between successful generations would be tackled. For Moody, such debate “has not disappeared but has assumed new forms in different countries. Like “The Terminator”, justice between generations is an idea that will not go away” (Moody 2007, 125).

Research Aims

My goal in this thesis is to provide an *egalitarian* account of intergenerational justice that takes seriously the challenges faced by the young as a vulnerable social group. I articulate a theory of justice between generations that does not follow the generational equity debate down the reactionary path it took in the 1980s, and aims to ease the suspicions of the Left. My account is egalitarian in two ways: (1) it is a theory of intergenerational *equality*; and (2) it works to further egalitarianism in its traditional focus on *the least advantaged*, through promoting a conception that does not promote an otherwise unjust society.

Ultimately, this thesis aims to answer the question: ‘what does it mean to treat the young as equals?’. I provide both a theoretical answer – asking what makes young adulthood special for distributive justice - and a practical answer – asking which radical policies could help bring about a temporally fair egalitarian society. I thus provide the conceptual clarifications and the normative tools needed to respond to the following questions:

- *Which inequalities between generations matter?*
- *What does it mean for a young person to be equal to an elderly person?*
- *When do institutions treat different age groups as equals?*
- *What do we owe to young people - in theory and in practice?*
- *What is special about time, age and the young for distributive justice?*
- *What is a properly egalitarian way to answer these questions?*

This thesis makes three core theoretical contributions to contemporary political philosophy. First, it is a contribution to egalitarian thought. Egalitarian theories will not be complete until they can accommodate issues of equality *through time*. And yet, as Petter Laslett put it thirty years ago, “the revival of political theory over the past three decades has taken place within the grossly simplifying assumptions of a largely timeless world” (Laslett 1979, 36). Things have changed since then. At the very end of the 1980s, the highly abstract ‘equality through time’ debate emerged. It sought to establish the time unit to which dominant egalitarian accounts for justice should apply: if John and Marry are unequal at T1 and unequal at T2 but equal overall, should we care? Is equality a diachronic value, in which case we should find the respective situation of John and Marry unproblematic, or is equality a synchronic value, in which case, we should find the inequality at T1 and T2 problematic. However, participants in this debate did not sufficiently connect their discussion of this abstract puzzle and the topic of intergenerational justice (Lippert-Rasmussen and Holtug 2006). The first important contribution of this thesis is that it deliberately reconnects this debate to generational issues and highlights its concrete implications for the field of justice between generations.

Second, in recent years, many philosophers have been concerned with issues of intergenerational justice, but most of them have focused on issues arising from what we owe ‘future generations’. The intergenerational literature has largely focused on the problems of justice that arise when we ask what our duties of justice are to people who do not yet exist. Very little has been written in political philosophy on what co-existing generations owe each other and even less on issues of intergenerational equality. And yet, as Larry Temkin argues, understanding what intergenerational justice requires demands that we consider carefully what role moral principles of equality should play between groups of people born at different times:

an adequate account of intergenerational justice will require as one of its central components a thoughtful and systematic treatment of the topic of intergenerational inequality. Nothing remotely resembling such a treatment has been afforded to date. Until it is, our understanding of the nature and extent of our obligations toward other generations will be incomplete and woefully inadequate.

(Temkin 1992, 201)

I take on this challenge and focus exclusively on co-existing generations, with an emphasis on what we owe to young people. By young people I will refer to the age group of 18 to 25 year-olds, but I will sometimes include slightly younger (16-18)

and slightly older young adults (up to 30 or 35 years old). I take care to specify the range when relevant.

Third, this thesis provides a detailed analysis of the normative importance of the distinction between two meanings of the concept of generation: age groups and birth cohorts. Simply put, the puzzle I engage with is the following. On the one hand, we have no more control over our age than over our gender or ‘race’, so perhaps age – like gender and ‘race’ - should be seen as a criterion that is not morally relevant in justifying inequality. On the other hand, given that we all age - whereas we do not (in most cases) change ethnicity or gender - inequalities that are age-based seem to be less problematic. The basic fact that we all age gives intuitive strength to the dominant default approach to equality through time – complete lives egalitarianism – which states that we should aim to treat people equally over their complete lives.

Complete lives egalitarianism, I show, brings interesting insights to explain why inequalities between birth cohorts matter, but is incapable on its own of making sense of why some inequalities between age groups matter. I argue that, even if we contend that complete lives equality, and hence birth cohort equality, is a goal of justice, there are at least two further goals which egalitarians should acknowledge. One is ensuring that inequalities between age groups are always ‘prudent’. The other is making sure that society is free from synchronic relationships of inequality. To highlight these two key principles of age-group justice, I introduce and discuss the key arguments of Norman Daniels and Dennis McKerlie, before going on to offer an account that advances the literature beyond these seminal contributions. This thesis can thus be seen as an in-depth discussion of the requirements of age-group justice extensively discussing an aspect of intergenerational justice that is often overlooked (Gosseries and Meyer 2009, 6).

To recap: this thesis makes three core theoretical contributions to the literature on intergenerational equality: (1) it draws out the *concrete implications* of the abstract ‘equality through time debate’ for generational issues; (2) it develops a substantive egalitarian account of justice between *overlapping* generations, and instead of focusing on *future unborn generations* it focuses on *young people*; (3) it highlights the normative importance of the demographic distinction between age groups and birth cohorts and contributes to the under-researched field of age-group justice. Throughout the thesis, I also make an important methodological contribution by bringing the age group/cohort distinction to bear on other questions in political

philosophy. In Chapter 3, for instance, I make an important contribution on the nature of egalitarian commitment: I use the generational example to make a broader point about the distinction between distributive and relational conceptions of equality. I argue that the two conceptions cannot be reduced one to the other and that purely distributive accounts obscure a fundamental set of problematic inequalities. Similarly, in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, I bring the distinction to bear on further questions in political philosophy such as the distinction between pre-distribution and re-distribution, the debate between basic income and basic capital, and the introduction of youth quotas in parliament. I show that taking on board the two dimensions of the generational lens enlightens each of these important debates.

Methodology: Philosophy of Public Policy

This research relates to the central question of distributive justice “who should get what and why?” - and thus belongs in the arena of political philosophy. However, my approach to normative theory is practical. The methodology used is at the intersection between political philosophy and public policy. This approach recognizes public policies as objects worthy of philosophical enquiry and considers the scope of political philosophy to extend beyond ideal theory. In this thesis, I systematically relate my normative considerations to the non-ideal circumstances in which we live and do not confine myself to asking what ideal societies owe to young people in the abstract. The aim of this section is to sketch what this methodology consists of, to discuss some its key benefits compared to purely ideal political philosophy, and to show why my thesis is an example of it.

There are perhaps as many different definitions of philosophy and its purpose as there are philosophers. It may be thought of as a discipline without an object of its own. It consists of a form of critical reflection that can be applied to objects from mathematics and physics to arts, history and politics. Political philosophy - the branch of philosophy that takes politics as its object of study - can be practiced in many different ways. For instance, one may focus on the historical development of certain norms, concepts and conceptions or seek to illuminate and explain a philosopher’s political theory. Analytical political philosophy is a resolutely normative enterprise that seeks to develop a theory of how things *ought to be* in the political realm. Its style is systematic, rigorous and deductive. It uses reason to examine the different views that can be consistently held and their implications for various examples (Pettit 2012, 8). Political philosophers cherish the idea that things

could always be otherwise. They can point to a direction – an ideal society that we should wish to bring into existence - and they can argue that things should be one way or another. They can, for example, dispute that the ultimate goal of justice is equality of welfare, for instance, or equality of resources.

But the risk with such a focus is that it may be too abstract and disconnected from reality to inform practice. Contemporary analytical philosophy has often been criticised for being too abstract and disconnected from empirical facts (Stemplowska and Swift 2012). Analytical theories of equality, for instance, are often critiqued for appealing to very abstract examples without enough concern for what people really experience or have struggled against in history (Anderson 1999). This poses the question of what philosophers can do for politics. In many cases, knowing what a just society would look like does not directly help in knowing which policies should be implemented in a given society, at a given time (Sen 2009). If political philosophers seek to contribute to politics in a more immediate way, therefore, they must try to engage more directly with the political contexts in which they write, identify midpoints as well as ideals, and seek to draw more explicitly some of the implications their theories have for policies.

Philosophy of Public Policy (PPP) takes on this challenge: it combines rigorous ideal debates with policy discussions. It seeks to avoid approaching politics in a disconnected manner and aims to make philosophy directly relevant to practice. Philosophers that engage in this practice seek to intervene “by way of argument into policy debates” (Wolff 2011, 8). PPP analyses the normative assumptions used to prescribe or implement policies. The specificity of PPP, as I aim to practice it in this thesis, is that it starts with political problems at the institutional level and uses ideal theory instrumentally to enlighten a specific pre-existing political debate. In this way, this thesis has started by highlighting the political contexts and problems that animate the philosophical discussions. Throughout, I will use concrete political and policy examples, and will end with two policy-oriented chapters where I explicitly draw the implications of the theoretical framework developed for policymaking. I will still use ideal theory and appeal to some abstract examples to clarify our intuitions. In this sense, this thesis still very much fits in contemporary ideal theory. But the aim is always to reconnect abstract discussions to the practical institutional problem this thesis seeks to inform.

How does the philosopher of public policy proceed? She may try to identify what success should mean for policies. As Adam Swift and Stuart White (2008) argue,

one important task of the political philosopher is to clarify the goals we are trying to achieve with a given policy and to decide which goal we *should* be pursuing (Swift and White 2008, 50). Sometimes the goal will be obvious and uncontroversial, but sometimes it will need serious discussion. The starting point of this thesis is that the ultimate goal, in the context of equality through time, is not straightforward. It is not obvious how time and age should be approached or how we should deal with these issues at the practical level.

The philosopher of public policy may use many philosophical techniques to enlighten a specific debate. This may include drawing important conceptual distinctions that are hidden behind a single phrase and bear important normative significance, or highlighting contradictions and clarifying ambiguities. In this thesis, I highlight relevant conceptual distinctions, such as between age groups and birth cohorts, between synchronic and diachronic, and between distributive and relational. I take particular care in drawing the implications that some abstract debates or ideal conceptions of justice have for the way we should think of inequalities between overlapping generations and the design of institutions that meet people's needs as they age. I also develop some conceptual innovations to make sense of how we should design institutional provision (for instance, the concepts of 'lifespan efficiency' and 'synchronic relational equality').

One problem with this applied approach to political philosophy, as Norman Daniels points out, is that it "risks frustrating both the professional philosopher and specialists in the area of application" (Daniels 1985, xi). For the philosopher, "the discussion starts a bit too close to the ground to really fly" while for the social scientist "this discussion is never down to earth enough" (Daniels 1985, xi). However, this need not be a limitation of Philosophy of Public Policy, but can be thought of as its strength. PPP inhabits an in-between space where policies become objects of normative enquiry and where ideal theory encounters practice. This thesis is located in this in-between space. Primarily, it aims to make an important set of theoretical contributions to egalitarian thought, as previously mentioned. However, it also aims to be of interest to the empiricist at least because it delineates some important lines of research through identifying which empirical data the normative claims depend on. The discussions PPP fosters, I hope to show with this thesis, are fruitful both for informing policymaking and for informing our conceptions of justice at the theoretical level. It is not only theory that enlightens practice; it is also practice that enlightens theory.

This thesis hopes to contribute to what Elizabeth Anderson (2008) and Stuart White (2014) call the “egalitarian toolkit” – that is the set of possible policy options egalitarians can appeal to so as to further a more egalitarian society. I aim to contribute to enhancing the toolkit by focusing on issues of time, age and justice and looking at which youth policies could be introduced, more specifically. My discussions of ‘pre-distributive’ temporal policies, basic income, basic capital and youth quotas serve this purpose. But by doing so, I do not abandon the more utopian task of moving beyond the feasibility concerns and practicalities of the moment to think about how things ought to be. As Philippe Van Parijs argued in a recent paper: “Utopian thinking is not enough, but it is more indispensable than ever” (Van Parijs 2013, 180). It must be “intelligent, critical, sophisticated, unindulgent” and mobilize the tools of all social sciences (Van Parijs 2013, 180). In this thesis, I propose radical policies like universal basic income and thus aim to contribute to an important philosophical debate that draws heavily on the social facts of poverty, inequalities and exploitation without getting lost in policy practicalities and forgetting ideal and utopian thought.

In no way should this thesis be taken as an attempt to undermine the moral significance of democracy in determining the right distribution of resources. This is a careful and rigorous contribution to the democratic debate, but it is simply one contribution amongst others. I agree with Cornel West when he claims: “I don’t think that there is any intrinsic tilt about being a philosopher that makes you a better citizen or a better person. I know many philosophers who are magnificent and some who are gangstas” (West and McCabe 2013). Even if I argue to ‘convince’ and sometimes use the strong language of what justice ‘requires’ I do not hold strong meta-ethical views about truth and justice. I see my work as a philosopher as that of White and Swift (2008)’s ‘democratic underlabourer’ – contributing to political debates by providing the relevant distinctions and clarifications, as well as proposing a coherent theoretical conception and highlighting its policy implications.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is structured in two parts. Part I (Chapters 1-4) establishes the theoretical framework of intergenerational equality. Part II (Chapters 5-6) discusses two public policies that can increase our chances of meeting the demands of intergenerational equality.

In Part I, I evaluate the challenges posed by the issue of time for egalitarianism, and I offer a principled theory of intergenerational equality. In Chapter 1, I present the equality through time debate: when we compare people born at different times, which time units are relevant? I introduce the dominant view – complete lives egalitarianism (CLE) - and highlight its implications for justice between birth cohorts and age groups. I show that, while it provides key insights into birth-cohort justice, it cannot account for why some cases of age-group inequalities may be unjust.

I then propose two additions to CLE to overcome its limitations: a prudential diachronic approach adapted from Norman Daniels’s theory of age-group justice (Chapter 2), and a synchronic alternative inspired by Dennis McKerlie’s work (Chapter 3). In Chapter 2, I ask which distribution of resources between age groups maximizes lifespan utility. This prudential discussion is fundamentally diachronic because it is concerned with knowing which lifespan distribution makes our lives better as a whole. In Chapter 3, I ask whether there is any significant non-diachronic element in our concern for equality. Should egalitarians object to synchronic inequalities when people are equal over their complete lives? I contend that, even if equality has diachronic value, there is some value in having a community where people are equal (in some respect) at any point. From the three first chapters, I derive three core principles of equality between overlapping generations. In Chapter 4, I draw on these principles to offer a three-fold response to what it means to treat the young as equals.

In Part II, I discuss two public policies in light of the theoretical account spelled out in Part I. In Chapter 5, I consider the radical egalitarian proposal of enforcing a right to unconditional cash. I ask *when* the unconditional payment should be made: in a lump sum at the beginning of people’s adult lives – as proponents of the *basic capital grant* argue; or in regular instalments throughout people’s adult lives – as proponents of the *basic income guarantee* argue. In Chapter 6, I take issue with the political marginalisation of young people and evaluate a policy proposal for youth quotas in parliaments.

My thesis thus makes an original contribution to the literature on egalitarianism in general and on intergenerational justice in particular. It offers an original account of the latter and shows how such an account can underpin practical policy proposals.

PART I – THEORY

CHAPTER 1 - COMPLETE LIVES EGALITARIANISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

In this first chapter, I provide some preliminary elements to distinguish the various examples of inequalities between generations highlighted in the introduction (a-e): that (a) the generation of young people today will end up having paid “a higher share of their incomes to their governments for a lower entitlement to services and benefits from their governments” (Coyle 2011, 103); (b) the government’s spending per elderly person is several times higher than the amount spent per child and that “Of the [national] NHS budget of about £100bn, half goes on the over-65s” (Willets 2010, 158); (c) the young are entitled to a lower minimum wage than older adults; (d) the unemployment rate of the 16-25 years old age group is twice as high as for the rest of the population; and that (e) the young today have to pay so much in tuition fees to study towards higher education while the generation before them did not have to pay for the same services when they were young themselves. To shed some light on these cases of inequalities between generations, I examine both some underlying conceptual distinctions and some contrasting intuitions.

First, Section 1.1 clarifies three important conceptual distinctions found in the intergenerational literature: between intra and intergenerational justice, between overlapping and non-overlapping generations, and between age groups and birth cohorts. These clarifications enable me to identify the gaps in the literature, narrow down the scope of the thesis, and make explicit where my contributions are located. It also allows me to locate my own object of study - young people - within the realm of intergenerational issues.

Second, I identify one set of divergent moral intuitions underpinning the cases (a-e) highlighted above. More specifically, Section 1.2 looks at the implications of the debate spurred by Dennis McKerlie (1989a) and Larry Temkin (1993) on what time unit egalitarians should endorse - complete lives or simultaneous segments – for questions of intergenerational equality. I translate this abstract discussion into the intergenerational language discussed in Section 1.1, and analyse what it tells us about the above examples. I argue that complete lives egalitarianism, the dominant view, gives us *prima facie* reasons to be concerned with inequalities between birth

cohorts, but none to object to inequalities between age groups. In Section 1.3, I then explain CLE’s intuitive strength to explicate why the view established itself as the dominant approach. I then clarify what is so ‘special’ about age that egalitarians do not find it important to challenge age-based inequalities in treatment, opportunities or welfare per se. In Section 1.4, I conclude by introducing some limitations to CLE, and setting up the key challenges for the following chapters.

1.1 Between Whom Does Intergenerational Justice Apply?

Those who have attempted to delineate the scope of intergenerational justice – including Lukas Meyer (2010), Nancy Jecker (2002), Joerg Tremmel (2006) and Axel Gosseries (2009), have offered different answers to the question ‘between whom does intergenerational justice apply?’. In the same way as one may ask ‘between whom does distributive justice apply?’ (for instance individuals, nations, social classes, or families), it seems important to clarify the kinds of ‘subjects’ involved in the context of justice between generations. The table below summarizes some of the answers they offered to this question.

	Subjects of IG justice	WHO owes...	...WHOM
Lukas Meyer (2003) <i>Stanford Encyclopaedia</i>	Non-contemporaneous generations	- Present generations...	...future generations ...past generations
Nancy Jecker (2002) <i>Encyclopaedia of Aging</i>	Age groups	- Society... - Specific age groups (eg: middle-aged adults)...	...specific age groups (eg: the elderly)
Joerg Tremmel (2006) <i>Handbook of Intergenerational Justice</i>	Generations	- Present people... - Older generations...	...future generations ...young generations (i.e. young people and children)
Axel Gosseries and Lukas Meyer (2009) <i>Intergenerational justice</i>	Non-contemporaneous generations; overlapping generations; age groups; birth cohorts.	- Present people... - Society... - Birth cohort X...	...future generations ...past generations ...specific age groups ...birth cohort Y

Table 1 - Between whom does intergenerational justice apply?

From this summary, one sees that, although ‘generations’ are always the subject of intergenerational discussions, we may refer to different kinds of intergenerational

relations: between current and past generations, between current and future generations, between current generations, between age groups, between birth cohorts, etc. This first section categorizes the types of subjects that are involved in the realm of intergenerational justice, so as to locate my own research questions and object of study in the existing intergenerational literature. I focus on the distinctions between: (1) intra and inter-generational justice; (2) overlapping and non-overlapping generations; and (3) age groups and birth cohorts.

1.1.1 Intra-generational and intergenerational justice

One first important definitional distinction that runs through the intergenerational literature is between *intra* and *inter*-generational justice. Intergenerational justice covers, by definition, the realm of issues that concern people born at different times. The concept of intra-generational justice is used to express what intergenerational justice *is not* about – questions of distributive justice within generations, such as justice between the rich and the poor, gender justice and international justice (Tremmel 2009). The diagram below illustrates this distinction.

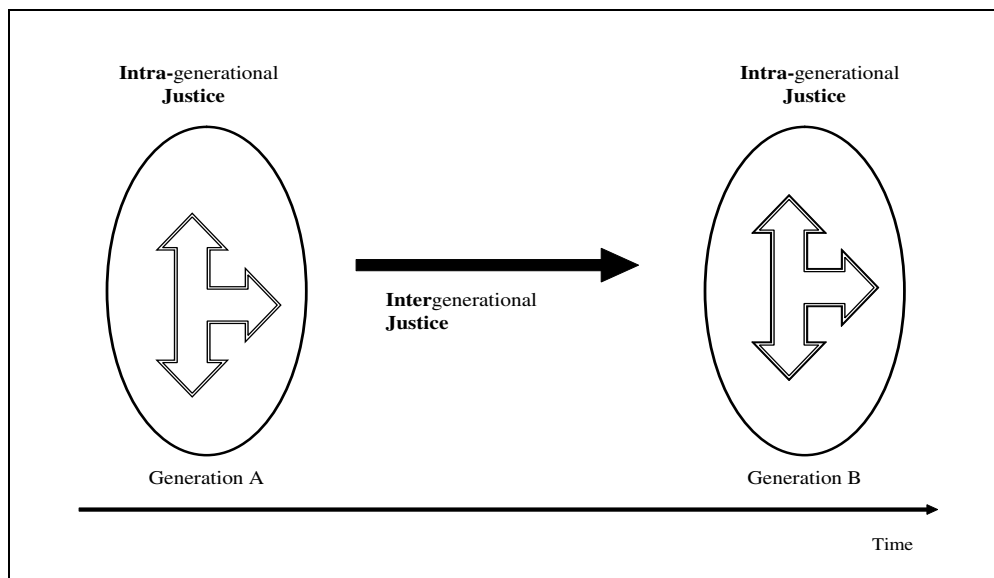


Figure 1 - Intra and Inter-generational justice (Tremmel 2006, 5)

The constitutive difference between intra and intergenerational justices is that the scope of intra-generational justice concerns issues of inequality and distribution *within* a generation (within generation A and within generation B) while the scope of intergenerational justice covers issues of inequalities and transfers *between* generations (between generations A and B). Intergenerational and intra-generational justice are further analytically separated in that, as Tremmel argues,

the two approaches “are fundamentally different in the sense of intergenerational justice comparing *average* individuals, whereas intra-generational justice analyses the various circumstances and living conditions of individuals at a given point in time” (Tremmel 2006, 5). In the intergenerational perspective, we are comparing the average individual in birth cohort N to the average individuals in cohort N+1, N+2, and so forth.

The analytical distinction between inter and intra-generational justice is slightly misleading, however, because it represents them as independent one from the other. In some sense, the isolation perceived at the political level mentioned in the introduction, seems to be mirrored by this conceptualization of intergenerational issues away from other social issues. This risks reinforcing the perception of generational discussions as diversions from the important business of discussing other inequalities. It would thus be with reason that, as Ben Little argues, “many on the left are suspicious of generational politics, on the grounds that it is stopping people talking about class” (Little 2014a).

The distinction between inter and intra generational justice threatens to blind us to the fact that the two are inevitably intertwined. This is because, at any given time, there always are members of different generations. As a result, whenever we redistribute resources from the better off to the worse off, we simultaneously transfer resources from the young to the old, from the old to children, and so on. Moreover, most intergenerational institutions also serve as class redistributive mechanisms: the poorest workers do not have to finance the health care of the retired; in (egalitarian) theory it is the richest that ought to pay for the services that the poorest elderly consume. So if we are to integrate questions of time and justice into egalitarian thought, we may not want to isolate questions of intergenerational justice too sharply from other issues of social justice.

This does not mean that average equality between generation A and B is not a goal of justice as well, but it does mean that intra and intergenerational justice cannot be represented as entirely independent. One of the goals of this thesis is to reconnect temporal issues of intergenerational justice to social inequalities by showing both that (a) the significance and development of social inequalities cannot be adequately conceptualized in abstraction from time and age, and (b) that the proper egalitarian way to conceptualize time is ‘intersectional’; that is, an egalitarian framework of intergenerational justice must integrate inequalities in advantage at its core.

1.1.2 Overlapping and non-overlapping generations

An additional important distinction is between overlapping and non-overlapping generations. By intergenerational justice (henceforth IG justice), we may only refer to justice between non-contemporaries. Lukas Meyer, for instance, introduces the question of intergenerational justice as follows: “Do justice considerations apply to intergenerational relations, that is, to relations between non-contemporaries?” (Meyer 2010). What makes IG justice an independent field of philosophical enquiry, he argues, is that it is concerned with people who will never coexist in time. This he contrasts with other areas of social justice, which are concerned with what contemporary individuals, or groups of individuals, owe to each other. Meyer then discusses what we owe to distant future or past generations, and highlights the difficult theoretical issues that arise when we ask such questions. He understands the objects of IG justice as being future and past generations. Issues of intergenerational duties and rights obtain between non-contemporaneous generations, which can be equally referred to as *distant* generations or *non-overlapping* generations.

As far as past generations are concerned, questions of justice between generations may involve discussions of the possible duties of current generations to compensate the descendants of past victims of collective rights violations, especially when there is a correlation between present disadvantage and past wrongs. Examples include claims for reparation of Native-Americans, Australian Aboriginals, Afro-Americans, and citizens of former colonial states. Present generations and institutions can be said to owe past generations through their descendants. In addition, an argument could be made that we owe past generations something more directly: perhaps a certain degree of respect and remembrance.¹

However, it is the debate on what we owe to future generations that has attracted the most attention within the field of intergenerational justice. This interest was prompted by the growing awareness that many natural resources are limited or non-renewable. Many questions started to arise: What do we owe to future generations? What ought we to sacrifice today for future unborn people? How can we design sustainable institutions? How to best represent the interests of future generations? Green movements throughout the world started to appeal to the idea of justice between generations understood as the set of ethical and political duties we have to future generations.

¹ On the topic of justice between current and past generations, see: Thomson (2008, 31-44, 2009), Brechner (2002) and Abdel-Nour (2003).

These questions stimulated a lively literature.² Philosophers took on the task of ‘applying’ available theories of justice to generational issues and soon realized that traditional accounts of distributive justice carried counterintuitive or problematic implications when applied to future generations: utilitarianism could potentially encourage infinite population growth in order to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number; social contract theorists would have to face the problem that reciprocity or mutual advantage make little sense when it comes to future generations, which are at our mercy; and Human Rights theories could not straightforwardly apply to unborn generations (Moody 2007, 4). In the introduction of their edited book entitled *Intergenerational Justice*, Lukas Meyer and Axel Gosseries (2009) also highlight several important philosophical problems that arise when it comes to justifying why we would owe anything to unborn people: unborn people cannot comply, or agree to anything; they do not exist yet, so cannot be said to have rights as such; they are so distant that we care for them much less than we do for those who are closer to us in time; and remoteness also implies problems of epistemic uncertainty. All these questions gave rise to a wave of literature on intergenerational justice, which focused primarily on what we owe future generations and examined the intersection of futurity and fairness.

There is still much work to be done to solve all these issues and adapt our theories of justice to futurity (Gosseries and Meyer 2009). However, the overwhelming emphasis on future generations should not lead us believe that there is nothing to be said about IG justice between *overlapping* generations, and it should not be allowed to crowd out enquiries into such questions of justice. As Gosseries and Meyer claim in the introduction to their edited book *Intergenerational Justice*, “we should not lose sight of the fact that justice between neighbouring generations is not, as such, a negligible field of investigation, as those insisting on justice between non-overlapping and remote generations may too quickly assume” (Gosseries and Meyer 2009, 4).

My research questions – ‘what do we owe to young people?’ and ‘what does it mean to treat the young as equals?’- are exclusively about the relations of justice

² The literature on future generations is too vast to be referenced exhaustively, but some key works include: Rawls (1971, 2001), English (1977), Parfit (1984), De-Shalit (1995), Dobson (ed.) (1999), Barry (1999), Rawls (2001), Tremmel (ed.) (2006), Mulgan (2006), Gaspart and Gosseries (2007), Gosseries and Meyer (eds.) (2009), Thompson (2009), Gosseries (2012). It is worth saying here that, although I am essentially focusing on contemporary political philosophy, the history of the idea of justice between generations can be traced back to philosophers like Thomas Jefferson ([1798](1975)), Thomas Paine ([1795](1984)) and Edmund Burke ([1790](1999)), who discussed whether it was fair for human societies to impose a constitution on future generations.

between overlapping generations. The literature on what we owe to future generations will not be directly relevant to my thesis, given that it focuses primarily on the problems that arise from the non-existence of future generations. Young people are already born and therefore the question of what it means to treat them as equals escapes the various problems associated with non-identity. I will be interested in future people only to the extent that they are today's young people envisaged at later stages of their lives. When I ask 'which inequalities between generations matter?'. I will therefore focus on the question of which inequalities between *overlapping* generations matter. In this way, my thesis aims to show that it is not the case that only relationships between non-contemporaries raise crucial questions of intergenerational justice.

1.1.3 Age groups and birth cohorts

The third conceptual distinction, often hidden behind the concept 'generation', will be of primary importance throughout this thesis. By generation we may mean 'age groups' or 'birth cohorts'. Age groups are groups of people at a certain stage of their lives, for instance children, or the elderly. Age-group justice refers to the "the ethical problem of distributing scarce resources between different age groups in a society" (Jecker 2002). For instance, "when societies debate how much of their scarce resources should be devoted to areas such as education that benefit primarily the young, versus programs such as social security or Medicare that benefit older members of the population" (Jecker 2002). By contrast, birth cohorts are groups of people born at a specific time and age together. For instance, the baby-boomers form a birth cohort of people born between the end of the Second World War and the 1960s.

The difference between age groups, on the one hand, and birth cohorts, on the other, lies with the fact that birth cohorts are specific groups of people who age together, while age groups are phases through which different cohorts pass as they age: "Age groups do not age. Over time, new and different birth cohorts simply move into an age group. In contrast, birth cohorts do age. They pass through the stages of life, and so, at different times, fall into different age groups" (Daniels 1988: 13). In the diagram below, the two axes represent time and age and help us visualize what differentiates birth cohorts, represented by arrows, from age groups, represented by boxes.

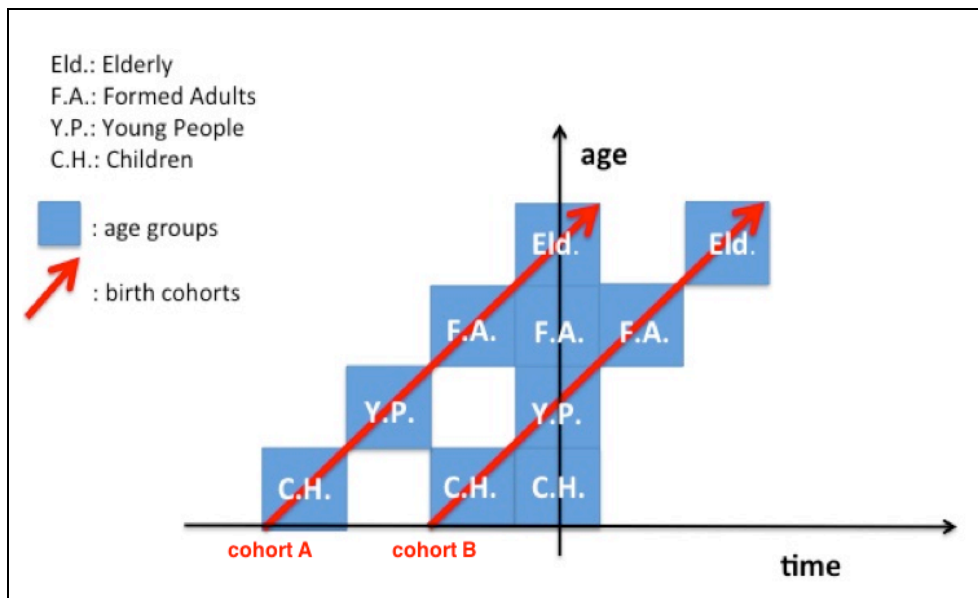


Figure 2 - Age and time in perspective

The diagram represents time (on the x-axis) and age (on the y-axis). It describes groups of people as they age. The red arrows represent two birth cohorts (A and B), each constituted by a group of people who go through the different stages of ageing together. The blue boxes represent the four age groups that exist in a society at any given time. At T_0 , for instance, we have roughly four age groups: children, young people, formed adults and the elderly. From this diagram, one can see that asking which inequalities between the two birth cohorts (red arrows) are unfair will be substantially different from asking which inequalities between two age groups – say young people and the elderly living at T_0 (blue boxes) matter. The first question is diachronic and requires comparing people over their complete lives, while the second is synchronic and concerns how two age groups respectively fare over a limited timeframe.

According to Daniels (1988), age groups and birth cohorts generate two different sets of problems of justice. This is because, since we all age, treating age groups unequally will not bring about inequalities between people, while treating birth cohorts unequally does bring about inequalities between persons. For instance, if one birth cohort benefits from free higher education and the following cohort must pay for it, then the institutions will have treated two groups of people unequally over their complete lives (other things being equal). However, if a policy subsidizes transport only for one age group – say those over 65 – then this differential treatment between age groups will not bring about inequalities between persons, because it is expected that everyone will be able to benefit from it at some point: “An institution that treats the young and the old differently will, over time,

still treat people equally” (Daniels 1988, 41). For Daniels, the age-group problem and the birth cohort problem are thus two different problems of justice.

Cohort problems arise when we ask how much we ought to pass on to the next generation. In this case, we are in fact asking what cohort C1 owes to cohort C2. And in turn, cohort C2 may owe something to cohort C1. For instance, cohort C1 may transfer institutions and savings to cohort C2, and cohort C1 may provide various forms of security and assistance to cohort C2, when the individuals in cohort C1 are older. It is important to note that birth cohorts may overlap, but of course not all will do. When we are concerned with those presently alive in a given community, we are dealing with several overlapping cohorts. When we refer to future generations, we are referring to an ensemble of birth cohorts yet to be born. An important distinction between questions of justice between non-overlapping generations and questions of justice between overlapping generations, is that the latter involves questions of age-group justice in addition to issues of birth-cohort justice.

Age-group problems arise when we become primarily concerned with the question of how institutions ought to treat people as they age and how scarce resources must be distributed among them. Only a few philosophers have explicitly contributed to this set of questions; and only two monographs have been written exclusively about age-group justice in contemporary political philosophy: Norman Daniels’s *Am I my Parent’s Keeper* (1988) and recently Dennis McKerlie’s *Justice between the Young and the Old* (2013).³ They both tried to establish a theory of age-group justice and to identify what institutions that meet age groups’ needs fairly should look like. The field is fundamentally under researched. As Axel Gosseries (2003) argues: “Theories of intergenerational justice are clearly still at an early stage. (...) But it is probably the domain of justice between age groups that is in need of the strongest research effort” (2003, 481). Once we integrate age-group justice within the scope of intergenerational justice, it becomes more apparent that some issues of justice between generations concern relations between individuals *at a given point in time*. In other words, intergenerational justice also pertains synchronically.

When I ask ‘which inequalities between generations matter?’. I am therefore asking two questions: ‘which inequalities between birth cohorts matter?’ and

³ Apart from Daniels and McKerlie, whose work I will extensively discuss in this thesis, the following authors have also touched on these questions: Ronald Dworkin (2000b), Nancy Jecker (1989, 2013), Axel Gosseries (2007, 2014), Jane English (1977), and Paul Bou-Habib (2011).

‘which inequalities between age groups matter?’. Similarly, when I ask what we owe to young people, I therefore raise two questions: (a) ‘what do we owe to young people as an age group?’ and (b) ‘what do we owe to young people as a birth cohort?’. I will provide an egalitarian theory of intergenerational justice that informs both sets of questions. However, given the particular research need on the side of age-group justice, this thesis will be primarily dedicated to establishing principles of justice between age groups.

So far, I have introduced three conceptual distinctions. The first distinction, between intra and intergenerational justice, was informative because it shed some light on the intergenerational emphasis on *average* individuals in successive generations. I suggested that it might not capture adequately the relations between generational issues and more traditional egalitarian issues, especially when we are discussing questions of justice between overlapping generations. We should be cautious in conceptualizing intra and intergenerational justice in isolation as it risks exacerbating the perceived political concern among those on the Left that generational issues may divert attention from other, implicitly more important, forms of inequality. The second distinction, between overlapping and non-overlapping generations, enabled me to reframe my research questions exclusively in terms of overlapping generations, given that my object of focus is young people rather than future generations. The third distinction was the most important conceptual clarification and will be central to this thesis’ investigation. When asking which inequalities between generations matter, we may look at the problem diachronically (over time) by focusing on birth cohorts, or we may look at the problem synchronically (at a given time) by focusing on age groups. Most theorists of intergenerational justice have overlooked the second problem of justice, either because they focused exclusively on the cohortal problem of justice for future generations or, as I will now show, because they were guided by the intuition that justice and equality only apply over complete lives.

1.2 The Equality Through Time Debate and Its Implications

1.2.1 Equality through time

Temkin (1993) devotes one chapter of his book *Inequality* to the issue of equality and time. He introduces the debate raised previously by McKerlie (1989a) on “whether the proper unit for egalitarian concern should be people’s lives, taken as a whole, or selected portions of their lives” (Temkin 1993, 232). Drawing mainly on

McKerlie, he highlights two views on what the relevant unit of egalitarian concern should be, as illustrated below.

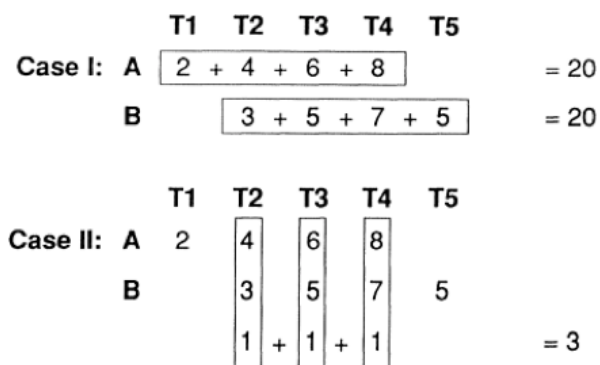


Figure 3 - Temkin's diagram on equality through time (Temkin 1993: 234).

The above diagram represents the respective levels of wellbeing of two individuals A and B (let us call them Anna and Bob). Anna's and Bob's respective lifespans are divided into five different time segments (T1-T5) of about twenty years each, such that Anna was born twenty years before Bob and they each lived for about eighty years. In the two cases, Anna's and Bob's levels of wellbeing are exactly the same. However, each case represents a different perspective on what time unit is relevant for comparative purposes. In Case I, the relevant unit of concern is taken to be "complete lives". The emphasis of this *complete lives view* is on the overall wellbeing of Bob as it compares to Anna's. Over their entire lives, Anna and Bob both enjoy a total of 20 "points" in wellbeing. A complete lives egalitarian would thus be satisfied by their respective wellbeing over their lifespan.

In Case II, however, the emphasis is placed on inequalities at given stages of Anna's and Bob's lives. Case II registers inequalities between Bob and Anna at T2, T3 and T4. This approach is called the *simultaneous segments view*. It emphasizes inequalities between Anna and Bob at simultaneous moments of their lives. At T2, for instance, Anna's wellbeing was superior to Bob's. According to this approach to time, inequalities that happen simultaneously matter, regardless of whether Anna and Bob happen to be equal over their whole lives.⁴

⁴ The equality through time debate is broader than I can discuss here. Given that my aim is to inform the distribution of resources between generations, I am instrumentally focusing only on the aspects of the debate that are directly relevant to my concerns. Other analytically interesting contributions to the equality through time debate include Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen's "ranking-order segments egalitarianism" (Lippert-Rasmussen 2005) – which compares segments regardless of their place in the lifespan, and Larry Temkin's "corresponding segments view" – which compares people at 'comparable stages', for instance first in childhood, then young adulthood, and so on (Temkin 1992). My main

The complete lives and simultaneous segments views thus offer two distinct ways to compare Anna's and Bob's wellbeing over time. The numbers preceded by equal signs on the far right of Temkin's drawing represent the relevant count that each view would register. On the complete lives view, Anna and Bob have been equal over their whole lives in terms of wellbeing, since their respective wellbeing is twenty points. The simultaneous segments view registers three points of inequalities in wellbeing by showing that, at each of the three simultaneous stages of their lives, Anna was 1 point better off than Bob. Thus, we can say that, depending on which perspective we adopt to compare Anna's and Bob's lives, we will get substantially different conclusions.

Complete-lives egalitarianism (CLE), the egalitarian theory that embraces the complete lives view, can be referred to as a distributive approach to social justice that considers as relevant only (in)equality between individuals' complete lives. On this view, inequalities between people that occur at a given time do not matter as such. They may matter, but only 'derivatively', insofar as they contribute to creating inequalities between people over their complete lives (Bou-Habib 2011). So, in some circumstances, the CL egalitarian will be able to appeal to an overall complete lives distribution to oppose a given synchronic inequality between two persons. By contrast, for proponents of simultaneous segments egalitarianism (SSE), inequalities that happen simultaneously matter in and of themselves, regardless of the overall lifespan distribution. In other words, SSE holds that inequalities between portions of different individuals' lives that happen simultaneously are of non-derivative, intrinsic moral concern.

In order to see how this abstract discussion relates to our generational concerns, and in particular to the examples highlighted in the introduction, let me now translate Temkin's puzzle into the generational language that I introduced in the previous section. The distinction between age groups and birth cohorts indeed makes particularly clear the intersection between the abstract equality through time debate and intergenerational equality.

problem with the ranking segments view is that it does not acknowledge that different stages of our lives are 'special' in different ways, as Temkin has also argued (Temkin 2003, 57). As for corresponding segments view, it is easily subsumed under complete life egalitarian accounts. In this thesis, I therefore focus exclusively on the two answers to the equality through time debate discussed above: 'complete lives' and 'simultaneous segments'.

1.2.2 Age groups, birth cohorts and equality

The debate over what time unit egalitarians should endorse has important implications for questions of justice between overlapping generations. Temkin (1992, 1993) makes this link quite explicit when he suggests that the angle from which we view intergenerational issues will depend on the perspective we adopt on what the right time unit of egalitarianism should be. In the introduction of their edited book on equality, Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen and Nils Holtug (2006) also mention these implications. In the citation below, by whole lives and time-slice, they respectively refer to complete lives and simultaneous segments.

According to whole lives egalitarianism, inequalities between individuals in different generations may well matter. (...). However, time-slice egalitarianism is concerned only with inequalities at particular time-slices and so does not give us a reason to regret intergenerational inequality. On the other hand, unlike whole lives egalitarianism, time-slice egalitarianism necessarily creates an objection to simultaneous inequalities between age groups.

(Lippert-Rasmussen and Holtug 2006: 10)

In Temkin's diagram, let us consider A and B as representing birth cohorts A and B. A represents a group of individuals born within the same time range who thus pass through different age groups together as they age. B represents the cohort of individuals born in the following twenty years. What matters, from a complete lives perspective, is equality between individuals' entire lives. From a CL egalitarian perspective, birth cohorts thus seem to be the right object of concern in the intergenerational context. Simultaneous inequalities at T0 between the elderly of cohort A and the young of cohort B do not matter per se. Synchronic inequalities between age groups at a given time only matter insofar as they constitute part of a larger whole. If, for instance, the individuals in cohort A are disadvantaged compared to the individuals in cohort B at T0, this only concerns complete lives egalitarians if this inequality is not compensated later or earlier in life.

What should we think of the inequalities (a-e) mentioned in the introduction? In example (a) the birth cohort of the young today get a lower benefit ratio than previous birth cohorts; that is, they end up contributing more than previous cohorts and receiving less in benefits than previous cohorts. Since the individuals in different cohorts will have been treated unequally over the course of their whole life, there is a complete lives egalitarian case to be made against such a state of affairs. Policies that reduce government spending on the current elderly or baby boomers, for instance, can be defended on this ground. Similarly, example (e), in

which the young today have to pay very high tuition fees when the previous cohort enjoyed higher education for free, is objectionable from the complete lives perspective (other things being equal).

The simultaneous segments perspective has very different implications than the complete lives approach. Since on SSE, it is synchronic inequalities that matter rather than complete lives, inequalities between age groups do matter. If the elderly are worse off than the rest of the population, this will concern the simultaneous segments egalitarian, regardless of whether the current young will undergo the same relative disadvantage when they will be older themselves. Relative levels of inequalities between different cohorts will not concern the simultaneous segments egalitarian. Being concerned with synchronic inequalities, SSE will tend to worry about age-group inequalities, regardless of how well cohorts A and B fare over their complete lives.

The simultaneous perspective thus seems to underlie three of our introductory examples. Examples (c) and (d) - which respectively highlight (c) the inequality in minimum wage entitlement between young people and older workers and (d) the inequality in unemployment risk between young and older workers - are only objectionable from a simultaneous perspective. Indeed, we will find both cases problematic if we consider that the “bigger picture” of what happens between complete lives is irrelevant when thinking about synchronic inequalities in treatment. In this perspective, the fact that youth unemployment is *always* higher than for the rest of the population, for all cohorts, is irrelevant to deciding whether the synchronic differential treatment is objectionable. If we claim that example (b), that the government’s spending per elderly person is several times higher than for other age groups, is unjust, then we also abstract from the diachronic perspective to focus solely on two age groups’ claims to be treated equally at a given time.

However, notice that determining whether these inequalities are unjust demands more than establishing the adequate time unit. In order to take a stand on specific cases, both simultaneous egalitarians and complete lives egalitarians would also have to specify the kinds of inequalities that matter (opportunity, wellbeing, welfare, resources). In example (b), if the simultaneous segments egalitarian is committed to equality in wellbeing or welfare between age groups, then he will find the inequality in the division of healthcare resources legitimate or even required. However, if he adopts a conception of equality as equal entitlements between age groups, she will object to the unequal healthcare state-spending ratio

between individuals. Most egalitarians will surely adopt the first approach and reject claim (b). This suggests that, even if simultaneous segments egalitarians consider that inequalities between age groups matter, other parameters will count in deciding specifically which inequalities between age groups matter.

The abstract distributive debate on the right time unit for egalitarian concern thus has important implications for the question of which inequalities between generations matter. If we endorse a diachronic approach to equality and time, we will tend to consider inequalities between birth cohorts as problematic and to disregard inequalities between age groups as unproblematic. If we endorse a synchronic approach, it is the other way round. The following table sums up these implications.

	Complete lives egalitarianism	Simultaneous segments egalitarianism
Which inequalities intrinsically matter?	Inequalities <i>between birth cohorts</i>	Inequalities <i>between age groups</i>
Examples of inequalities that matter	(a) Inequalities in benefit ratios <i>between cohorts</i> . (e) Inequalities in Higher Education funding <i>between cohorts</i> .	(b) Inequalities in the allocation of public resources <i>between age groups</i> . (c) Inequalities in minimum wage entitlements <i>between age groups</i> . (d) Inequalities in unemployment risks, <i>between age groups</i> .
Examples of inequalities that do not matter	(b) Inequalities in the allocation of public resources <i>between age groups</i> . (c) Inequalities in minimum wage entitlements <i>between age groups</i> . (d) Inequalities in unemployment risks <i>between age groups</i> .	(a) Inequalities in state benefit ratios between cohorts. (e) Inequalities in Higher Education funding <i>between cohorts</i> .

Table 2 - Intergenerational implications of the equality through time debate

1.3 The Case for Complete Lives Equality

Complete lives egalitarianism is the prevailing approach to equality through time and the dominant default view endorsed by egalitarian accounts of justice. As McKerlie puts it, “philosophical theories of justice tend to assign their distributive principles to the temporal scope of a lifetime” (McKerlie 2013, 22). John Rawls, for instance, claims that: “Justice as fairness focuses on inequalities in citizens’ life

prospects – their prospects over a complete life” (Rawls 1971). CLE is often simply assumed, by default, because it is quite intuitive. In this section, I will explain CLE’s intuitive pull (Section 1.3.1), provide justifications for its cohortal implications (Section 1.3.2) and discuss what makes age ‘special’ (Section 1.3.3).

1.3.1 Explaining the intuitive pull of CLE

When egalitarians define wrongful inequalities between two individuals, they usually implicitly assume that the relevant time unit is the individuals’ entire lives. There are at least three underlying explanations for the endorsement of the whole life perspective: (1) a metaphysical explanation, (2) an anti-utilitarian explanation (which relates to the separateness of persons argument), and (3) an argument from compensation and responsibility. These explanations for why CLE has established itself as the dominant view do not *justify* an exclusive focus on complete lives. This is especially true of (1) and (2), which are more explanatory than justificatory, but jointly they have given a strong impetus to egalitarians having adopted complete lives as the right unit of concern.

First, CLE draws on a widespread metaphysical view about persons – the continuous-identity view. If we believe that individuals are one and the same in youth and old age, then we are more likely to be drawn to the complete life view. Consider the example of a state that has an established and enduring policy that ensures free public transportation to anyone over the age of 65 years old. In such a case, the synchronic inequality in free access to transportation between a 20-year-old, who has to pay, and a 65-year-old person seems unimportant because the young person will also benefit from the policy in later life.

However, note that this is only true if we contend that the young person today is indeed the same person as the future elderly person who will enjoy the benefits of the policy. If we endorse a different metaphysical view – for example, that individuals are so different in old age and in youth that we may consider that they are different persons at these different stages of their lives – then the focus on complete lives seems to lose its grip. On such a view, shorter time segments would provide a better-suited temporal focus, as this would not assume continuity throughout people’s lives. Complete lives egalitarianism thus relies and follows from a conception of persons as unified selves from birth to death. For this reason, it is worth saying that one way to undermine CLE would be to reject the continuity view. However, in this thesis, I accept the view of persons as unified selves and consider that we are one and the same person throughout our lives. As I will show,

there are several limitations to the diachronic approach, independent of its metaphysical basis. But our tendency to endorse the continuity perspective in relation to personal identity is one explanation for the diachronic focus of many accounts of distributive justice.

Second, the egalitarian commitment to complete lives can be seen as the other side of the coin of the contemporary egalitarian commitment to the separateness of persons. The opposition to the utilitarian aggregation of burdens and benefits across lives is constitutive of Rawls's egalitarianism. Utilitarianism, Rawls argues, "does not take seriously the distinction between persons" (Rawls 1971, 26). The maximization of utility approach cannot be used between different persons because it negates each individual's fundamental right not to be used as means for others' benefit. Utilitarians, Rawls argues, treat interpersonal judgements as they would treat intrapersonal judgements:

The striking feature of the utilitarian view of justice is that it does not matter, except indirectly, how this sum of satisfactions is distributed among individuals any more than it matters, except indirectly, how one man distributes his satisfaction over time. The correct distribution in either case is which yields the maximum fulfilment.

(Rawls 1971, 26)

By contrast, for contemporary egalitarians, the maximization of utility strategy is adequate within a life, but not interpersonally. For instance, it is one thing to decide that I will do something I hate doing today because it will considerably increase my welfare for the following three days. It is an entirely different thing to have someone else do something they hate doing for a group of us to be happy. Or, in other words, interpersonal judgements are fundamentally distinct from intrapersonal judgements.

The other side of a coin of the separateness of persons is thus that intrapersonal inequalities, as opposed to interpersonal inequalities, are represented as unproblematic from the point of view of equality. Similarly, McKerlie argues: "the price of defending the existence of egalitarian distributional constraints between lives is conceding that there are no such distributional constraints inside lives. This is the price that the egalitarian writers of the 1970s were not at all reluctant to pay" (McKerlie 2013, 26). The application of the egalitarian value to complete lives is thus the other side of a coin of the liberal egalitarian commitment to the separateness of persons.

Third, egalitarians are often drawn to the diachronic approach because they value the joint ideal of responsibility and compensation. Luck egalitarians, in particular, believe that the point of egalitarian justice is to ensure bad brute luck has as little impact as possible over people's lives (Arneson 2000, 339). For this reason, those who are poor through no fault of their own should be compensated. However, if individuals make free choices that have a negative impact on their lifetime prospects, then they will have to assume the costs of such choices. This rationale of responsibility and compensation is thus fundamentally diachronic. Egalitarians should not be concerned about inequalities at a given point in time; they should look at the diachronic picture to find out whether compensation is, or is not, owed for a given time-limited inequality. In other words, a given synchronic inequality between two persons only matters if it is the sign of an unequal diachronic distribution of resources. Richard Wagland (2012) sums it up this way: "luck egalitarianism is based upon two premises: first, that diachronic equality is viewed as the fairest form of distribution; and second, that the cut between choice and circumstance is morally important because it maintains diachronic equality between separate persons" (Wagland 2012, 148).

The metaphysical view of individuals as unified selves from birth to death is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for CLE's plausibility. The separateness of persons' explanation merely explains egalitarians' tendency to accept intrapersonal judgements as irrelevant for egalitarianism, and in turn, to consider whole lives as the relevant unit of concern. If the unity of personhood and the separateness of persons both contribute to explain why egalitarians have been drawn to the complete life approach, the compensation and responsibility argument offers a potential justification for it. If we want to take into account past choices and unequal endowments, then we must endorse a diachronic approach that establishes what people are owed in the present segment based on what they had, or did, in previous segments. The synchronic approach, by contrast, disregards past distributions and thus neglects these two important egalitarian values.

Having explained the intuitive pull of CLE for egalitarians, let me now turn to CLE's generational implications. As we have seen, if one endorses CLE, then one will naturally be drawn to find inequalities between birth cohorts *prima facie* problematic and inequalities between age groups *only derivatively* problematic if they are sign of an unequal distribution of inequalities over complete lives. I will now show that there are important egalitarian reasons to believe that inequalities between birth cohorts are morally significant. I will then ask what it is about age

that is so special that complete lives egalitarians are drawn to find age-based inequalities unproblematic.

1.3.2 The moral significance of inequalities between birth cohorts

The complete lives egalitarian implication that inequalities between birth cohorts should concern us seems justifiable from the point of view of equality. A particularly appealing way to frame questions of cohortal justice can be derived from the key premise of luck egalitarianism - that it is fundamentally unfair if people are unequal through no fault or choice of their own. Luck egalitarianism, as Richard Arneson (2004) suggests, is based on two types of views: a “luckist” view and an egalitarian view. The luckist view claims that it is morally wrong if brute luck determines people’s status and opportunities - for instance, features over which one has no control such as one’s sex, social background or ethnic origins should not limit the scope of what one may be able to do in society.

In addition, there must be a correlation between individual responsibility and the choices people make, on the one hand, and the opportunities people end up with, on the other. This responsibility-based component of luck egalitarianism has strong implications for questions of intergenerational justice. For instance, future generations do not exist yet, do not have agency, and can thus never be said to be responsible for any damages to the environment they will inherit. Since they are completely at our mercy, it is *prima facie* unfair if we restrict their opportunities. Similarly, there is something wrong if children and young people’s opportunities have been unduly reduced as they begin their lives.

The other basic element of the luck egalitarian view, the equality component, takes equality between persons to be the default position in matters of justice. Brought together, those two components result in the view that the only inequalities that are acceptable are those stemming from genuine choices. On luck egalitarianism, what we owe to future generations is that they have access to roughly the same opportunities. One of the clearest formulations of this view is Brian Barry’s important 1999 article on intergenerational justice. Discussing environmental justice, he argues:

It appears that sustainability is at least a necessary condition of justice. For the principle of responsibility says that, unless people in the future can be held responsible for the situation that they find themselves in, they should not be worse off than we are.

(Barry 1999, 106)

Philippe Van Parijs similarly formulates his view that intergenerational justice requires “each generation, each birth cohort, to make sure the situation of the next generation somehow measured, on a per capita basis is no worse than its own” (Van Parijs 1998, 106). This goal of diachronic sustainability through time applies to other domains than the environment. It has implications for the levels of debt we are entitled to pass on to subsequent generations, for the public infrastructure we must invest in (such as roads, libraries, and housing), for the budget we must devote to research (for instance health and sustainable energies), and for the extent to which we must protect heritage.

The complete lives egalitarian assumption thus seems to point to a justifiable egalitarian concern for equality in opportunities for future cohorts. If we are egalitarians, then we should make sure that the brute luck of being born at one point in time or twenty years later does not illegitimately affect your opportunities. It is *prima facie* unfair if the parent generation (upstream) takes decisions that restrict the opportunities of their children’s generation (downstream). There may be some reasons for deviating from cohort equality, and it may be complicated to secure such goal of justice because the future is always uncertain (as I will discuss in Chapter 4). But the diachronic approach leads us to the important conclusion that *approximate equality in opportunities between birth cohorts* is an important goal of justice.

1.3.3 What makes age special?

Given that individuals have as little control over their age as they have over their sex or ethnicity, it is not clear why treating people unequally based on their age should be acceptable. Egalitarians usually take inequalities between groups of people to be *prima facie* objectionable. Sexual and racial discrimination are often offered as exemplars of illegitimate forms of unequal treatment. What makes age so special that we may focus on whole lives and discount inequalities between age groups?

Axel Gosseries (2007, 2014) points to three interesting distinctions that could explain the intuition that age-based differential treatments are *prima facie* less problematic than sex-based differential treatments. Gosseries (2014)’s first explanatory hypothesis is that while gender inequalities are binary, age is a point on a scale. Ages are ‘multiple’, so to speak. Second, and perhaps more importantly, gender inequalities are more unilateral than age-group inequalities: it is not clearly the case that one age group tends to always end up being worse off than the other.

We cannot say the same of gender inequalities. A similar analysis can be given of the difference between age-based discriminations and ethnic discriminations. While the latter are likely to fall on those relegated to the bottom of the hierarchy of racial prejudices, the former do not disadvantage a specific age group in the same systematic way: consider for instance voting and driving rights, to the disadvantage of teenagers and the various age-based subsidies and discounts that are to their advantage. Third, Gosseries argues that age is often a more accurate proxy for morally relevant features than is gender. One could make the argument that at least some age ranges - like very young or very old age - are better proxies for ability, competence, or experience, than is gender.

However, these distinctions do not fully explain the intuition that age is special. Even if racial and gender-based discriminations were less dialectic and binary, less unilateral, and only limited to cases where they are accurate sociological proxies for relevant features, one could still object to a society fraught with differential treatments based on natural features over which people have no control. Consider the recent debate over the use of gender by car insurance providers. Women are involved in considerably fewer accidents than men, so insurers in Europe used to apply this sociological fact to the advantage of women. Even though this gender-based differential treatment advantaged women on the basis of good actuarial evidence, the European Court of Justice decided that, as a matter of principle, the use of gender in fixing insurance premiums was an unfair discrimination. The intuition to which this ruling appeals is that there is a deep sense in which we should not treat people unequally based on natural criteria over which they have no control. The mere fact that it is a good sociological proxy for risky behaviour and that it benefits a group that is usually worse off is not sufficient to override the 'principle of non-discrimination' the European Court seems to have appealed to. The distinctions highlighted above are thus indicative, but do not convincingly explain why we may consider letting age-based discriminations off the hook. And if age is just like gender, then the complete lives egalitarian implication that inequalities in treatment between age groups are unproblematic seems to be undermined.

Both Gosseries and Daniels, however, come to the conclusion that what makes age truly special is that 'we all age', and thus we move from one age group to another in a foreseeable way. Gosseries sums it up this way: "Your age is pure brute luck and thus should not be held against you. And yet, while we cannot change our age, our age keeps on changing" (Gosseries 2007). This makes age special when

compared with gender or ethnicity: as we age, we pass through different age groups, while we generally do not change gender or ethnicity. For instance, at first sight, it might seem unfair that some rights, such as voting rights, are only granted after a certain age. However, this is fundamentally different from a case in which women cannot vote, for instance, since age restrictions on voting rights do not treat individuals unequally over time while sex discrimination does. In this way, an adult could justify age restrictions on voting rights to his underage daughter complaining about the unfairness of this inequality as follows: “This situation only looks unfair to you because you don’t see the bigger picture. When I was your age, I could not vote either. You will be able to vote when you are older, too. So there is no injustice: over our lives, we will have been treated equally.” The idea behind this justification thus seems to be that, since we all age, age group inequalities do not matter.

As a result, at least in theory, if institutions remain stable over people’s complete lives, differential treatments between age groups will not generate inequalities between persons, whereas treating people differently based on their ethnicity and sex does bring about inequalities between people over their complete lives: “a society that relentlessly discriminates between people on grounds of age can still treat them equally over their complete lives (...). Everyone’s turn [at being discriminated] comes” (Gosseries 2007). Even if young people and elderly people are not treated equally at T₀, they can still have been treated equally over their lives. Ultimately, it is this that makes age ‘special’ and, arguably, it explains the intuitive pull of complete lives egalitarianism and its generational implications.

1.4 Conclusions

If age is special because we all age, then perhaps we should embrace the diachronic approach, be wary of inequalities between birth cohorts and accept that inequalities between age groups are unproblematic. I hope to have conveyed the intuitive pull of CLE and the moral significance of its cohortal implications. However, even if we accept that the diachronic concern for cohort equality should fare well in a theory of intergenerational equality, the complete lives egalitarian approach is unlikely to be sufficient on its own to establish the requirements of intergenerational equality. Although CLE is intuitive at first sight, as Temkin argues, “this is yet another area where I think there is a generally accepted, unexamined view, which on reflection is fraught with difficulties” (1993, 232).

In this thesis, I will argue that CLE is not sufficient to account for what egalitarians should believe in the context of intergenerational equality. While I have shown that CLE's cohortal implications can be justified by appeal to luck egalitarianism, I have not given *reasons* why we should accept the view that inequalities between age groups are unproblematic. I have merely attempted to *explain* our intuition that 'age is special'. In fact, the only potential justification I have provided for CLE is that the value of responsibility applies diachronically. But when we step away from matters of individual responsibility to focus on cases of age-based discrimination, for instance, then the diachronic view is left without justification.

Moreover, the idea that at least some inequalities between age groups should matter to egalitarians also seems intuitive. What if the young live in total misery while the elderly flourish? Even if the young will enjoy the same benefits as the previous generation when they are old, it seems that this extreme inequality between parts of lives is intuitively problematic. As McKerlie also puts it, on CLE, elderly people may be left in poverty so long as they were well off in the past. There are no egalitarian reasons, complete lives egalitarianism implies, to assist elderly people. McKerlie argues: "I find this consequence intuitively objectionable. To avoid it, we need a new kind of egalitarian theory" (McKerlie 1992, 281).

In the next two chapters, I argue that a radical complete lives egalitarian view that denies that the inequality between the young and the old in the examples given above matters at all, or one that holds that age-based discrimination is always acceptable, is an unattractive and implausible egalitarian view. I show that we must find ways to move beyond 'pure CLE' to inform the distribution of resources at different stages of their lives, that is between age groups. In Chapters 2 and 3, I examine two theories of age-group justice that give us substantive guidance on how to distribute resources between age groups. In Chapter 2, I introduce Daniels's prudential theory of age-group justice. One conclusion that can be drawn from his account is that inequalities between age groups are only fair when they are 'prudent'. Daniels's account is still complete lives egalitarian. But Daniels finds a way to combine CLE with an account that provides significant guidelines as to what counts as a just distribution of resources between age groups, as I will now show. In Chapter 3, drawing on McKerlie's simultaneous segments view, I will then offer a fundamentally synchronic answer to the question 'which inequalities between generations matter?' that also informs the topic of age-group justice.

CHAPTER 2 - DANIELS'S PRUDENTIAL LIFESPAN ACCOUNT AND ITS LIMITS

As a society, we are harangued by Cassandras who see the aging of society as a divisive problem. They see competition, with the old pitted against the young, grandparent against grandchild, in a life and death scramble for scarce resources. By focusing on what is distinctive about age – that is, we all age - I have found a way to undercut this grim view.

(Daniels 1988, 154)

Am I My Parent's Keeper? by Norman Daniels (1988) is the most prominent volume to have been produced in the under-researched field of age-group justice. It is one of the very few works that directly address questions such as 'what is a fair distribution of resources between age groups?' and 'which forms of inequalities between age groups are legitimate?'. Not only was Daniels one of the first authors who took on the challenge of filling this gap in the normative literature, but his work on age also remains pivotal today. Notwithstanding the numerous criticisms his framework prompted, Daniels's systematic elaboration on the intuition that 'we all age' is a cornerstone for any research on age, time and justice. His theory of age-group justice, the 'prudential lifespan account' (PLA), and its limitations will consequently be the focus of Chapter 2. The prevalence of Daniels's work for the field of age-group justice also explains the length of this chapter.

Daniels's main contribution to political philosophy has been the extension of Rawls's theory of justice to the domain of healthcare. John Rawls had abstracted away from the circumstances of illness citizens are likely to suffer from at many points in their lives (Rawls 2001, 175). In *Just Health Care*, Daniels (1985) examines people's entitlements to the healthcare resources needed to recover "normal species functioning", as a requirement of fair equality of opportunity. Daniels's work on age-group justice stems from this previous engagement with healthcare and distributive justice. Through his idealized procedure, the PLA, he raises the further issue of how we should fairly distribute scarce resources across people's lifespan. The fact that his account emanates from his writings on healthcare is conspicuous throughout his work on age-group justice. This is illustrated by his appeal to healthcare examples, his choice of concepts and the level of scarcity he assumes. As I will discuss in this chapter, this context partly explains both the intuitive force of the PLA and its limitations.

In a nutshell, Daniels argues both that age-group justice demands the preservation of a “normal opportunity range” throughout our lives, and that “age rationing” can be justified under restricted conditions. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to evaluate the plausibility of the PLA as a theory of age-group justice, and more specifically as a *diachronic* account of age. As discussed in Chapter 1, while pure complete lives egalitarianism provides reasons to find inequalities between birth cohorts problematic, it does not shed much light into issues of age-group justice. By contrast, Daniels’s modified account provides a diachronic way to register inequalities between age groups (beyond their derivative impact on birth cohort equity) and offers a procedural solution to determine which inequalities between age groups matter.

In this chapter, I first present Daniels’s complex procedural theory (Section 2.1) and make its outcomes explicit (Section 2.2). I then categorize three kinds of criticisms against the intrapersonal prudential procedure from within the diachronic paradigm - the *demographic*, the *longevity* and the *impartiality* objections - and I rescue the account from these charges (Section 2.3). Last, I level an original criticism at the PLA, namely that it conceptualises the age-group problem as a residual problem of justice and establishes the requirements of age-group justice in sharp isolation from the demands of social justice (Section 2.4). This final discussion rises up to the challenge I posed earlier in this thesis to integrate generational issues into the broader realm of egalitarian social justice.

2.1 The Features of the PLA

The prudential lifespan account is a device that uses “what is prudent over a lifespan to determine a result that neither young nor old can object as unfair to them” (Daniels 1988, 63). The PLA rests on the two following basic observations about age-based differential treatment:

- (a) “Such unequal treatment does not mean that persons are treated unequally over their lifespan” (Daniels 1988, 45).
- (b) “Such unequal treatment may have effects which benefit everyone” (Daniels 1988, 45).

The first point appeals to what I have introduced and discussed in Chapter 1: the basic observation that we all age. Once we adopt a diachronic perspective on age, we are able to see that synchronic inequalities between age groups may cancel out over time: “Differential treatment by age, over time, is not unequal treatment of persons, even if it is unequal treatment of age groups on each occasion, at each moment” (Daniels 1988, 42). Daniels’s first basic observation is thus an injunction to endorse the complete lives view. Let me briefly recall the three generational implications this approach carries. First, inequalities between age groups are not *prima facie* unfair. Second, inequalities between birth cohorts matter, since they are about individuals’ complete lives’ prospects. This way, Daniels argues that institutions must be designed to foster and respect *approximate equality in benefit ratios between cohorts*⁵ (Daniels 1988, 128). Third, inequalities between age groups are derivatively objectionable insofar as they may contribute to creating or exacerbating inequalities between birth cohorts. For instance, if Cohort X is treated worse than Cohort Y at both T1 and T2, one may object to the synchronic inequality at T2 because it may increase the likeliness of diachronic inequality between Cohorts X and Y over their complete lives.

If (a) is what makes Daniels’s account a ‘lifespan’ view, (b) is what makes it ‘prudential’. Daniels’s second basic observation - that age-based unequal treatments may have effects which benefit everyone - can be understood in two ways. I will first highlight a circular way of understanding it and then propose a better way to make sense of the intuition. First, (b) can be understood as a common sense judgement on the changing nature of our needs over time. It seems reasonable to believe that our institutions should be responsive to changing needs and should thus allocate resources accordingly along the lifespan. (a) tells us that it may be *prima facie* unproblematic to treat age groups unequally. However, (a) does not give us *reasons* to treat age groups unequally and does not tell us *how* to treat them. On the contrary, (b) provides a reason to treat age groups unequally - they have different needs; and it also points to a possible way to do so - to each age group according to their needs.

However, this is not the kind of unequal treatment Daniels has in mind. The fact that people have dissimilar basic needs and that institutions treat them accordingly is often constitutive of what counts as ‘equal treatment’. As Brian Barry (2009) argues, equal treatment often requires that we treat people differently. He takes the

⁵ Daniels defines ‘benefits ratios’ as “the ratio of benefits received to contributions made” (Daniels 1988, 118).

example of an army that provides all soldiers with size 8 boots, regardless of their own shoe size. This would count as ‘same treatment’ and yet “equal treatment requires each soldier to have boots that fit” (Barry 2001, 2). Similarly, we could consider that, when institutions treat age groups according to their needs, this counts as equal treatment. For instance, treating able middle-aged people ‘the same’ as elderly people would mean affording them an equal amount of healthcare resources. Treating them equally, however, would mean affording elderly people more of such resources.

But then (b) may seem to lose its grip since it wrongly identifies equal treatments as unequal and points to a non-existent problem. Indeed, if ‘equal treatment’ means ‘differential but adapted treatment’, then by ‘unequal treatment’ between age groups, Daniels cannot mean ‘differential but adapted treatment’ in this sense. In other words, if we understand equal treatment as treatment that gives people ‘boots that fit’, and if (b) means that unequal treatment is acceptable when it is in line with people’s age specific needs, then the unequal treatment mentioned by Daniels would in fact be a perfect instance of equal treatment. So by ‘unequal treatment that benefits everyone’, Daniels must mean something other than treatments that treat people according to their needs.

There is an alternative way of understanding (b), however. Daniels is primarily concerned with the allocation of scarce healthcare resources between age groups and with finding out whether rationing healthcare on age grounds can ever be legitimate. He is thus concerned with conflicts that emerge from circumstances of scarcity: for instance, a case in which only one expensive medical treatment is available for two needy patients – a 20-year-old and a 65-year-old. In such case, justice requires, arguably, that it should be allocated to the younger person, even though both need it. The age-priority rule disadvantages elderly people person at T_0 , but it advantages everyone if we adopt a diachronic perspective. Indeed, the rule is such that everyone’s risk of living a short life is reduced thanks to such priority rules. This seems to be the best way to make sense of the basic point (b) that some unequal treatments between age groups may benefit everyone.

The prudential lifespan account draws on (a) and (b) in the following sense. Because (a) treating age groups unequally is compatible with treating persons equally (over time) and (b) unequal treatment can benefit everyone (by making them all better off in principle over their complete lives), then the *synchronic*

problem of distribution that we face when considering how resources should be distributed between age groups can be modeled through a *diachronic* procedure:

We are driven to convert the synchronic or time-slice distribution problem we first raised – namely, how to ration health care resources between competing groups while avoiding age-bias – into a diachronic perspective in which we are concerned with the treatment of the same people through various stages of their lives.

(Daniels 1983, 495)

In addition to this conversion from synchronic to diachronic, the PLA translates *interpersonal* questions of justice between different groups of people - for instance, the question of young people's responsibilities to elderly people - into questions of *intrapersonal* transfers within the same life. This way, Daniels approaches age-group justice through asking the following intrapersonal questions: which transfers would we want from one stage of our life to the other? How much should we forego at one stage of our life for a later time? All of these questions can in fact be subsumed under one single question: what distribution of resources across the lifespan would allow our lives to go as well as possible? The outcome of such intrapersonal deliberation on what savings rate is prudent will tell us which principles should guide our intergenerational institutions.

However, Daniels's approach has almost nothing to do with the classic economic model of prudential reasoning. The deliberators in charge of planning the distribution of resources between different stages of our lives must be impartial:

My knowledge of particular facts about me allows my individual interests to influence choice. Any bargains struck in the light of full knowledge then risk allowing the accidents of current age-group competition to influence unduly the arrangements governing long-term cooperative schemes.

(Daniels 1983, 507)

To guarantee the fairness of institutions, Daniels argues, planners must be placed behind a veil of ignorance. He interchangeably refers to the idea of "social" and "veiled" prudence to qualify his procedure. Daniels's prudential model is *social* in the sense that it aims to bring about fair outcomes precisely because it is *veiled*. He argues: "the prudent agents deliberating about principles to govern their cooperative scheme should know nothing of their age, family situation, health status and genetic history, socioeconomic status, or their particular conception of the good" (Daniels 1983, 507). The legitimacy of the move from interpersonal to intrapersonal reasoning relies on the impartiality of the planners, since the outcomes of the PLA will be imposed on everyone. The PLA rests on the assumption that prudent intrapersonal distributive rules translate into fair

interpersonal ones. Inversely, an imprudent planning would give rise to an institutional design that treats age groups unfairly.

The most important and peculiar aspect of the prudential position is that planners must be age-blind. Fully informed rational agents knowing their age could discount distant years: there would be little incentive for them to save for their very distant future, let alone for their past years. A young person could be tempted to discount his older years and to allocate to his younger self a disproportionate amount of resources. At the other end, older planners could self-interestedly discount their younger (and past) years. Prudence thus requires time-neutrality. In other words, a prudent planner “should be equally concerned by *all* the parts of his future” (Daniels 1988, 159).

To protect this “requirement of equal concern” for the different stages of their lives, planners must also be made to believe that they will live through the institutions they choose for their entire life. If they believed that they could then change the institutions to meet their changing needs as they age, then there would be no need for them to be prudent. Similarly, if a planner knew he was going to die young, then there would be no need for him to save for his old years. Prudence thus justifies the requirement that planners design institutions as if they had to live under them throughout their lives.

Another important feature of the prudential procedure is that planners must be blind to their own conception of the good. As a planner, even if I do not know my age, I may still have a specific vision of the good that will undermine my prudential reasoning. For instance, I may love extreme sports and know that I will be unlikely to practice them after I turn 50 years old. I may therefore discount older years and want to have access to as many resources as possible between 15 and 40 years old, leaving insufficient means to live decent older years. As I grow older and value life differently, I may well regret such choice. If my vision of the good leads me to discount my older years, I will make imprudent planning decisions and the corresponding institutions will thus treat elderly people unfairly. Thus, in the name of lifespan prudence, Daniels considers that planners should be blind to their own conception of the good.

Just like the parties in Rawls’s original position, Daniels’s planners know a few facts about how society works. Intrapersonal prudence is incompatible with a total ignorance of the facts. Knowing some facts is important for deciding whether a

given choice is appealing or misguided. If planners were ignorant of the facts, in other words, they would make imprudent calls. For instance, they must know that as they age, the risk that they may be disabled and incapable of working increases. They must also know that some resources are likely to be scarce (for example, costly life-extending treatments).

However, there are a few facts that they do not know. First, the possibility that they may die young is excluded. This is ensured by the earlier requirement that planners must believe that they will experience aging through the institutions they have designed. This may be a problematic imposition on planners because it is not so clear whether this is required by prudence alone, as Lazenby (2011) argues. Why shouldn't prudent planners take the risk of dying young into account? Second, prudent planners are not aware of the demographic ratios between young and old in their society. They must only focus on the intrapersonal question in abstraction from existing demographic trends. If they were allowed to know demographic ratios, Daniels argues, planners would then be answering the cohortal question instead of the age group question. I will address these two problems in the third section of this chapter. For now, I will simply accept such restrictions.

Last, planners must know what they ought to be prudent about. They must know which goods are required for a life to go well. Daniels's own subscription to Rawls's principles of justice drives his choice. Rawls's contractors "are to think of their well-being as being determined by their *lifetime expectation* of having a certain distribution of basic liberties, opportunity, income and wealth, and the social bases for self respect" (Daniels 1988, 61). The prudential planners' role is then to answer the following question: "how should that lifetime expectation of enjoying a certain level of primary social goods be distributed over each stage of life so that lifetime well-being is maximized?" (Daniels 1988, 62). The resulting deliberations will allow us to modify our existing principles of distributive justice so that they solve the age-group problem.

The PLA is meant to be an extension of Rawls's theory of justice, so Rawlsian language is pervasive throughout the account. However, one may endorse the general prudential framework and simply amend the procedure by modifying the currency of egalitarian justice that must be maximized across the lifespan. One may define lifetime wellbeing in terms of capabilities, real freedom, or welfare, for instance, and still ask what is the lifetime distribution of resources required to make a life go as well as possible. Daniels himself, throughout his book, argues

that the PLA is freestanding and can be attached to other theories of justice. What is constitutive of the PLA, however, is that planners are asked to reach a decision based on what will make their lives go as well as possible. That is, they aim to maximize diachronic utility (however defined) in the allocation of resources.

To recap, Daniels operates a triple conversion with the PLA. He translates: questions of interpersonal justice between age groups into a problem of intrapersonal planning; a question of fairness into a question of prudence; and a synchronic problem into a diachronic one. Impartial planners are asked to allocate basic primary goods over their whole lifespan so as to make their life go as well as possible. They are rational self-interested agents placed behind a veil of ignorance: they do not know anything about their own particular circumstances and private interests, including their age and conception of the good. However, they believe that they will live through the institutions for their entire lives and know a few facts about society so that their judgements may be informed. The principles of prudent allocation they come up with set the guidelines for what counts as a fair distribution of resources between age groups.

2.2 The Outcomes of the PLA

If the assumption that intrapersonal veiled prudence conduces to interpersonal fairness between age groups is correct, then solving the intrapersonal question will tell us what counts as a fair distribution of resources between age groups. In his numerous publications on prudential lifespan planning, Daniels discusses the features of his procedure in great detail, as shown in the previous section, but he does not provide a principled review of the general outcomes that can be derived from the PLA. In this section, I attempt to derive two key principles of age-group justice from his account - the first sufficiency based and the second efficiency driven.

2.2.1 The lifespan sufficiency principle: ensuring there is enough at any point

Veiled planners obey the prudential ‘requirement of equal concern’ and thus do not discount one stage of their life at the expense of another. It is thus very likely that they will allocate resources in a way that ensures they never fall below a certain level. Daniels defines this threshold as a “normal opportunity range” that must be protected throughout the lifespan. He defines it as “the array of life plans reasonable persons (...) are likely to construct for themselves” (Daniels 1988, 69).

Planners know that they have a conception of the good life, that they will have particular plans in life and also that they are likely to revise such plans as they age. They thus have a fundamental interest in making sure they have access to sufficient resources to develop and revise their life plans. For Daniels, this means that: “it is especially important for them to make sure social arrangements give them a chance to enjoy their fair share of the normal range of opportunities open to them at each stage of life” (Daniels 1988, 76). The first outcome of the PLA can thus be understood in sufficientarian terms: institutions must ensure that people have access to sufficient resources to enjoy a normal range of opportunities at each stage of their lives.

This sufficiency-based commitment to the normal opportunity range is primarily driven by a discussion on healthcare provision. In previous works, Daniels (1985) had argued that the role of healthcare institutions was to restore a normal level of species functioning. Healthcare is what enables people who have suffered from illness or accidents to recover a normal range of functioning. It also prevents those who are functioning normally from falling below a certain level. The principle of normal opportunity across the lifespan modifies and extends further the principle of just healthcare provision to the remaining age-group problem. However, the normal opportunity range principle also applies to the distribution of other kinds of resources, such as income. In Chapter 7 of *Am I My Parents' Keeper?*, Daniels establishes the “income preservation principle” as the income-specific distribution rule to foster a normal range of opportunities at any point. It ensures “that the individual has available to himself, at each stage of life, an adequate income to pursue whatever plan of life he may have at that stage of life” (Daniels 1988, 121). Therefore, even though it was primarily framed within the realm of healthcare, the sufficientarian outcome of the PLA can also apply to the provision of other resources, such as income.

Daniels defines this threshold as fundamentally *age-relative*: institutions should ensure that an age-relative normal array of opportunities is preserved over time. What counts as a normal range of opportunities, the argument goes, depends on one’s age-relative legitimate aspirations. By age-relative, Daniels does not simply mean that the young have different needs than their elders, but that what is considered normal varies according to our age. For instance, both an elderly person and a teenager might have an impairment that prevents them from running. However, we may consider that being able to run is more ‘normal’ for a teenager than for an elderly person, in the sense that being able to use their legs to the fullest

is more constitutive of the young's opportunity range than the elderly person's. The age-relative normal opportunity range is dependent on many cultural and social factors and on the degree of scarcity of a given society. Issues of distribution between age groups cannot be set once and for all and universally.

One may worry that such reasoning is circular since what is due to each age group depends on what is considered 'normal' for them to have. Why would the normal range tell us anything about the fair range? Daniels does not pretend to solve all issues of resource provision between age groups. He simply points to a way to reframe the discussion. For instance, when it comes to the provision of scarce healthcare resources, institutions will have to be designed in accordance with the "disease-age profile" of the population. This means that, in order to meet the age-relative threshold for each age group, institutions must be responsive to facts about when and how people get some conditions over the lifespan (frequency, type, etc.) (Daniels 1988, 76-78). Moreover, Daniels does consider that what is identified as being the normal opportunity range at a given time should and will progress. What is considered a normal range of opportunities for elderly people, for instance, evolves considerably with technological advancements.

The lifespan sufficiency principle has interesting implications for how we should allocate allegedly incommensurable resources such as healthcare, income, or culture. Take the basic problem of state budgeting. If institutions did not set a cap on how much they spend on healthcare per capita, we would not spend much on education, culture or art. States would never invest on anything but healthcare, since you could always spend more to extend lives and bring people up to an ideal level of functioning. The institutional answer is to set an artificial cap on how much we are willing to spend on health per capita, so as to leave 'enough' for all other aspects of what makes a life meaningful. The age-relative sufficiency principle provides a less artificial way to think about how to commensurate these resources. For instance, the opportunity to learn and develop skills is constitutive of the normal range of opportunities of the young and there must therefore be a budget for education, just like there must be a budget for healthcare to secure the elderly's normal opportunity range. Very different resources such as education and healthcare can thus be made commensurable through the age-relative normal opportunity principle.

The age-relative threshold thus indicates how we should allocate resources between age groups. However, given that Daniels alternates between defending an

age-relative standard of living and promoting the goal of a society where people have access to basic resources throughout their lives (Daniels 1988, 58), I think that the best way to represent the sufficientarian outcome of the PLA is twofold:

- *Lifespan sufficiency principle*: Institutions must distribute resources between age groups in a way that ensures a normal opportunity range throughout people's lives – i.e. members of any age group should be maintained above two thresholds: (1) an absolute threshold defined by appeal to basic human needs; (2) an age-relative threshold set at the level of what counts as a 'normal' set of opportunities for a given age group in a given society at a given time.

The first threshold includes what humans need to be free from deprivation. It coincides with the sufficiency threshold Paula Casal (2007) describes by appealing to the “non-comparative importance of deprivation” (Casal 2007, 305). It also resembles what Axel Gosseries (2011, 482-485) refers to as the requirement of “continuous sufficiency”, which is grounded on the view that a life well lived necessitates a continuous lifetime access to the necessary resources to live a life in dignity. If prudence requires an age-relative normal opportunity range throughout the lifespan, then it first demands that our most basic human needs be fulfilled. The second threshold thus covers the first but goes beyond it.⁶ It includes the set of opportunities that are considered 'normal' in a given society for a given age group. Even if the second threshold covers the first one, the distinction is important to establish what should be ensured for all age groups non-differentially from what should be distributed differentially. As I will now show, identifying different layers for the normal opportunity range threshold helps determine when the differential provision of resources along age lines is legitimate.

The age-relative normal opportunity principle instructs that we should not increase the share of opportunities of the young and old at each other's expense, but that their respective range of opportunities should evolve together. In other words, planners must not allocate resources in a way that disproportionately promotes their opportunities at a given time at the expense of their normal opportunity range at another time. For instance, in light of technological advancements and given that the PLA is about making lives go as well as possible, it implies that institutions should aim at securing a *maximized* normal range of opportunity for each age group. Under conditions of relative abundance, we could then highlight a third

⁶ Note that this is only true of relatively rich countries. In poorer countries, the actual normal opportunity range may be lower than the basic needs threshold. See Brauer (2009, 30) for an interesting discussion of the potential negative implications of Daniels's framework in developing countries.

threshold that institutions should aim to meet: an *ideal* age-relative threshold – which consists of a maximized and increasing ideal level of opportunities that we can hope to reach for each age group. However, it would be imprudent to provide an ideal opportunity range to your younger self while only securing a less than normal opportunity range for your elder self. In the same way, it would violate the requirement of equal concern if you saved enough to secure an ideal opportunity range for your elder years at the expense of your normal opportunity range as a young person. Even more straightforwardly, under no circumstances should planners jeopardize the satisfaction of their basic needs at one point to ensure a normal or ideal range of opportunities at another point, as this too would violate the requirement of equal concern. Thus, highlighting layers for the lifespan sufficiency threshold seems to help in ensuring that our deliberations are in line with the requirement of equal concern.

Let me now examine the spending rules we may apply to promote the lifespan sufficiency principle in conditions of moderate scarcity. First, it seems that prudential deliberators will quickly come to the conclusion that resources ought to be allocated in a way that is adapted to their changing needs from birth to death. This means that they should not take it as a *prima facie* prudential requirement that the same kind or quantity of goods must be allocated for each stage of their lives. This translates into an important spending rule for age-group justice: institutions should be sensitive to changing needs. Healthcare needs are, for instance, likely to increase substantially as one ages. It would not make much prudential sense to devote an unsuitably high bundle of healthcare resources to my youth and deny my older self the required healthcare resources to live decently. Institutionalising intrapersonal prudence is thus likely to entail different but adapted treatment between individuals on grounds of age.

Is it unfair then if the government's spending per elderly person on healthcare is several times higher than the amount spent per child? David Willetts (2010, 158), for instance complains that of the annual NHS budget of about £100bn, half goes on the over-65s. If institutions should be adapted to changing needs, the legitimacy of such spending ratios depends on whether they are needed to sustain the elderly population above the two thresholds. In other words, Willetts would have to show that the elderly need fewer resources than what is being granted to them to be within the normal range. The mere fact that per capita spending per age group is not equal does not give rise to a claim of justice. This may just be exactly what justice requires: "Facts about the disease/age profile and the age profile, plus the

emphasis placed by the opportunity account on meeting needs, determine that per capita expenditures are likely to vary greatly between children, the young and the very old. These variations are what prudence and thus justice require” (Daniels 1988, 78).

In other words, Daniels argues that it is senseless to believe that equality in spending between age groups is an ideal to pursue: prudence requires that spending be adapted to changing needs. In fact, we could have reached this same basic conclusion without appealing to the prudential lifespan account. We could simply have highlighted the basic analytical distinction raised in the previous section between ‘same treatment’ and ‘equal treatment’. In principle, differential treatments are not only *compatible* with equality in treatment but they may even be *required* by equality in treatment.

Daniels’s framework is primarily well known for another, more controversial, spending rule he allows: age rationing – that is the allocation of some scarce resources to some age groups exclusively. It may be the case that, in order to ensure that each age group can access the resources they need to function ‘normally’, we will have to restrict the access of each age group to the resources that are not constitutive of the normal opportunity range of their age group. For instance, if the only way to make sure the young have access to the training and education they need is to restrict costly educational resources to the young, then this may be justifiable prudentially. Similarly, we may introduce compulsory retirement regulations for those reaching old age, even if they still want to work, to protect the normal opportunity to work of the young. So a first reason why we may legitimately use age-rationing is to ensure that the demands of the age-relative normal opportunity range are met.

I have identified the first outcome of the PLA as being lifespan sufficiency. The principle states that institutions should be designed to ensure a normal opportunity range throughout people’s lives. This entails that institutions should promote an absolute sufficiency threshold set at the level of people’s basic human needs, and a further age-relative threshold that contains all the opportunities that are considered normal for people in an age group to have. I have also argued that, in order to meet the demands of sufficiency, institutions are likely to spend different kinds and quantities of resources between age groups, given that needs change over the course of our lives. The resulting inequalities in average per capita spending per age group are unproblematic as such. Moreover, I have pointed to a further more

controversial spending rule, which consists of rationing some resources by age when it is the only way to meet the lifespan sufficiency principle. However, the moral permissibility of age-rationing is further emphasized by the second outcome of the prudential procedure, which I will now refer to as the *lifespan efficiency principle*.

2.2.2 The lifespan efficiency principle: maximizing diachronic benefits

Planners behind the veil of ignorance are asked to allocate resources in a way that makes their lives go as well as possible. In other words, they must maximize intrapersonal efficiency over the lifespan. Ensuring the first requirement (which I have named the lifespan sufficiency principle) is already a way to make one's life go as well as possible. But it is also very likely that planners will want to allocate a substantial amount of the available resources to their younger selves, mainly for two reasons: (1) because it may increase their chances of living a life of normal length; (2) because early investments may increase diachronic utility in a way later investments cannot.

First, age-rationing may be legitimate if it is the only way to guarantee that the young are able to live a life of normal length. It would not make sense from the point of view of prudent planners to implement a healthcare scheme that extends our chances of living a long life once we have reached old age and that decreases our chances to reach old age in the first place. Daniels (1988, 87) provides the following example. As a planner, if Scheme A will increase my chances of living older than 80 years old once I have reached 70, but at the same time decreases my chances of living until 50, then the measure is not prudent and does not make my life go as well as possible. The resulting institutions will be unfair. Prudent planners would prefer a scheme that improves their chances to live a lifespan of normal length to a scheme that may extend their lifespan, but reduces their chances of living a life of normal length. An implication of this view is that, for instance, a reform of healthcare entitlements that extends the lives of elderly patients at the cost of increasing child mortality rates would not be found prudent (all other things being equal). Some instances of age-rationing are thus made permissible in principle by the PLA: "pure age-rationing is morally permissible under certain, very specific, and restrictive conditions" (Daniels 1988, 84). The resulting institutions, that prioritize the young in such conditions, will be fair to each age group.

A second reason why planners may invest more in their youth than in later years is derived from the potentially radical diachronic returns of early investments. Planners would surely decide to invest healthcare resources so as to prevent conditions that would require that they spent even more of their resources in curative strategies. For instance, they would want to tackle child obesity as early as possible and invest the required resources then, instead of having to spend more once it has given rise to further conditions over their lives. Beyond the preventive provision of healthcare resources, early investment strategies also apply to education or training. This is important for my research question because the prudential requirement to invest in prevention offers strong reasons to invest resources in childhood and young adulthood. If disadvantage at a young age is likely to cause further disadvantage later in life, then prudence seems to require that such phenomena be avoided through an early investment of the necessary resources. I will explore the implications of the prudential principles for youth policies in greater details in Chapter 4.

In some circumstances, therefore, planners will privilege investments in their younger years over their older years. This is compatible with the requirement of equal concern, because such investments increase diachronic returns, either quantitatively - it ensures that a normal number of years is lived prior to extending lives - or qualitatively - it promotes diachronic utility through preventing disadvantage from developing and maximising the chances of leading a good life. This likely tendency of the planners to allocate more resources to their younger selves thus gives rise to what I identify as second outcome of intrapersonal prudence: lifespan efficiency, which I flesh out through the following principle.

- *Lifespan efficiency principle*: Institutions should invest resources early in the lifespan when it increases lifespan efficiency – that is when it improves diachronic returns.

The relationship between the lifespan sufficiency and the lifespan efficiency principles remains to be established. Julian Le Grand and David Nissan (2003) distinguish ‘curative’ and ‘preventive’ policies in the context of income provision. These two concepts may help elucidate the distinction between the two principles. While the lifespan efficiency principle encourages preventive investments early in the lifespan, one may argue, the lifespan sufficiency principle promotes curative policies that make sure no one falls below the two pre-identified thresholds. However, the distinction between curative and preventive does not seem to mirror the distinction between the two principles. Surely the efficiency principle

encourages preventive measures and investments that will increase wellbeing over the lifespan as a whole. However, such preventive strategies also promote the sufficiency principle to an important extent. Preventing bad health at a young age from causing further disadvantages later in life, for instance, may be precisely what promoting lifespan sufficiency requires. It is indeed more difficult to promote good health in old age when preventive strategies were not implemented early on. Ensuring lifespan sufficiency may require both preventive and curative strategies.

The two principles may thus overlap substantially in what they recommend. However, I believe that the distinction remains important, if only because the two principles may also push in different directions. Based on the lifespan efficiency principle, I may be tempted to invest most resources in my young age, consuming as much training and healthcare resources as possible, knowing that this will result in many diachronic returns in terms of wellbeing. Favouring young age over old age, in theory, is compatible with the requirement for equal concern because it may respect and promote wellbeing over the complete life, as I have shown. However, the efficiency principle allows and encourages trade-offs that may jeopardize the goal of lifespan sufficiency. If I only invest in young adulthood and hope that this investment will guarantee enough resources for my whole lifespan, I make an imprudent gamble. Early investments cannot act as substitutes for prudent savings for old age. What prudence requires, the lifespan sufficiency principle tells us, is that I vouch for institutions that *ensure* that I get enough to live well at each step of the lifespan. I must therefore both grant myself the required resources at any point in my lifespan to live a good life, hence directly saving for old age, and invest some resources early to maximize long-term returns.

What should we do when the requirements of the two principles are in conflict? One possibility is to view them as lexically ordered: sufficiency would be the primary prudential requirement, and efficiency would be a secondary principle, informing the distribution of extra resources. Institutions may be required to first ensure the two thresholds are met (basic needs at any point and age-relative normal opportunity range). Then, institutions may allocate most of the remaining resources to the young if it is the best way to maximize lifespan efficiency.

The problem with this ranking of sufficiency over efficiency is that, depending on the kinds of resources that they are allocating, planners may follow the principles in different orders of importance. They may want to distribute income in a way that improves the array of opportunities accessible at all stages of their lives. This may

well be what the requirement of equal concern demands. By contrast, as far as educational and healthcare provision is concerned, investing some resources at a young age may have an impact on the lifespan that cannot be reached by directly investing the resources later on. Indeed, as I have already pointed out, it may cost much more to cure a condition after it has caused further conditions than to prevent it from happening in the first place. As far as educational resources are concerned, lifespan returns may be quite important too: being trained appropriately may result in occupational security and satisfaction over the lifespan, which in turn may translate into increased wellbeing over the lifespan. In a world where technologies evolve quickly, however, we may need to have access to training throughout our lives. It may thus be prudent to ensure access to educational resources later in the lifespan instead of reserving them exclusively for our younger self. Thus, it seems that the lexical order may not always be the best way to account for how prudent planners will allocate resources. They may deliberate by going back and forth between the incentive, on the one hand, to invest enough at each stage and save enough for later times, and on the other hand, the incentive to invest earlier in the lifespan to generate higher returns in terms of overall wellbeing.

Relaxing the lexical ordering, however, may mean that planners will end up leaving too few resources for old age. The planners think that they will live a life of normal length, but what should they save for the years lived beyond the normal length? Wouldn't it be rational to leave only few resources to your future self, once you have reached a normal lifespan? This decision would fundamentally threaten the lifespan sufficiency requirement, but could be justified as promoting diachronic utility. Perhaps it would be imprudent to save nothing for very old age and planners may decide to save enough for their basic needs to be fulfilled. But it does not seem to be rational to save more than this, if it would mean decreasing your chances of leading a good life before the normal age of death. The requirement of equal concern for each stage of our lives does not seem to apply to the parts of our lives where we are very unlikely still to be alive, so planners will give decreasing importance to very old age. From a diachronic perspective, this may not be a problem. Lifespan efficiency requires that we do not spend unlimited resources to extend lives and then maintain people at a very high level of functioning, if it means that we do not then have enough resources to fulfil the basic needs and opportunities of the young. But this is an important aspect of the PLA. For this reason, it is not clear that sufficiency will always be chosen prior to lifespan efficiency, especially beyond a life of normal length.

In conclusion, Daniels's procedural prudential framework does not provide all the answers. As I have tried to argue, it offers an intrapersonal framework to think of age-group justice and points in two directions - sufficiency and efficiency. Two main principles may be derived from the prudential procedure: the lifespan sufficiency and the lifespan efficiency principles. The principles are not entirely distinct. Having access to enough opportunities at any point is itself an interpretation of what maximizing diachronic utility may mean. However, the two principles may conflict in some circumstances, because lifespan efficiency may require waiving the requirement of lifespan sufficiency for older years. At this stage, we may thus consider these two principles as two dominant intrapersonal prudential outcomes, which jointly frame the debate on how to allocate resources between age groups.

2.3 Three Objections to Intrapersonal Prudence

Daniels's prudential account has generated many criticisms. In the previous two sections, I tried to present Daniels's theory under its best light to provide a plausible reading of its outcomes. I will now focus on three criticisms aimed at the intrapersonal structure of the prudential procedure. I will only focus on criticisms that come from within the complete lives egalitarian paradigm. In other words, I will only address objections that accept the diachronic focus but reject Daniels's prudential framework.⁷

All three criticisms - (a) the *longevity*, (b) the *demographic*, and (c) the *impartiality* objections - target Daniels's view that questions of age-group justice can be re-described as intrapersonal. They are grounded on the same fundamental criticism: there are some irreducibly interpersonal dimensions to age-group justice that are obscured by the intrapersonal prudential framework Daniels proposes. In other words, the PLA masks core constitutive challenges raised by the field of age, time and distributive justice, and for this reason, we should perhaps abandon the PLA. The *longevity objection* points to the overlooked interpersonal problem of distribution between people who die young and people who die old; the *demographic objection* highlights the unfair inequalities between birth cohorts that may arise if questions of age-group justice are settled in abstraction from

⁷ Objections that come from outside complete lives egalitarianism will be considered in Chapter 3 when I introduce McKerlie's synchronic alternative.

demographic ratios; and *the impartiality objection* focuses on the irreducibly interpersonal dispute between competing conceptions of what a good life entails.

2.3.1 The longevity objection

The longevity objection takes issue with the basic observation, on which Daniels's account relies, that inequalities in treatment between age groups need not translate into inequalities between persons. The basic fact that 'we all age' while we do not change gender or race makes age special, as I have shown earlier, because it means that unequal treatment of age groups will not always generate inequalities between persons. In a paper published in 2011, Hugh Lazenby argues that the prudential framework relies on the counterfactual 'complete lives assumption' that we all live lives of equal length. Daniels appeals to the complete lives assumption on two different occasions: as an idealizing assumption, when he argues that "there is a natural reduction from the interpersonal to the intrapersonal perspective" (Lazenby 2011, 330); and as a constraint on the planners, who must believe that "they will live through each stage of life under the institutions they are designing" (Daniels in Lazenby 2011, 331). Lazenby claims that the basic counterfactual assumption threatens the validity of the PLA. Age-group justice, he argues, "is not special in the way Daniels proposes; it involves the same irreducibly interpersonal distributive decisions as other problems of justice" (Lazenby 2011, 328). This undermines the PLA as a sound theoretical framework.

Moreover, Lazenby argues, this mischaracterization generates unfair distributive implications for those who die young. Groups of different longevity will receive different amounts of resources over their complete lives as a direct outcome of the PLA. By demanding that the normal opportunity range of the elderly be maintained, the PLA grants more resources to those who will be lucky enough to die old than to those who will die earlier. Those who will die very old will receive more than their lifetime share X , while those who die young will only receive a fraction of X . This creates an unfair interpersonal distributive inequality between longevity groups: "insofar as Daniels's theory dismisses the problem of premature death via an idealizing assumption, he not only changes the nature of the subject he addresses, he changes it in a way that has potentially radical distributive implications" (Lazenby 2011, 333). The intrapersonal procedure misses out on the fundamental inequalities stemming from cases of premature death, and Lazenby argues that this makes the PLA unconvincing.

For this reason, Lazenby suggests that one solution would be to let planners know about the risks that they may die young when they deliberate. Instead of asking them to plan as if there was a 100% chance that they would die old, perhaps we should let them think rationally about what to do in face of the adverse circumstance of early death. This change would be likely to have an important impact on the conclusions they draw. The requirement of equal concern for each stage of our life may not be respected in this context. As Lazenby argues, planners would most probably confer significantly more benefits to earlier age groups (Lazenby 2011, 328). Taking into account the fact that they might die young, they risk wanting to leave much less for later years than they would grant under Daniels's PLA.

However, if planners know that they might die young, then the basic assumption that we all age falls apart, and the PLA no longer seems justified. Indeed, the translation of the interpersonal problem into an intrapersonal problem itself relies on the fact that we all age: "the substitution of one problem for another is appropriate because, in the peculiar case of age groups, they are essentially the same problem" (Daniels 1988, 67). If age is not special in this way, the translation is not valid anymore. This is exactly what Lazenby worries about, and he argues that, once the fact of early death is emphasized, age-group issues become, in this respect, like issues of race and gender: they generate interpersonal inequalities (Lazenby 2011, 337). This leads him to conclude that there are no small modifications that can be made to Daniels's account that would fix the problem.

To establish whether Lazenby is right, let me assess the legitimacy of the PLA's core underlying idealizing assumption. After all, as Laura Valentini (2009) points out, just because some facts of social reality are distorted or just because we idealize away from some facts about social reality, it does not mean that an ideal account will be irrelevant to social reality. Lazenby is right that Daniels overlooks the risk of premature death and that he endorses the counterfactual view that we all age. However, contrary to Lazenby, I do not think that Daniels's account is irrelevant for a world where we may die young. My argument is structured in two stages. First, I will show that Lazenby over-emphasizes the residual interpersonal inequality between longevity groups and does not sufficiently focus on the central problem of age-group justice. Consequently, he has inadequate reasons to reject the PLA. Second, I will deny that the PLA cannot be action-guiding and argue that there are in fact ways in which the PLA can address questions of inequalities between longevity groups.

Lazenby's paper is pervaded by the idea that Daniels distorts the subject of age-group justice by assuming that age is special. An ideal account that distorts the subject of one's enquiry is what Valentini (2009) identifies as a bad instance of idealization. However, it seems that the disagreement between Lazenby and Daniels is precisely on what constitutes the primary subject of the theory. For Lazenby, "it is in central part that people die at different times that motivates us to ask the question [of] what justice requires between age groups" (Lazenby 2011, 333). For him, therefore, asking what age-group justice requires in abstraction from the fact that some die younger than others is just like asking what gender justice requires in abstraction from the fact that there are two genders (Lazenby 2011, 333). If, "the truly relevant categories are not age groups but longevity groups" (Lazenby 2011, 338), as Lazenby seems to believe, then he is right to argue that Daniels distorts the subject to which is theory is meant to apply.

However, Lazenby's thesis seems overstated. Lazenby complains that Daniels's framework cannot tell us how to treat those who die young, and he may be right, but I disagree that this question is of chief importance. The primary question is not how we should treat those who die young but how we should treat different age groups as they age, given the fact that (a) it is reasonable to expect that we will age and (b) institutions that treat age groups differently will benefit us if we age. If we are concerned with designing institutions that distribute resources between age groups fairly, then we should assume that there is such a group as the elderly and that it is reasonable to expect citizens to go through that category eventually.

Most of us reasonably hope to die old, and we project an image of ourselves into the imagined future. Premature death does not have the centrality that Lazenby gives it. To be off the hook, Daniels need only reply that his account aims to answer the central question of age-group justice rather than the question of justice between different longevity groups. There is a first problem of justice concerning the question of how institutions should treat various age groups in society, he may claim, and there is a second problem, which has to do with the question of whether those who die young, or at least younger than normal, deserve some form of compensation. The first problem may be considered as the core definitional problem of age-group justice and the second as a residual problem of justice.

Rejecting the basic claim that the fact that we all age makes age special amounts to rejecting the idea that there is such a thing as age-group justice. On these conditions, it seems that we should consider that membership in an age group is

morally irrelevant and should be treated perhaps as other memberships like gender and ethnicity. I have tried to show in Chapter 1 that this view may go against our considered judgments. However, here I just want to suggest that if Lazenby wants to reject Daniels's simplifying assumption, then he also has to abandon the claim that there is such a thing as age-group justice. Lazenby's criticism of Daniels is that Daniels disregards a fundamental interpersonal issue by assuming that we all age, but the reverse criticism that applies to him is that by focusing on the cases of early death, he disregards the most important question of age-group justice. If one issue must be disregarded, then it ought to be the residual issue, rather than the core. Note that empirically, at least in wealthy countries, the risk that one may die 'young' is very low – for instance, the risk of dying between 10 and 24 years old is lower than 0.1% (The Economist, 2012). For this reason, I think Lazenby is throwing out the baby with the bathwater just because he saw a bug in the tub. The longevity problem is not sufficiently important to undermine the PLA, at least in comparison with the age-group problem.

Having argued that age-group justice is primary and the longevity problem is residual, let me turn to the question of whether or not it is true that the PLA does not tell us anything about how to treat those who may die young. Lazenby argues that Daniels's complete lives idealizations are 'permanent' features of the theory and that as a result the PLA can only apply to a world that does not exist: a society where we all age and live lives of equal length. I think that the assumption that people live lives of equal lengths is only 'temporary', however. To be action-guiding, all the PLA requires is that people can reasonably be expected to reach the normal age expectancy.

First, planners are told that they must plan to live a life of 'normal length'. Arguably, this requirement already includes a concern for different longevity groups. Indeed, the average life expectancy is a calculation that already accounts for the fact that some die younger and some die older. The prudent planner is like an 'average' individual - a fair representative of those who live lives of approximately equal lengths. Lazenby complains that the duties of justice to those who die young are not taken seriously, but in fact, this is just as true of our duties to those who live for longer than normal. As I mentioned earlier, what we owe to the very old, i.e., those who live for longer than normal, is not so clear on Daniels's account. Perhaps this suggests that the PLA only tells us how to treat people who live lives of roughly normal length but does not tell us how to treat the very old and those who die very young. But the mere fact that the PLA is weaker on the

extremes does not make it irrelevant to the question of how we should design institutions that meet age groups' needs.

Moreover, Daniels argues that planners will be driven to invest resources in a way that maximizes their chances of reaching a normal lifespan before dedicating resources to extending lives beyond a normal lifespan. Lazenby takes inequalities in life expectancy as a given, but planners understand it as a requirement of prudence that they should not risk investing resources in a way that renders premature death more likely. One of the key components of Daniels's theory, I argued in previous sections, is the *lifespan efficiency* requirement, which enables trade-offs between parts of lives when they maximize lifespan efficiency. Arguably, maximizing lifespan efficiency requires making sure that we minimize the risk of being ill and dying young by investing prudently in childhood and youth. This suggests that prudential reasoning does entail some instances of youth-first rationing of resources, as I have previously argued. There is a prudential case for substantial spending early on.

Last, the problem that Daniels is trying to solve with the PLA is a problem of 'treatment'. It is not only a problem of distribution. Does age-rationing treat people unfairly? Had she lived a life of normal length, she would have received the same as others. What matters is that institutions increase the persons' chances to live a life of normal length and that she gets the same opportunities for welfare as others in her age group for the time she lives. This arguably suffices to fuel Daniels's view that interpersonal institutional problems of age-group justice can be modeled intra-personally, despite the residual case of premature death.

An internal conflict remains: Daniels presupposes equality between complete lives as a requirement of the theory that frames the account (henceforth the 'frame theory'). And yet, if individuals have access to a lifetime share of resources X under the frame theory, it now follows from PLA that those who die young will only get a portion of X. The PLA thus recommends a distribution of resources that conflicts with the frame theory's distribution. Lazenby argues that the PLA is thus doomed to work against the frame idealization of complete lives equality. However, there is no such conflict if planners are of average longevity, which is the case in Daniels's account. The case of premature death is excluded at the ideal level, which does not mean that the PLA cannot be action-guiding in real life, as I have suggested. However, I have conceded that the prudential requirements, while they are action-guiding in normal cases, are weaker when telling us what to do with

the residual case of premature death, as Lazenby argues, but also with the case of the very old who live longer than ‘normal’, which Lazenby does not acknowledge. I will extensively take issue with the treatment of the very old by the PLA in Chapter 3; I will argue that prudential requirements do not exhaust the requirements of age-group justice and that we must also endorse a synchronic lens to identify what matters.

2.3.2 The demographic objection

The PLA addresses questions of age-group justice in abstraction from issues of birth-cohort justice. As Gosseries and Meyer complain (2009): “It is often assumed that the difference between cohort effects and age effects may be linked to two distinct realms of justice, though this is far from certain” (Gosseries and Meyer 2009, 6). Daniels is aware that the separation between age groups and birth cohorts is not unproblematic: “some will insist that there is never any question of justice between the young and the old except one that is about justice between particular cohorts – these young and these old. They eliminate the age-group problem in favour of the birth-cohort problem” (Daniels 1988, 14). In other words, some may argue that pure, timeless and abstract age group questions never exist. Rather, we solely deal with questions of justice between specific cohorts born at different times. What I call the *demographic objection* challenges Daniels’s conceptualization of age-group justice in isolation from questions of birth-cohort justice. In other words, the demographic objection states that the PLA assumes away, and thus tolerates or even generates, problematic interpersonal inequalities between cohorts.

For Daniels, institutions must “embody solutions to both problems of distributive justice” (Daniels 1988, 118). And yet, the PLA only solves the age problem: Daniels treats age-group justice as an independent and timeless area of enquiry, but in the real world, transfers between age groups are also transfers between birth cohorts. When a society is ageing, institutions may treat age groups ‘fairly’ in the prudential sense but at the same time generate inequalities between birth cohorts. For instance, let us suppose that we know how to invest resources prudently over our lifespan and that we design institutions accordingly. Take the example of an ageing society where a small young generation has to maintain a much larger generation’s age-relative normal opportunity range. This young generation is likely to carry a larger proportion of the burden than the previous cohort. The requirement of age-group justice may thus generate inequalities between birth cohorts: “Our idealized solution to the age-group problem thus ignores real

interpersonal transfers, and such transfers raise questions of distributive justice not addressed by our model of prudential deliberation” (Daniels 1988, 119).

The demographic objection thus seems to hold some truth. Age-group and birth-cohort issues are so interconnected that separating them may mischaracterize and obscure the challenges at stake. Instead, one should address them together and come up with principles of age-group justice that are sensitive to demographic variables. After all, as Daniels himself points out, it is precisely the ageing of society that gave birth to discourses of generational equity. In this context, asking what is due to elderly people, for instance, in abstraction from concerns for cohort equity seems misplaced. However, there are a number of points that can be raised in defence of Daniels’s focus on age groups in isolation from cohortal issues. Let me point to a few ways to rescue the PLA from the demographic charge.

A first response may be that the PLA is an ideal theory of justice: it only provides the ideal principles of age-group justice, which then have to be modified to apply to non-ideal circumstances. Daniels is conscious that it is difficult to move from an ideal theory of age-group justice to the non-ideal circumstances in which birth-cohort problems arise. In non-ideal circumstances, institutions have to deal with uneven demographic trends, alternation between periods of economic crisis and growth, and with institutional changes. As a result, different cohorts may end up having been treated unequally over their complete lives. This is not a problem for the theory per se; it is merely a difficulty with regard to its application. Throughout Daniels’s main writings on age-group justice, he indeed suggests that although age groups and birth cohorts involve two ‘moral’ problems, the latter is more knotted to non-ideal circumstances than the former. The timeless question of what age groups owe each other, he argues, must be settled first, and only then, applied to the non-ideal reality. In other words, once we have established the requirements of age-group justice, we may focus on finding ways to meet these demands of justice in face of moderate scarcity, popular disagreement, and feasibility - just as in any other context of justice. If this first interpretation - that the separation between age and cohort issues follows the lines of the ideal/non-ideal distinction - is correct, then Daniels is not wrong to approach questions of age in isolation from cohortal questions. Applying ideal prudential principles to the real world is simply complex and beyond the scope of the PLA.

However, this first way to reply to the demographic criticism does not work. First, Daniels would not be satisfied with the PLA if it could not be action-guiding. He

argues: “theory should guide practice, and if it cannot, that is a problem for the theory” (Daniels 2009, 40). Second, birth-cohort issues are not restricted to the non-ideal realm. Both age-group justice and birth-cohort justice can be discussed ideally and non-ideally. Ideally, we can ask what birth cohorts owe each other and what one cohort must save for the next, just as we can ask what age groups owe each other and how resources must be distributed between age groups. Non ideally, we can ask what is owed to the young today and what trade-offs are fair in given circumstances, just as we can ask what the baby-boomers owe their children and what rates of savings are acceptable. So, although they can seem that way at first sight, age-group and birth-cohort issues are not divided along the lines of ideal and non-ideal theory. Moreover, Daniels explicitly endorses the complete lives egalitarian view that institutions should enforce approximate equality in benefit ratios between birth cohorts. Therefore, conflicts between the demands of age-group justice and the reality of demographic ratios are not just problems of applicability but also moral conflicts between conflicting principles of justice.

However, there is a more satisfactory way to defend Daniels’s choice to address matters of age-group justice in isolation. Indeed, the abstraction from cohortal issues is not permanent but only ‘temporary’⁸ in Daniels’s account. The PLA surely abstracts from birth cohort equity in its design but it is still able to guide us on what birth-cohort justice requires.

First, in many cases, a given problem of distribution cannot be settled without appealing to a series of values that may conflict. In this respect, the conflict between birth cohort and age-group justice is like any other moral conflict. The challenge is to find ways to accommodate both values, when we can, and to pick one over the other, when we cannot. But for such deliberations to happen, we must have at hand principles that represent the different aspects of the problem. The principle of approximate equality between cohorts is not sufficient. As such, knowing that cohorts must be treated equally does not tell us how people should be treated as they age; for this we need the PLA.

This is all the more important given that, at the time Daniels writes, the field of age-group justice is overlooked and political discourses are dominated by arguments for cohort equity (Daniels 1988, 3-16). By pointing to principles for age-group justice, Daniels’s account aims at challenging discourses of generational

⁸ I borrow the idea that an ideal account may fail if it distorts reality ‘permanently’, as opposed to ‘temporarily’ from Laura Valentini (2009).

equity that pervade political discourses. When we look at current generations, he argues, they only seem to be in conflict because we forget the deeper timeless age-group problem and only pay attention to the demographic tensions between two specific cohorts. This categorical focus on cohort equity, Daniels argues, hides part of what really matters. He does not claim that cohort equality does not matter, but argues that there is another fundamental value involved in the equality through time debate, in addition to the cohort equality principle. The PLA reminds us that we all have an interest in institutions meeting our needs fairly as we age.

Second, intrapersonal prudence already integrates some concerns that should please complete lives egalitarians concerned with cohort equity. Indeed, under conditions of extreme scarcity, we would want institutions to ensure that we are able to live a life of normal length with a normal range of opportunities before investing more in extending lives. The PLA thus has the resources to settle some extreme cases. This is just to suggest that the efficiency principle does provide the resources to promote cohort equity when serious imbalances may be at stake. Note that, at the other extreme, it seems that if we have access to a relatively abundant level of resources, we may be able to meet age groups' needs as required by the PLA and to then allocate other resources in a way that promotes approximate equality in per capita benefit ratios between members of different birth cohorts. For the middle range of cases, it seems that what the PLA does is provide extra principles for deciding what we should do for each cohort as they age. In some cases, we may consider that the prudential goal of promoting a normal range of opportunities for the elderly is more important than equality in benefit ratios between existing cohorts. In other cases, we may consider that the burden carried by a generation is too disproportionate and we may restrict the opportunities to access some resources for an earlier cohort.

In conclusion, the demographic objection is then partly tackled. Birth-cohort and age-group justice are only addressed in isolation one from another 'temporarily' in Daniels's account. By temporarily, I mean that Daniels's account can be action-guiding in the real world even if it assumes away inequalities between birth cohorts in the design of his procedure. Daniels aims to correct an imbalance: the exclusive focus on birth cohorts obscures the age question; a prudential account is needed to complement it. It is important to know that equality between complete lives matter, but we also need to know how institutions should treat people as they age, and what counts as a good life. The cohort equality principle, for instance, cannot alone tell us how we ought to treat elderly people or children. Arguing that age group and

birth cohort issues belong to two separate realms of justice may be too much, but they can at least be said to constitute two different sets of issues. Daniels does not distort reality ‘permanently’, and his theory can therefore be action-guiding: in non-ideal circumstances, we must accommodate cohortal and age-based principles of justice. Under some very specific restricted conditions, intrapersonal prudence might even increase our chances of meeting the approximate equality principle by privileging younger people, who have not had the chance of enjoying a life of normal length yet, over older people.

2.3.3 The impartiality objection

The *impartiality* (or *liberal neutrality*) objection is leveled at the PLA for granting *too much* to the elderly as a matter of principle. On this view, Daniels’s prudent institutions embody one conception of the good life at the expense of other legitimate ones. This formulation accepts the complete lives egalitarian view but challenges Daniels’s narrow interpretation of prudence as requiring that planners show equal concern for each segment of their lives. Individuals, the objection goes, should be able to decide for themselves what trade-offs they are willing to concede to fulfill their ambitions and own projects. Paul Bou-Habib (2011) illustrates this position through the following example:

Consider Hebe, for example, a person who is firmly in the grip of a youth-orientated conception of the good, so that she prefers, for the same money-value, less than age-relative normal opportunity while old in order to have more than age-relative normal opportunity while young. Assume that Hebe is not asking for something that is worth more money than her fair lifetime share, so that her having it would not leave others with less than their fair lifetime shares. To insist that Hebe’s fair lifetime share take a form that is insensitive to her ambitions, even when her receiving it in an ambition-sensitive form would impose no additional costs on others, seems unjustified.

(Bou-Habib 2011, 294)

An alternative to the PLA would be Dworkin’s ambition-sensitive prudential account. Dworkin (1993, 2000a) argues that ambition sensitivity is developed diachronically and that institutions must enable individuals to live the life of their choice. Individuals should be free, for instance, to withdraw their right to expensive life-extending treatments once they have reached a certain age, if it means that they can use their resources in their youth on cultural and educational consumption, for instance. Hebe’s choice would be respected, just like Daniels’s prudent planner’s choice would be respected. Everyone would thus be equally free to live what they think is a good complete life. On his account, individuals may envy each other at any given time slice, but they will not over their complete lives.

Richard Wagland (2012) provides the following overview of what Dworkin's approach entails:

Some people will wish to work hard and accumulate their resources, while others will wish to enjoy more leisure and consequently fewer resources. For this reason it is viewed as fair to suggest that in order for someone to legitimately envy the bundle of resources of another she would also have to envy the level of hard work that the other person had done in order to accumulate those resources. Thus, while person A might envy Person B's bundle of goods a year after an initial distribution, she could not envy Person B's complete life and all the work he has had to do in order to accumulate his final complete life share.

(Wagland 2012, 151)

On this ambition-sensitive account, the problem with Daniels's PLA is that, by imposing the requirement of equal concern on the planners, he de facto rejects many conceptions of what a good life may require, such as the view that old years ought to be given less weight than younger years. For proponents of the neutrality objection, Hebe's conception of the good life ought to be respected. This view is based on the idea that individuals' agency is exercised over time and consists in the ability to make plans and assume the costs of their choices. Daniels, by denying individuals the right to make their lives go as well as possible in the way they want with their fair life share, imposes his own conception of the good life and does not respect the fundamental ideal of liberal impartiality. However, there are several ways to rescue Daniels's account from this charge.

First, there seems to be a fundamental disagreement between the ambition-sensitive view and the PLA at the level of the theory that frames each account. Dworkin's own procedure is framed by his resource egalitarian envy-free and ambition-sensitive conception of justice, while Daniels's account is underpinned by Rawlsian theory. It is precisely because Daniels endorses a Rawlsian frame theory that he does not subscribe to the sort of 'you broke it, you own it' view about justice, as he argues in one of his later papers (Daniels 2009). Therefore, we could argue that the liberal neutrality objection might well propose a competing conception of age group equality, grounded on a different framework about what matters to equality. We could even reinforce the social egalitarian commitment of liberal egalitarianism and argue, with Scheffler that luck egalitarian views are insufficiently egalitarian:

By mimicking the conservative's emphasis on choice and responsibility, they unwittingly inherit the conservative's unattractive moralism and questionable metaphysical commitments, and they lose touch with some of the most important reasons why equality as a value matters to us in the first place.

(Scheffler 2005, 24)

At best, what the liberal neutrality objection tells us is that Daniels is wrong to suggest that the prudential account can be attached to any theory of justice. As Lazenby suggests, Daniels is wrong to claim that his response is “*free standing*, with the capacity to attach to any more general ‘frame’ theory of distributive justice” (Lazenby 2011, 328). Daniels should concede this point. For this reason, one way to settle the debate would be to acknowledge and assume the importance of the frame theory itself and restrict the scope of my enquiry to asking what Rawlsians and non-luck egalitarians, instead of egalitarians in general, should think about age-group justice. However, I want to be able to defend the PLA without restricting the scope of my thesis from egalitarianism in general to Rawlsian justice. In the next few paragraphs, I hope to show that, even if we endorse a comprehensive egalitarian framework that integrates a commitment to ambition-sensitivity, we may consider that Daniels is right to insist on the requirement of equal concern.

First, it simply is not the case that the rationality behind Hebe or Dworkin’s view has no room to express itself in the PLA. As I have shown through the lifespan efficiency principle, the PLA already includes the idea that some trade-offs between parts of lives are acceptable. If institutions deny the young the resources needed for them to enjoy a normal opportunity range because a disproportionate portion of X (people’s fair lifetime share) is spent extending lives for five extra months once people have reached old age, then planners will be likely to say that institutions are imprudent. So there is room, under some restricted conditions, for planners to adopt youth-first principles of lifetime provision. This, however, is unlikely to satisfy proponents of ambition-sensitive accounts. They may prefer Daniels’s PLA to a synchronic age-insensitive distribution of resources, but still consider that the decisions should not be made in a uniform way for everyone. Institutions should be sensitive to individuals’ lifetime ambitions, they may insist.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, individuals may change their minds. This is a key reason why Daniels thinks that intrapersonal prudence translates into the requirement of equal concern. Hebe, as Bou-Habib describes her, is in the grip of a youth-oriented conception of what a good life is when she decides to deny her future self the required resources to have a normal opportunity range as an elderly person. It is therefore possible that she will change her mind. What if she does? Can we really deny her the treatment she will need at 70 because she forfeited her claim to it at 20? If we endorsed a discontinuous definition of persons, then we could argue that it is unfair to old Hebe, who is not the same person as young

Hebe, to have to be made miserable as a result. If we do not endorse such discontinuous definition of persons, it may be more difficult to argue that the inequality between young and old Hebe is 'unfair'. However, we can argue, with Daniels, that institutions that let the young decide give an unfair weight to the voice of the young over those of the old. On this view, the impartiality objection could be turned against Dworkin's account: your account is partial because it gives more weight to the views of the young than to the views of the old. As Wagland (2012) argues, this could be seen as a "tyranny of youth". Given that we know that people change their minds on what they think matters most, the requirement of equal concern seems a more reasonable understanding of prudence than the 'youth decide' approach.

This touches on a deeper disagreement about the temporality of ambition-sensitivity. Choice and responsibility, which are fundamental components of ambition-sensitivity, are understood as fully diachronic concepts for Dworkin and many luck-egalitarians: at one (early) point you make the decision and at another (late) point you face its positive or negative implications. Everyone must be given the same opportunities or resources so they can have the same leverage to decide what they want to do with their lives. The responsibility that they have for what comes out of these decisions (made with a just background) is then theirs to cope with. Ambition-sensitivity entails two sides of a coin: choice and freedom, on the one side, and responsibility and costs, on the other. This understanding of ambition sensitivity is thus fundamentally diachronic: at one point you make decisions, at other future points you enjoy the benefits or pay the costs of such decisions.

I would deny, however, that ambition sensitivity can only be understood over a complete life. Most people would probably recognize that many of our plans and projects evolve and change over the course of our life. A life well lived may well entail different projects at different times. Ambition sensitivity may therefore apply to shorter segments of our lives too. Daniels's requirement of equal concern seems to stem precisely from this conception. A life well lived is a life in which our ambitions and plans at different stages are respected, not a life spent paying the prize of our youth-oriented conception of a good life. Moreover, the PLA's first outcome, as I have proposed in the last section, is best expressed as sufficiency driven rather than egalitarian. It still leaves room for trade-offs between stages of life, even perhaps chosen by individuals, beyond the threshold. Nothing suggests that the PLA is not compatible with some degree of individual planning, but the

PLA at least has the merits of ‘leaving options open’ thus increasing our freedom to develop life plans at different stages of our lives.

In Section 1.3, I have examined three criticisms directed at the PLA, as summarized by the table below.

Objections	Overlooked interpersonal distributive inequalities...	Why was it overlooked?
The longevity objection	...between those who die young and those who die old	- Assumption that we all age and live lives of equal lengths - Imposition on the planners that they must plan as if they were going to live to old age
The demographic objection	... between births cohorts	- Assumption that there is a timeless question of age-group justice (independent of demographic trends) - Planners are ignorant of current demographic ratios
The impartiality objection	...between different conceptions of what makes a life go well	- Planners are blind to their conception of the good life - The requirement of equal concern restricts the scope of individuals’ ambitions

Table 3 - Three diachronic interpersonal objections to the PLA

The first objection concerned the interpersonal inequality between longevity groups obscured by the PLA, while the second claimed that the PLA could not be action-guiding because it approached questions of age-group justice in abstraction from cohortal issues. I argued that neither of those two objections dangerously threatens the PLA. They both mischaracterize the subject to which the PLA is meant to apply, and their alternative propositions - to focus on longevity groups or birth cohorts – are inadequate. Furthermore, I have argued that they are wrong to claim that the PLA cannot be action-guiding in a world in which we may die young and belong to a specific cohort. The third objection I examined bears on the fact that Daniels’s account is not sufficiently ambition-sensitive. I have shown that there is indeed an important disagreement at the level of the frame theory. However, I have argued that, if we endorse a comprehensive egalitarian theory, we may still accept the PLA. In light of the simple fact that we may change our minds about what matters over time, the luck egalitarian diachronic understanding of ambition sensitivity is not fully adequate. I praised the PLA for ‘leaving options open’ by promoting a normal opportunity range throughout the lifespan, hence not

subscribing to the ‘tyranny of youth’. In the next section, I will level an original criticism at the PLA, which I believe is more important.

2.4 Age-group Issues Are Not Residual

Daniels idealizes away from questions of social justice to focus exclusively on age-group justice. He assumes that society is just *but for* questions of justice between age groups. Individuals have access to their fair share X of opportunities and resources over their complete lives, as determined by the frame theory of justice, and planners must now decide how to allocate resources across the lifespan. Age-group justice is treated as a residual problem and is tackled in isolation from other problems of social justice. As McKerlie argues, however, “it is strange that Daniels does not tell us more about the frame theory or more about the division of labor between the frame theory and the prudential lifespan account (the part of the theory concerned with distribution across temporal parts of lives)” (McKerlie 2013, 37).

In some sense, Daniels inherits a mistake from previous thinkers, precisely while he was trying to fix it. Philosophers had left questions of age-group justice out, thus treating it as a residual question of justice. Daniels’s account aims to fill this problematic gap. But by doing so, he inherits the understanding of age-group issues as residual. Paradoxically, while Daniels designed the PLA to make the Rawlsian theory more relevant to the real world in which we age, he risks having produced a theory for a world that does not exist. Indeed, given that inequalities between social classes tend to be more significant than inequalities between age groups, assuming away age issues (as Rawls did) may be much less problematic than assuming away inequalities between social classes (as Daniels does). This would not be entirely fair to Daniels, however. He does not overlook issues of social justice, but endorses the Rawlsian theory of justice and complements it. However, given that the PLA examines the requirements of age-group justice *once an otherwise just society is in place*, it is unclear whether it can be action-guiding in the real world. Can the PLA - which works at such a high level of idealization that it assumes society is already fully just *but for* age-group issues - still be action-guiding in an unjust world such as ours?

When I introduced and rejected the longevity and demography objections, I touched on similar methodological issues. Ideal theories always assume a series of counterfactual details. In many cases, that does not prevent the theories from being

action-guiding. Good instances of idealization, Valentini argues, are only temporary because they do not distort the very subject to which they are meant to apply. Ideal theory cannot be action-guiding when it “*entails* an idealised account of the subject to which it is meant to apply, and not merely by virtue of it being constructed under idealised assumptions” (Valentini 2009, 334). Ideal accounts that rely on bad cases of idealization are likely to be of no use to practice because “the gap [between theory and practice] is unbridgeable” (Valentini 2009, 342). The problem with such accounts, Valentini argues, is that they offer no tools to mediate theory and practice and are therefore irrelevant to non-ideal circumstances. Worse, such accounts are at risk of obscuring unjust power-relations instead of illuminating them (Valentini 2009, 342). Abstracting away temporarily from cohortal and longevity issues, I argued, did not distort the core subject of age-group justice and was a justifiable way to proceed. As I have shown, the idealizations involved in the demographic and longevity cases did not prevent the PLA from guiding action in an ageing world in which some die younger than others. So what is different about the assumption that we live in an otherwise just society?

Will Kymlicka and John Rawls, respectively in *Multicultural Citizenship* and *The Law of Peoples*, both start from an idealized account of the state from which they then work out the requirements of minority rights and global justice. Kymlicka considers what just states owe to just minorities, and Rawls examines how well ordered liberal societies ought to act. Valentini argues that these are both instances of bad idealizations because they “design their principles surreptitiously assuming that such a background is in place” (Valentini 2009, 352). Such idealizations, she argues, “build into a normative theory a false, i.e., idealised account of the social phenomenon the theory itself aims to put under moral scrutiny, in this way severely undermining its potential for guiding action in the real world” (Valentini 2009, 352). As Simon Caney and Thomas Pogge both argue, Rawls’s global theory is irrelevant because it assumes the existence of well-ordered liberal societies that do not exist (Valentini 2009, 351). For this reason, Valentini argues that *The Law of Peoples* is not action-guiding.

The PLA’s assumption that we live in an otherwise just society may be of the same nature. The PLA may be deemed inapplicable to the non-ideal circumstances it is meant to inform because our society is not interpersonally just, and the PLA only tells us what to do once that condition is met. This core idealizing assumption is all the more problematic that it mischaracterizes the subject to which it is meant to apply. Indeed, it seems to me that age issues are much less residual and much more

constitutive than Daniels makes them out to be. Age-related problems are fundamentally intertwined with other problems of justice. Institutions that transfer resources between age groups are essential tools to achieve the goal of interpersonal equality since they may create new inequalities, exacerbate existing inequalities, or on the contrary, reduce them or cancel them out. By contrast, adequate age-group institutions may work *for* the frame theory instead of *against* it. I will argue that, for these reasons, it is misleading to frame age-group justice as a residual problem of justice.

What is important about the life course is the phases of vulnerability that come with it. Age groups are all potentially vulnerable: children are relatively powerless and their disadvantage can have crucial long-term consequences; young adults are vulnerable because they are often at risk of unemployment, poverty and exclusion which undermine their process of socialization; formed-adults are potentially vulnerable because they are likely to have children and having dependent children multiplies risks of poverty; elderly people are vulnerable because they are much more likely to be disabled, impaired, and to lose their autonomy. In the real world, these risks are very unequally spread across the population, and their significance depends on how institutions that meet age groups' needs are framed. This suggests that age-group institutions can play a key role in increasing our chances of meeting the demands of egalitarianism, traditionally understood. To illustrate this claim, let me turn to two examples: (a) old age and disability, (b) young age and disadvantage.

Disability almost becomes the norm with old age: "Around one in twenty children are disabled, compared to around one in seven working age adults and almost one in two people over state-pension age in Great Britain" (Office for Disability Issues 2011). For most of history, and for related reasons, being old and losing physical capacity considerably increased people's chances of being poor and marginalized. By providing universal benefits, institutions can contribute (and have contributed) to reducing inequalities between the non-disabled young and the elderly, and also within the elderly population. Old age is a radically different experience whether lived in relative disadvantage or not. Moreover, whether or not one has experienced poverty, manual work, and high levels of stress or insecurity determines one's health in old age. When institutions are not active enough in dealing with impairments and lack of income, aging triggers and accelerates the loss of autonomy and welfare. Since individuals are fundamentally unequal in

facing these challenges, this will create or exacerbate existing social inequalities (between classes, genders and ethnic groups).

Consider the second example of structural youth unemployment - which I will extensively discuss in Chapter 4. Experiences of unemployment at a young age can cause further experiences of poverty, and unemployment, as well as social exclusion, and lowered self-confidence in later life (Chauvel 2010, Standing 2011). Those who have sufficiently wealthy and supportive families will undergo the same trends, but will be affected in radically different ways. They can afford more training, work experience, and education in the meantime. In this way, unsupportive institutions for the young create or exacerbate social inequalities within a generation. For instance, in France in the 1970s, parents' economic participation was not crucial for the young's chances of success. Today, French young people have very little chance of success without the economic support of their families (Chauvel 2010). As a result, in France, while inequalities within age groups have fallen, they have increased *within* the 18–24 age group (Maurin and Savidan 2009, 95). While institutions may exacerbate existing disadvantage, they may also achieve the opposite and reduce the risk of youth disadvantage clustering into further social inequalities.

The literature on intersectionality offers strong arguments for refraining from addressing different portions of people's identities in isolation. Feminist thinkers such as Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) have argued that focusing solely on gender, in isolation from other issues, can lead us to overlook the heterogeneity of women's conditions and leave behind those women at the bottom of the class and racial social hierarchies. Formal equality between genders is surely a fundamental goal of justice. However, alone, it cannot address the complex causes of the domination women suffer from, because it misses out on how gender, social class and race overlap. Crenshaw (1991) argues for the need to focus on groups that are "multiply burdened", and for this purpose, to make our theoretical frameworks more intersectional. Non-intersectional theory, she adds, also risks recommending inadequate practical solutions.

Jonathan Wolff and De-Shalit (2007), propose an intersectional approach to inequality which emphasizes how disadvantage clusters into further disadvantage. For instance, poverty can lead to disability and disability can lead to poverty. Intersectional theorists mainly focus on gender, race, class and disability, but membership of an age group is another fundamental variable for understanding and

challenging patterns of disadvantage. Not only does disadvantage affect the population along age lines, just as it does along class, race and gender lines, but disadvantage also clusters over time. By isolating the challenge of age-group justice from other aspects of social justice, the PLA misses these fundamental connections.

Furthermore, by assuming social inequalities away, the PLA could even guide practice in a way that contradicts the frame theory. Indeed, because it stems from a concern for rationing scarce healthcare resources between age groups, the PLA is very ‘scarcity-driven’. It thus risks providing arguments that reinforce the status quo. Daniels wanted the PLA to ‘undercut the grim view’ of the young pitted against the old for scarce resources (Daniels 1988, 154). But, as it stands, the PLA may in fact reinforce the grim view instead of challenging it. The PLA instructs that when there is a conflict between young and old over scarce resources that they both need, it is fair to privilege the young - it thus justifies cutting benefits aimed at the elderly in the name of fairness. The burden of such cuts is very likely to fall on the poorest within the elderly population. Reconnecting the requirements of age-group justice to broader discussions of social justice is therefore critically needed. It will offer the necessary critical lens to guide the designing of fair institutions that treat age groups fairly in a way that does not work against social justice, broadly understood.

Moreover, social inequalities themselves have an important impact on health and wellbeing (Pickett and Wilkinson 2010). This implies that the need for some healthcare resources would decrease if inequalities decreased. The solution to the age-group problem is thus likely to depend on how we solve the class problem and vice versa. It seems to me that my criticism can be understood in parallel to the challenge posed by the literature on the social determinants of health for normative accounts of just healthcare. If we are to keep the PLA, then we should perhaps seek to make its recommendations more intersectional.

Valentini (2009) argues that in bad instances of idealization, the assumptions become permanent in such way that you cannot take them away without changing the entire theory. As mentioned earlier, *The Law of Peoples* may be an example where the theory cannot be action-guiding, and where relieving the bad idealization destroys the theory: if there is no such thing as a ‘well-ordered liberal society’, as Rawls understands it, then the problem his theory aims to solve disappears. In Daniels’s case, it seems that the assumption that society is just other than in

relation to age-group justice justifies the move to an intrapersonal account. If Valentini is right, this suggests that we have to come up with another theory.

However, I do not think that we have to go as far as to reject the entire account. As I have shown in previous sections, there are appealing aspects of the PLA that should fare well in any account of age-group justice. Moreover, as my responses to the longevity, demographic and neutrality objection suggested, the PLA is one of the strongest diachronic egalitarian accounts of age-group justice. Furthermore, there is hope that the outcomes of the PLA can be applied so as to work towards other goals of social justice. Indeed, as I have shown, if institutions that meet age groups' needs are designed adequately, they may work to prevent the intergenerational transmission of poverty and the clustering of disadvantage across the life course. I will show in Chapter 4 that the two prudential principles can inform practice in an otherwise unequal society if its two core principles are made more intersectional. My goal is not to provide an account of 'justice-all-things-considered'. Overlapping generations remain my main object of study. But I propose to see the scope of age and time in a less residual manner than Daniels does. I will explore this possibility in Chapter 4 as I use Wolff and De-Shalit clustering of disadvantage model to establish the implications of the lifespan efficiency principle for what we owe to young people.

2.5 Conclusions

We are thus left with the two following prudential principles:

- *Lifespan sufficiency principle*: Institutions must distribute resources between age groups in a way that ensures a normal opportunity range throughout people's lives – i.e. members of any age group should be maintained above two thresholds: (1) an absolute threshold defined by appeal to basic human needs; (2) an age-relative threshold set at the level of what counts as a 'normal' set of opportunities for a given age group in a given society at a given time.
- *Lifespan efficiency principle*: Institutions should invest resources early in the lifespan when it increases lifespan efficiency – that is when it improves diachronic returns.

We are also left with the challenge of making these two outcomes of the PLA more sensitive to other social inequalities (in particular inequalities between social classes) so they may work with the grain of the egalitarian frame theory rather than against it, which I will take on in Chapter 4.

One of the important limitations of the PLA, which I have already hinted at, is that it risks granting too little to the elderly, or at least to those who have already lived for longer than normal. McKerlie's synchronic account is motivated by this concern. In Chapter 3, I will consider his synchronic alternative to the PLA: the simultaneous segments view (SSE), already introduced in Chapter 1. I will now elaborate McKerlie's intuition and propose a synchronic theory of my own. However, I will show that it should supplement rather than replace the diachronic approach.

CHAPTER 3 - A RELATIONAL ALTERNATIVE TO MCKERLIE'S SEGMENTS VIEW

From the end of the 1980s, Dennis McKerlie took part in the 'equality through time' debate (1989a, b, 1992, 1993, 2001, 2006, 2013) and critically assessed the diachronic nature of most egalitarian accounts of social justice. In his numerous contributions, McKerlie claims that complete lives egalitarianism is fraught with difficulties and regrets that it became established as the dominant default approach to equality through time. McKerlie thus agrees with Daniels that radical complete lives egalitarianism is an implausible view. However, while Daniels offers a diachronic complement to CLE with the PLA, McKerlie offers a fundamentally synchronic alternative approach, which relies on the view that inequalities between segments of our lives matter as well as complete lives. McKerlie resolutely argues, against diachronic accounts, that synchronic equality has intrinsic moral value. The specificity of McKerlie's view is that it offers the basis for an account of what is wrong with synchronic inequalities that does not appeal to the quality of whole lives.

In this chapter, I explore the moral significance of synchronic inequalities. Given that inequalities between age groups are by definition synchronic, the view that synchronic equality matters per se has important implications for establishing the requirements of age-group justice. I show, with McKerlie, that diachronic accounts of equality, even when complemented by a prudential account, miss out on one fundamental aspect of age-group justice. However, I also show, against McKerlie, that the relational conception of equality better explains our reluctance to accept some cases of synchronic inequalities than does any distributive account. I suggest that the dominance of the distributive paradigm in egalitarian thought partly explains the predominance of complete lives egalitarianism over questions of equality through time. I argue that we should endorse a further principle of age-group justice, which I call the 'synchronic relational equality principle'.

Chapter 3 is structured into three sections. In Section 3.1, I describe McKerlie's criticism of the PLA. I argue that there is something very strongly intuitive about the counter-examples he puts forward against the PLA. I raise several issues with McKerlie's theory and attempt to rescue his account. I argue that his reliance on the distributive view - that temporal segments morally matter - persists as a major problem. In Section 3.2, I then propose a non-distributive synchronic alternative

that draws on relational egalitarianism. After highlighting the differences between the distributive and relational approaches, I argue that our reluctance to accept some cases of synchronic inequalities is best explained by the relational conception of equality. In Section 3.3, I evaluate three possible responses to my relational view (the *prudential*, *sufficientarian* and *currency* objections) and show that they each fail.

3.1 Evaluating McKerlie's Egalitarian Theory of Age-group justice

3.1.1 The simultaneous segments view: an alternative?

Consider the following two hypothetical examples, which I refer to as the 'Swapping Castes' and the 'Unequal City' examples. First, imagine a feudal society with two castes that swap position every twenty years (McKerlie 1989a, 479). The first caste dominates the second for twenty years, then the second dominates the first for the subsequent twenty years, and so on. At the end of their lives, the two castes will have exerted equal amounts of control over each other. Second, imagine an 'Unequal City' where elderly people live in miserable, overcrowded retirement homes with little prospect for happiness, while younger people live in lovely affluent residences (McKerlie 2013, 6). The older residents enjoyed the same happy lifestyles in their past, and the younger residents will end up in the same miserable homes themselves when they grow old. The members of the Unequal City, just like the members of the Swapping Castes system, are thus equal over their complete lives.

These two examples are part of a series of challenging examples that McKerlie raised against CLE, which came to be referred to as *changing-places* examples. If complete lives were the relevant unit of egalitarian concern, he argues, we would not find these examples objectionable. On 'pure' CLE, inequalities between age groups only matter insofar as they create inequalities between people's complete lives. In the Unequal City example, each cohort is treated in the same way as they age, and thus the synchronic inequality between young and old does not create inequalities between people's complete lives. And yet, most of us do find them problematic from the point of view of equality. This simple synchronic objection undermines the complete lives view, McKerlie claims. Phases of inequality, like in the Swapping Castes example, do not cancel out diachronically. On the contrary, they add up.

The fact that people are equal over their complete lives is little consolation when half of the population is miserable and the other half is thriving. If we, as egalitarians, have to bite the bullet and believe that such inequalities are *acceptable*, we might as well forget that we are egalitarians. In other words, any egalitarian thinker must be able to provide reasons for why such cases are wrong, from the point of view of equality. And yet, McKerlie argues, complete lives egalitarians cannot. 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. Distributive justice, he insists, not only applies to complete lives, it also concerns temporal parts of lives. This objection has important implications for the field of age-group justice:

In morally assessing inequality between age groups we should continue to think of it as inequality between different people, inequality that is objectionable. If the elderly live in poverty while others are affluent, this inequality is wrong in itself. The view does not deny that we are the same people in youth and in old age, but it does ask us to care about equality in a different way than the complete lives view.

(McKerlie 1992, 295)

In response to the shortcomings of CLE, McKerlie puts forward the simultaneous segments view. Temporal segments matter morally in and of themselves for distributive reasons. McKerlie does not deny that complete lives may matter as well. However, he argues that we should complement our account of time and equality with simultaneous segments egalitarianism (SSE) and that, in some cases, what happens at simultaneous segments may even trump what happens over complete lives. The following diagram by Temkin, which I have already introduced in Chapter 1, represents the levels of wellbeing of two individuals, A and B, at different moments of their lives (Temkin 1993, 234).

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

Figure 4 - Case I in Temkin's diagram

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

Figure 5 - Case II in Temkin's diagram

In the first case, we look at how they fare comparatively over their complete lives. In the second case, we look at how they fare at simultaneous segments. The first approach is the dominant view that McKerlie criticises and the second is the alternative view he himself endorses. On SSE, when considering people born at different times, we should focus on how they fare in relation to each other at specific moments in time.

The Swapping Castes and the Unequal City examples are both intuitively appealing and the simultaneous segments view seems to be an important alternative to radical CLE. However, it is not clear how far SSE challenges the dominant modified complete lives egalitarian view that I have discussed in Chapter 2 – Daniels’s prudential lifespan account. Let me thus now establish more precisely what sort of alternative McKerlie’s simultaneous segments theory offers to the PLA. There are at least three ways in which McKerlie’s theory might be an alternative to Daniels’s: (1) it might draw on the same prudential account, but reach distinct conclusions (same account, different conclusions); (2) it might be radically alternative, if it provides a distinctive account and reaches different conclusions (different account, different conclusions); (3) it might use a different account - that is, a different set of reasons and arguments - to reach the same conclusions (different account, same conclusions).

We can immediately reject the first possibility (same account, different conclusions) because McKerlie rejects the diachronic approach that frames Daniels’s theory. He does not appeal to a lifespan prudential account to decide whether a given synchronic inequality is problematic. An alternative to the PLA of this kind would for instance be a view that accepts that veiled prudence should dictate what the requirements of age-group justice are, but denies that the result of the planners’ deliberations would in fact be lifespan sufficiency and efficiency. McKerlie’s theory is thus either a type (2) or a type (3) alternative.

Consider the Swapping Castes example. It seems clear that veiled planners would reject such a society as imprudent. As I have shown in my previous chapter, Daniels argues that institutions should aim at making people's lives go as well as possible. Inequalities between age groups are thus *only* permitted when they are prudent. In the Swapping Castes example, not only is the *lifespan sufficiency* requirement not met, but there is no diachronic 'added value' to the phases of domination. Thus, the temporal inequalities cannot be justified by the *lifespan efficiency* principle, which requires that trade-offs maximize utility over people's lives as a whole. There are therefore strong prudential reasons to explain our intuition that the Swapping Castes example is unjust. This example seems to suggest that McKerlie's theory may be a type (2) alternative to the PLA: it provides alternative reasons but reaches similar conclusions. This seems to be in line with Hugh Lazenby's comment that Daniels and McKerlie's accounts have very similar implications and that Daniels's account in fact comes close "to McKerlie's preferred ideal of strict temporal equality" (Lazenby 2011, 337).

Looking at the other case - the Unequal City example - may confirm or contradict the view that McKerlie's simultaneous segments account does not reach radically distinct conclusions. At first, it seems that, as in the Swapping Castes example, prudent planners would reject the Unequal City organization as imprudent. Lifespan sufficiency requires that elderly people have access to an age-relative normal opportunity range. The elderly in the Unequal City example do not seem to have access to sufficient such resources. This distribution of resources over people's lifespan is objectionable on prudential grounds, because it seems to violate the requirement of equal concern for each stage of one's life. Those who planned the Unequal City seem to have endorsed the view that a happy life at a young age matters more than a happy life later on, which contradicts the veiled prudential perspective. The Unequal City example thus seems to confirm the view that McKerlie's theory is a type (2) alternative.

However, there is at least one way to argue that McKerlie's theory may also sometimes have implications distinct from the conclusions of the PLA. McKerlie worries that diachronic views, including prudential views, will always put at risk the benefits of the elderly and may authorize cases like the Unequal City example. Because risks of death increase with age, it is easier to justify from a whole life perspective to allocate most resources early on. As mentioned in Chapter 2, it is not clear why prudent planners would leave resources for the elderly once they have reached a life of normal length. The eldest may thus be left with less than needed to

live a decent life on that basis. I interpreted prudential planning to imply lifespan sufficiency, which requires that the elderly have access to sufficient resources. However, I have rejected the lexically priority of lifespan sufficiency over to lifespan efficiency. Moreover, I have conceded that the lifespan sufficiency principle might not generate as strong obligations to the very old elderly, who have already lived for longer than ‘normal’, than for younger people. For this reason, McKerlie may well be right that diachronic approaches, even prudential ones, risk granting to the elderly less than the simultaneous segments view does. This suggests that McKerlie’s theory also provides a type (3) alternative to Daniels – different account, different conclusions.

Therefore, McKerlie’s theory is an alternative to the PLA in at least two ways. First, it provides distinct reasons to explain what is wrong in cases like the Unequal City and the Swapping Castes examples. It proposes that there is something intrinsically synchronically wrong in such cases, while the PLA provides only diachronically derivative explanations. SSE and PLA will sometimes reach similar conclusions about which inequalities matter, but for radically different reasons. When given synchronic inequalities have no lifespan prudential justification – that is, they have no lifespan benefits or are detrimental to lifespan efficiency compared to other arrangements - the PLA will oppose them. For instance, consider the following ‘Reverse Unequal City’ example: this time, the young live miserably while the elderly thrive. Just like for the Unequal City example, this is an inequality between simultaneous segments to which McKerlie would object. Such example of synchronic inequality would also be unacceptable from a prudential perspective. Lifespan efficiency would in fact give us strong reasons to beware such cases, which may have a negative impact on the lifespan as a whole. However, at other times, the two accounts will come to different conclusions. As previously shown, McKerlie’s account may reach a distinct verdict than the PLA about given cases of synchronic inequalities, especially in cases where the elderly are worse off.

3.1.2 Three objections to simultaneous segments egalitarianism

I will now consider three objections to SSE. First, one might claim, as Daniels does, that SSE appeals to a different currency of egalitarian justice than complete lives egalitarian accounts. Second, one may argue that SSE cannot compete with the diachronic view because there are compelling egalitarian reasons to focus on complete lives – including compensation, responsibility and prudence. Third, one may argue that McKerlie’s reliance on the moral value of ‘temporal segments’ is

unconvincing. I conclude that SSE can easily escape the first difficulty, can be rescued from the second under some conditions, but cannot withstand the last objection.

Wellbeing and opportunities

First, McKerlie assumes throughout his book that egalitarianism is ultimately concerned with wellbeing and not with opportunities or resources: “Egalitarian values should be concerned with what is most important, and well-being is more important than the other items cited” (McKerlie 2013, 21). However, we may seriously question the extent to which such an assumption weakens his enterprise, not only because he is too quick to exclude 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 be vulnerable to a criticism that Daniels raised a few years ago: that SSE 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” (Daniels 2008, 481).

However, there are in turn some problems with this objection to McKerlie. Indeed, Daniels himself is concerned with wellbeing as part of his commitment to the quality of whole lives: “I shall assume in what follows that a time-neutral concern for well-being over the lifespan is one of the demands of prudence itself” (Daniels 1988, 57). There is a strong connection between seeking to distribute opportunities throughout the lifespan and asking how resources should be allocated to promote people’s wellbeing. Furthermore, arguably, whether we consider that it is wellbeing or opportunities that matter, the question of how to allocate resources between age groups will have to be raised. Ultimately, all egalitarians must take a stand on whether we should approach the problem diachronically or synchronically, or both. The relevant distinction between McKerlie and Daniels is thus that McKerlie does not translate questions of age-group justice into a diachronic intrapersonal prudential problem, while Daniels does. It is not that McKerlie focuses on wellbeing and Daniels on opportunities. The first objection to SSE, that it talks past other egalitarian accounts because it is focused on wellbeing, can thus be escaped.

Simultaneous segments versus complete lives

A more important objection to McKerlie is that his account cannot compete with the diachronic approach. McKerlie (2013) conceded in his most recent publication on age-group justice that there are three important egalitarian values that are not captured by SSE: compensation, responsibility and prudence. There is a strong case to be made for the diachronic approach on such grounds, as I explained in Chapters 1 and 2. For this reason, the value of equality, McKerlie worries, may in fact be better expressed by an approach that focuses on the life course. There is ground, he believes, to be suspicious about the adequacy of the view he himself conceptualized because it may not be in a position to compete with CLE. In the end, he argues, "we should have serious reservations about this view" (McKerlie 2013, 87). For this reason, McKerlie eventually turned to a prioritarian view about age-group justice, which he calls "time-specific priority". The root difference between prioritarianism and egalitarianism, McKerlie claims, is that the former considers that the more absolutely worse the quality of life, the more valuable the benefit will be, while the latter focuses on the relative position of the worse off with respect to the better off.

The new view, time-specific priority, states that the value of priority should be applied to *any relevant* temporal segments – priority being given to those segments for which the value of the gain would be most significant based on "the level of well-being of that person when the gain is experienced" (McKerlie 2013, 98). Consider the following example, put forward by McKerlie to explain his view. At T1 Anna and Bob are both experiencing a low wellbeing level of 1, and at T2, Anna is at 5 and Bob is at 4.

	T1	T2
A	1	5
B	1	4

Figure 6 - The time-specific priority view

Imagine we can add an extra unit of wellbeing to Bob either at T1 or at T2. On time-specific priority, McKerlie argues, we should give 1 unit to Bob at T1, rather than at T2, because that is when he is doing worst. (McKerlie 2013, 97).

With this new view, McKerlie argues, one does not run into the same difficulty as with SSE, because priority can be applied to *both* complete lives and temporal stages. Contrary to SSE, which cannot really offer reasons for why equality applies to short segments, priority applies to *any* relevant segments. McKerlie works with two understandings of well-being: one that focuses on overall quality of life, and one that is focused on well-being at a particular stage of one's life. Priority does not run into the same problems as SSE because it is a non-comparative and non-relative value (McKerlie 2013, 89). It is primarily concerned with improving the quality of the life of the worse off:

A benefit added to a life that is of low quality assessed as a whole will have special value, as will a benefit received by someone which is currently badly off. Which has more value will depend on the size of the benefit and the degree of priority, and I see no reason why the result must be that the first benefit is more important.

(McKerlie 2013, 117)

Simultaneity, McKerlie argues, does not matter to priority, while it does to SSE. For instance, “if I must choose between helping the person who is worse off now or waiting and helping someone else [who is even worse off] a year from now, I should make the second choice. The fact that a person is suffering now does not give me an extra reason to help her” (McKerlie 2013, 91). As he moves away from SSE and rejects the significance of simultaneity, McKerlie thus renounces the idea that there is something intrinsically valuable in the goal of synchronic equality.

I do not accept this move from equality to priority, for a series of reasons. First, I find it difficult to believe that there is nothing wrong ‘from the point of view of equality’ in the Unequal City and Swapping Castes examples. The aim of this thesis is to provide an egalitarian account of intergenerational equality. Unless it is impossible to provide an egalitarian explanation for what is wrong with synchronic inequalities, therefore, I will carry on with this task. I do not deny that there are other values that may help in framing the age-group problem like priority or freedom, but I do not consider that McKerlie's reasons for abandoning the value of equality are sufficient.

Second, McKerlie's renunciation of SSE is itself unmotivated. He still thinks that diachronic arguments do not entirely refute the simultaneous segments view (McKerlie 2013, 87) and states that he is himself “not convinced that the objections raised (...) show conclusively that it is unreasonable to care about simultaneous segments inequality” (McKerlie 2013, 88). If we are committed to the question of equality through time, we should not too readily abandon the view that synchronic

inequalities may matter. We should instead look at potential ways to strengthen the view.

Third, the significance of the diachronic prudential approach need only undermine the synchronic approach if we are trying to replace the former with the latter. McKerlie himself is not entirely clear about whether he thinks SSE should replace or complement the PLA. At the end of his critical chapter on Daniels, he suggests that SSE may be an alternative to the PLA: “I hope the objections give rise to considering an alternative approach to justice between the young and the old that might avoid the difficulties that arise for Daniels’s theory” (McKerlie 2013, 51). However, SSE does not have to be evaluated as a replacement for the PLA. We may assess it as a complement, which can be incorporated as part of a comprehensive theory of intergenerational equality.

In this way, the significance of synchronic temporality for equality can be acknowledged without denying that the diachronic temporality is significant too. McKerlie himself points to this possibility of a division of labour between the synchronic and the diachronic approaches in the introduction to his recent book (McKerlie 2013, 18). In establishing what is morally significant about synchronic inequalities, we may therefore be modest and attempt to identify what the prudential account cannot capture, without attempting to find a view that can replace it - especially if it means abandoning the value of equality. Perhaps SSE can be salvaged as a complement to the diachronic approach in such way.

The arbitrariness of the distributive segments view

That said, there is a deeper problem in McKerlie’s SSE, which will lead me to abandon it and develop an alternative synchronic view to complement the diachronic approach. McKerlie argues that if an individual is worse off at Tx, then he should be assisted, but how the Tx segment is defined is not so clear. The main problem is that, once we have defined the temporal segment that matters morally (say twenty years), then we do not know whether we should find inequalities that occur within these smaller units of time unproblematic or not. One could always highlight shorter segments, in which case defining the worse off would become arbitrary. There is no justification for specifying that a given segment matters morally more than the previous one.⁹

⁹ I am indebted to Nils Holtug for helping me identify this problem at the 2012 ‘Conceptions of Justice’ conference in Aarhus.

McKerlie himself points to this problem with SSE:

In the case of equality, we seemed forced to choose between an arbitrarily specified stretch of time – arbitrary because any such stretch might contain within itself simultaneous inequality that our principle could not take into account – or making the temporal scope a mere moment, a designation that also seemed to lead to implausibility.

(McKerlie 2013, 105)

However, McKerlie does not elaborate and misses out on what I take to be the core underlying issue. To illustrate the problem, consider the following modified version of Temkin's diagram (Case II is just as it appears on his diagram and Case III is my version).

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

Figure 7 - Case II in Temkin's diagram

In Case II, we compare A and B at the simultaneous segments T2, T3 and T4 of approximately twenty years each. At each segment, A is one point better off than B. As Temkin notes on the right, this means that they are unequal (to the value of 3) at these three simultaneous segments.

		T1	T2		T3		T4		T5	
			Ta	Tb	Ta	Tb	Ta	Tb		
Case III:	A	2	3	1	5	1	4	4		
	B		1	2	1	4	2	5	5	
			2	+	1	+	4	+	3	+
			2	+	1	+	4	+	3	+
										=13

Figure 8 - A modified version of Temkin's diagram

Case III is wholly similar to Case II: A is equally well off in Case II and Case III both over her complete lives and at T2, T3 and T4; and the same for B. However, we compare A and B at the shorter simultaneous segments T2(a), T2(b), T3(a), T3(b), T4(a) and T4(b), of approximately ten years each.

In Case II, A is better off than B at T2(a), T3(a) and T4(a). However, B is better off than A at T2(b), T3(b) and T4(b). This illustrates the problem with McKerlie's simultaneous segments view. In Case II and III, depending on whether we register simultaneous inequalities every twenty years or every ten years, we will draw substantially different conclusions as to who is worse off. If we only register inequalities between twenty years segments, we may compensate B and increase inequalities at shorter segments (for instance, increasing the distributive imbalance in favour of B). If we consider ten years segments, it is not clear who is worse-off anymore.

This problem suggests that the simultaneous segments view arbitrarily defines the segments that matter. This undermines the distributive anti-complete lives egalitarian case, since the complete life segment is the least arbitrary. In other words, a solely distributive view will find it difficult, or perhaps impossible, to provide better reasons for adopting temporal stages than complete lives. As Iris Marion Young (1990: 15-18) puts it, the distributive paradigm is fundamentally static: it measures and compares respective levels of goods being distributed over a set time segment. McKerlie attempts to apply this thinking to temporal segments, but he cannot provide a rationale for why any given division of segments matters more than others, and cannot win the complete lives egalitarian over to the view that a given segment is most relevant to justice.

For this reason, it is unlikely that there can be a coherent and plausible distributive story about why specific segments matter. This suggests that there is a strong non-accidental connection between distributive approaches to equality and complete lives egalitarianism. Complete lives may be thought as the *par excellence* time unit of distributive equality. I will now put forward an alternative non-distributive account of why some synchronic inequalities between age groups matter. I will show that once we step away from the distributive paradigm and endorse a relational conception of equality, we see more clearly what is wrong in cases of synchronic inequalities like the Swapping Castes system or the Unequal City example.

In conclusion, there is therefore at least one strong reason to abandon simultaneous segments egalitarianism. It is not that it focuses on the wrong currency. It is not that the synchronic temporality is irrelevant for the value of equality. It is that the least arbitrary way of applying the value of distributive equality over time is over a whole life. However, this does not mean that there is no moral significance to

synchronic inequalities like the Unequal City and the Swapping Castes examples; and it does not mean that what happens in those cases has nothing to do with the value of equality. In fact, I will now argue that there is a fundamentally, non-derivatively synchronic egalitarian explanation for the intuition that there is something strongly non-egalitarian about these cases.

3.2 An Alternative Approach: Synchronic Relational Equality

3.2.1 The dispute between relational and distributive conceptions of equality

In the last two decades, a relational egalitarian conception of equality has gradually emerged.¹⁰ Its proponents reject the widespread and dominant ‘distributive’ understanding of equality, which they believe misrepresents the real point of equality. Iris Young (1990) argues that distributive accounts disproportionately emphasize patterns of distribution while most forms of injustice have little to do with the respective holdings to which individuals have access. The distributive paradigm, she argues, neglects the social structures and relationships that create and reinforce unequal distributions. Similarly, Anderson (1999) argues that the aim of egalitarian justice is to end relationships of oppression. Relational egalitarians primarily take issue with the way people relate to each other in a community. For instance, they are concerned with whether people are able to appear in the community without shame, whether they are respected, and whether minority groups are recognized or, on the contrary, whether they are victims of exclusive norms and are marginalized or demonized (Lippert-Rasmussen 2012, 127-128).

The distinction between the two conceptions can be simply expressed this way: while distributive egalitarians believe that it is a moral requirement of justice that people get an equal amount of X (other things being equal), relational egalitarians believe that the point of equality is the realization of a community where people are able to stand in front of each other as equals. Relational egalitarians draw heavily on the badness of oppressive relationships like exploitation, oppression, domination or exclusion to explain why equality matters. In contrast, distributive egalitarians focus on individuals’ relative levels of goods (however understood) and ask whether the division of these goods is morally justified or whether some individuals should be compensated, for instance for consequences of bad brute

¹⁰ Key texts on relational (or social) egalitarianism include: Young (1990), Anderson (1999), Scheffler (2003), Scanlon (2004), Wolff (2007), O’Neill (2008), Schemmel (2011) and Fourie (2012).

luck. According to Schemmel, “relational egalitarians present their conception as an alternative to distributive egalitarianism” (Schemmel 2011, 7).

One may doubt the relevance of the categorical distinction. Arguably, we could reframe relational egalitarian accounts in distributive terms, where the good X that must be equalised is power or status. In the same way, one may argue that most distributive egalitarians believe that unequal relationships matter to justice, but simply object to them in distributive terms. Relationships of domination and oppression, one may argue, are wrong precisely because they are evidence of a fundamentally unequal distribution of opportunities, welfare, income and resources, or because they directly involve an unfair distribution of power and status. Iris Young expressed this objection herself: the distributive paradigm, she argues, feels very malleable since in theory most things can be distributed, from voice to status and power (Young 1990, 15-39). Relational and distributive understandings of equality might thus be best understood as two expressions of the same value, rather than as rival conceptions; the distinction would then be of little significance. Arguably, if the distributive paradigm is so adaptable to various things we may value (opportunities, resources, power, respect, welfare, etc.) then the relevance of the relational approach seems to wither. For instance, Lippert-Rasmussen (2012) argues, against Anderson, that relational concerns can be captured by luck egalitarian accounts.

However, the claim that the relational egalitarian conception can be re-described as distributive is inadequate. Relational egalitarians consider distributive justice as a lever to achieve the goal of a community of equals, which means that distributive equality is required *only* when it promotes the goal of a relationally equal community. Distributive egalitarians, however, defend the moral ideal of distributive equality and consider that inequalities in opportunities, resources, income or welfare matter intrinsically. This means that distributive inequalities that have no impact on status and power will be considered irrelevant by the first and unfair by the second. Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen expresses this distinction this way:

The latter [distributive egalitarians] take the distribution of goods to matter, from the point of view of justice, independently of its effect on social relations. The former [relational egalitarians], by contrast, contend that distribution matters *only* instrumentally in virtue of its impact on social relations and the degree to which these are suitably egalitarian.

(Lippert-Rasmussen 2012, 118)

Think of a very equal society where people enjoy the same opportunities, fairly equal outcomes, have the same standard of living, enjoy a full and equal set of capabilities, etc. Imagine that some happen to have very luxurious cars, and others do not. Those who do not possess luxurious cars, however, have no need for them because they have efficient cars of their own. Moreover, let us consider that luxurious cars do not happen to grant a higher status in this specific society. On relational egalitarian grounds, there are no reasons to object to this specific distributive inequality. On most distributive egalitarian accounts, however, it may well be unfair. It all depends on the reasons why these individuals have luxurious cars: did they work harder; do they have higher needs; or is it a result of pure brute luck? This society is still problematic for distributive egalitarians, which suggests that relational and distributive accounts are likely to diverge when identifying which specific inequalities are objectionable. From this example, one may suppose that the two conceptions have distinct implications.

And yet, it seems that the Luxurious Cars example is not fully satisfying, because it merely shows that the two conceptions conflict in *marginal* circumstances. One may claim that the two conceptions have the same implications in the vast majority of cases, with few exceptions. The distinction between the two conceptions could thus be considered as of little importance. The *non-reducibility thesis* - i.e. the view that the relational conception cannot be re-described as distributive - thus requires a less marginal example. Moreover, an ideal example in support of the non-reducibility thesis would be a case in which one conception tells us that we ought to do one thing while the other conception tells us to do its opposite. In the Luxurious Cars example, the relational egalitarian might not have reasons of her own to restore distributive equality, but she may not have reasons to object to the luxurious cars being redistributed either. A better illustration would show that the two conceptions can pull in opposite directions. One may then more plausibly infer that they are not reducible one to another and perhaps even that they are fundamentally in tension.

I now want to propose that the Unequal City and Swapping Castes examples have the features that the Luxurious Cars example lacks. I will show that they successfully account for the significance of the non-reducibility thesis. These examples are likely to offend any egalitarian, and yet distributive egalitarians do not have the resources to explain why these examples matter from an egalitarian point of view, as explained in my earlier criticism raised against McKerlie. I will therefore argue that, even if we are distributive egalitarians, there are cases we can

only make proper sense of if we endorse the relational conception of equality. To clarify, I make the following three claims in the remainder of this chapter:

(a) Our reluctance to accept synchronic inequalities (like the Unequal City and the Swapping Castes examples) is best explained by the relational conception of equality (Section 3.2.2).

(b) The non-reducibility thesis - which states that the relational and distributive approaches to equality count as two distinct conceptions and cannot be reduced one to another - is true (Sections 3.2.2 ad 3.3).

(c) Even if we are distributive egalitarians, we must endorse the relational conception of equality to make full sense of age-group justice (Sections 3.2.2 and 3.3).

(a) is an original contribution to the field of age-group justice, (b) is a contribution to the broader debate between relational egalitarians and distributive egalitarians, and (c) is a contribution to both age-group justice and egalitarianism in general.

3.2.2 The synchronic relational egalitarian explanation

What is worrying in the Swapping Castes and Unequal City examples is not that there is a time-slice inequality in distribution as such, but rather that relationships of inequality may pertain. In the first example, the relationship between the two castes is fraught with domination and oppression. In the second case, the elderly are likely to be segregated and marginalised, which is incompatible with the social egalitarian goal of a community of people standing as equals. The fact that equality over complete lives is granted in both cases is largely beside the point. What is problematic is precisely that these societies may not be communities of relational equals.

Phases of domination (in the first case) or marginalisation and segregation (in the second case) cannot be thought to cancel out diachronically. These phases are non-derivatively offensive: they matter to us precisely for the relationships they contain. Diachronic equality is compatible with synchronic relations of oppression, exploitation, domination, exclusion, stigmatisation, marginalization or exclusion. Our reluctance to accept synchronic inequalities is best explained by the relational dimension of equality understood as a social and political value. From this perspective, social inequalities between age groups – for instance, between the young and formed-adults or between formed-adults and the elderly – matter insofar

as they constitute relationships of inequality in and of themselves and independently of the fact that the young will end up being old at some point too.¹¹

Take the case of age-based discrimination. Some policies of discrimination may benefit younger cohorts: for example, forced retirement for workers over 60 years old may benefit new entrants. There may be valuable diachronic reasons to introduce such a scheme, as well as many other forms of age-based discrimination. If we are concerned that youth unemployment is so high that the cohort of younger people will be worse off than the previous generation, we may think that those who have already enjoyed a career of normal length should retire and leave space for younger people. However, we should also consider what the impact of such policy would be for the kind of synchronic relationships that would pertain between age groups. Adopting a comprehensive framework that integrates both concerns decreases the risk of egalitarians missing out on part of what matters.

The distinctiveness of the relational egalitarian conception of equality is that it has a strong presumption against inequalities in rank, status, and respect. As Scheffler puts it, to understand the value of equality, one must “investigate the specific respects in which egalitarian relationships must be free from regimentation by considerations of rank or status” (Scheffler 2005, 18). Many forms of differentiation will be compatible with the goal of a community of equals. But synchronic inequalities should be considered from the relational egalitarian point of view too.

Relational egalitarians would ask the following questions to find out whether a given arrangement is satisfactory from the point of view of equality. Are the young and the old equally respected and recognized? Or are the very young demonized and the very old marginalized? Are the very old condescended to and the young patronized? Are the elderly able to appear without shame and are the young exploited in the labour market? Do the elderly hold a higher authority and do they control and dominate the political life? These are questions that would not be straightforwardly asked (or answered) by a diachronic prudential account. Of course, having access to sufficient opportunities and resources is needed to stand as equals. But questions of respect, authority, rank, status and power also deserve to be raised. And these may arise in the synchronic temporality.

¹¹ Interestingly, this point is also made by the cancer care specialist Richard Wagland (2012).

The topic of age-group justice has not attracted much attention from egalitarians. This problematic oversight can perhaps be explained by the dominance of the distributive paradigm over egalitarian thought in general. Indeed, my earlier criticism of McKerlie's simultaneous segments distributive account suggested that complete lives are the ultimate time unit of distributive equality. I thus suggested that the connection between the complete lives view and the distributive paradigm is non-accidental. Paul Bou-Habib (2011) discusses another fundamental reason which explains the close tie between, on the one hand, luck egalitarianism, and, on the other, complete lives egalitarianism. Luck egalitarians are logically drawn to the diachronic view because it leaves scope for ambition sensitivity, while synchronic views do not. Perhaps the dominance of the complete lives egalitarian approach to equality through time can thus also be explained by the dominance of the luck egalitarian paradigm over egalitarian thought, as I already suggested in Chapter 1. These connections help explain why very little attention has been paid to the question of synchronic inequalities, why questions of equality between age groups are under-researched, and why few philosophical objections to age-based discriminations exist.¹² However, once we step away from the distributive paradigm and endorse the relational egalitarian approach, the relevance and objectionable nature of synchronic inequalities becomes clearer.

3.3 Distributive Objections to the Relational View

In the previous section, I argued that our reasons for finding some inequalities between age groups unjust are primarily relational. Complete lives egalitarians have missed out on an important explanation for wrongful inequalities that is non-derivatively synchronic and relational in nature. I thus suggested that even if we are distributive egalitarians, we need to endorse a relational approach to make sense of some objectionable synchronic inequalities.

In order to fortify this claim, I will now show that there are no convincing distributive ways to explain what is wrong with the synchronic inequalities I have identified as relationally wrong. I have already shown why McKerlie's distributive segments account is implausible. Let me now turn to three further potential distributive objections that might be raised against my relational explanation. All three offer a distributive account of why and when synchronic inequalities matter.

¹² Exceptions include: Colla and Gosseries (2013), Gosseries (2007, 2014).

All three are compatible with complete lives egalitarianism and provide an explanation of what is wrong with synchronic inequalities of the sort we highlighted earlier without appealing to relationships. I will show where they each fail.

3.3.1 The prudential lifespan objection

The first objection says that complete lives egalitarian accounts of equality that integrate a prudential dimension *can* explain why McKerlie's examples are problematic without appealing to the relational view. Let us assume that we are committed to the double prudential requirement of lifespan efficiency and sufficiency. As I have already pointed out, Daniels's account does not accept the view that as long as complete lives are equal, what happens within lives is irrelevant to justice. Inequalities of the changing places type are imprudent. Periods of domination, prudential complete lives egalitarians may argue, generate a strong disutility over complete lives. This suggests that they would be able to reject many cases of synchronic inequalities of the changing places type by appealing to the derivative effect of such inequalities on people's quality of lives and thus without appealing to a relational approach.

However, the diachronic approach will always tend to threaten the status of the elderly as fully equal members of their communities. If scarce resources like jobs and healthcare are distributed solely along diachronic lines, then multiple cases of age-based discrimination will be found acceptable to protect the opportunities of new entrants against those of older persons who have already had their share of opportunities. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the PLA may leave too little for the very old, because of its scarcity-oriented diachronic focus. Perhaps the very old have 'exhausted' their entitlement to the lifetime fair share, but if they are left in a situation of second-class citizens as a result, then there is another fundamental egalitarian reason to object to this treatment - a fundamentally synchronic one.

Moreover, *even* when veiled prudence can provide reasons to reject age-based discriminations, it seems that these are not the right sorts of reasons. What is offensive in the Unequal City example is not primarily that it is an imprudent distribution; it is that the elderly are worse off and therefore that the fundamental egalitarian goal of achieving a community of equals is jeopardized. The scope of egalitarian concern when it comes to age-group inequalities extends beyond their impact on the quality of whole lives. The diachronic prudential approach has some

strength in distributive terms, but it fails to see that there are some non-derivative reasons to be cautious about synchronic inequalities.

The first objection to my relational approach was that most cases of wrongful synchronic relational inequalities can in fact be rejected based on their impact on the quality of whole lives. My answer has been first, that the focus on diachronic prudence may threaten the status of the elderly as fully equal members of society, and second, that even when diachronic distributive accounts can be stretch to provide a prudential argument against the examples of synchronic inequalities that my relational synchronic account objects to, the reasons provided are not the right reasons. That the Swapping Castes and Unequal City examples are offensive to an egalitarian eye has little to do with the fact that they are inefficient over a complete life. The prudential reasons may prescribe the right answers in many cases, but they constitute the wrong sort of reasons. Whether it creates utility or disutility over complete lives is largely beside the point. The examples are offensive precisely because they create relations that are incompatible with the goal of a community of relational equals. For this reason, the distributive prudential explanation is often inappropriate. Insofar as we accept that changing places examples raise issues of justice, these are better explained by the relational view and cannot be re-described as distributive.

3.3.2 The sufficiency objection

The second potential objection to my relational view closely relates to the prudential lifespan objection. It consists in saying that we should aim to ensure equality over complete lives, but that we should also secure continuous sufficiency throughout lives. Paula Casal (2007, 320-323) illustrates this view by appealing to the example of two potential recipients of limited resources: an octogenarian woman who has lived extremely well in the past and now finds herself facing hardship, and a teenager who faces a whole life of relatively lower quality. We should be concerned with complete lives equality, she argues, but we should also aim to ensure that people have enough at any point: “Faced with the choice between benefiting the octogenarian or the teenager, it is not implausible to believe that (...) it would be wrong to allow the octogenarian to fall below some critical threshold during the last segment of her life” (Casal 2007, 321). With this example, Casal aims to show that we may endorse a mixed view that leaves space for both distributive equality and sufficiency: “If such a conviction [that we ought to help the elderly woman] is sound, then there is still a place for certain types of sufficiency principles within distributive ethics” (Casal 2007, 321).

As I have shown in Chapter 2, Gosseries (2011) and Daniels point to an even stronger connection between both principles: they suggest that it is a requirement of the quality of lives as a whole that enough be provided at any time. In other words, their concern for continuous lifespan sufficiency is itself derived from a concern for the quality of complete lives. The sufficientarian view can thus be phrased as such: the right time unit for equality *is* complete lives; to make sense of some cases of synchronic inequalities like the Unequal City Example, we do not need to appeal to the relational conception of equality, we can simply appeal to the view that ensuring that no one falls below a certain threshold at any point is constitutive of the complete lives egalitarian view. This continuous sufficiency objection thus shares at least two features with the prudential objection: it reduces the synchronic problem of age-group inequalities to a diachronic problem about the most justified distribution of resources over a lifetime; and it states that a life well lived is incompatible with extreme hardship at any point.

However, the sufficiency objection differs from the prudential lifespan objection in at least one respect. While the latter view argues that synchronic inequalities between age groups must be justified by appeal to intrapersonal prudence, the former considers that equality between age groups is simply not a goal of justice. The real worry is not synchronic inequalities; it is the fact that the worse off, in the Swapping Castes or Unequal City examples, do not have *enough*. This view does not need to appeal to a procedure to decide which inequalities between age groups matter once the threshold is met. The sufficiency threshold view threatens my relational view because it denies that synchronic equality matters at all in theory, but in practice it can still explain why cases like the Unequal City example are objectionable: the elderly simply do not have enough.

However, this objection does not hold. In the Unequal City example, the problem may be that the elderly do not have enough, but defining the threshold for what counts as enough is a fundamental problem. One can envisage at least three sufficiency thresholds: (1) an absolute threshold - defined through an appeal to basic human needs and constituted by the resources necessary to be free from deprivation; (2) a relative threshold - dependent on what others have and set by the resources necessary to function 'normally' in a given society at a given time; (3) a relational threshold - sensitive to the relational imbalance that may prevail when some individuals or groups have more influence or status than others, and constituted by the amount of resources necessary to stand free from domination.

These three thresholds may overlap slightly, but the relational threshold can only be defined through considering the relationships of inequality that may pertain between age groups at any given point.

In the Unequal City example, the elderly may have enough in terms of their basic needs being met: they have access to basic resources including income, housing, healthcare, etc. They may be said not to have enough in the relative sense, depending on whether we consider that what they have is commensurable with what others have. Even though they have fewer opportunities to flourish than younger people, however, what they have is within the normal opportunity range of the elderly in their society, and they have had the opportunity to live a normal lifespan. However, the elderly of the Unequal City fall below the third threshold: they are spatially segregated and at risk of marginalisation and social exclusion.

Therefore, sufficientarians may find it difficult to provide an explanation for what is problematic in the Unequal City example without appealing to the relational conception of equality. And yet, as soon as one appeals to the relational threshold to explain what may be wrong, one commits oneself to the view that synchronic relational inequalities matter. In other words, continuous sufficiency throughout our lives could be a good way to express the requirement of age-group justice, but the best underlying explanation for why ensuring sufficiency matters in cases like the Unequal City example is egalitarian in nature – it derives from the relational egalitarian goal of achieving a community of equals.

3.3.3 The currency objection

The last objection I will consider is that there may be an important qualitative distinction between, on the one hand, goods that must be distributed equally over complete lives, and on the other hand, goods that must be provided equally to individuals, regardless of their age. In other words, there are basic rights and liberties that should *not* be distributed so as to maximize lifespan efficiency. Proponents of this view could argue, for instance, that the problem in the changing places examples is that those who are oppressed have lost their basic liberties. Basic liberties cannot be traded off at one point in the lifespan for more later on.¹³ Some resources like healthcare resources and income may be subject to diachronic rationality, but basic liberties should not be. On this view, the distributive paradigm does not need to be supplemented; we should just acknowledge that there is an in-

¹³ I am grateful to Norman Daniels for phrasing a version of this potential objection at the York 2013 Intergenerational Justice conference.

kind distinction between what must be distributed diachronically and what must be distributed synchronically. This objection threatens the relational view in the same way the two previous potential objections did: it offers a fundamentally distributive explanation for why the cases of synchronic inequalities discussed in this chapter matter without appealing to the relational egalitarian conception of equality.

A first way to answer this objection is to argue that the best way to make sense of the in-kind distinction is precisely to ask which goods are required for people to be able to stand as equals, continuously, throughout their lives. The relational conception would thus provide the rationale for separating goods that must be distributed over complete lives, at shorter segments, or continuously. However, in any case, the in-kind distinction does not seem convincing. Having or not having access to goods almost always has an impact on whether people will be able to stand as equals or not. Jobs, housing, income and healthcare all have a fundamental impact on relational equality. If our ability to stand as equals before others is fundamentally dependent on the bundle of resources we have access to, then the in-kind distinction does not seem to hold as an explanation for why the Unequal City example is repellent. At least, it does not threaten the view that the best reasons for rejecting synchronic inequalities are relational.

In Section 3, I have identified three potential distributive alternatives to my relational view: the prudential lifespan, the sufficiency threshold, and the currency objections. I have shown that none of them gets to the core of what is fundamentally unattractive from an egalitarian point of view in the changing-places examples. What is problematic in those examples cannot simply be derived from a diachronic appeal to the quality of whole lives. Some synchronic inequalities carry non-derivative moral weight, and the relational egalitarian conception stands on firm grounds as the most plausible and satisfactory egalitarian explanation for why we should be cautious in such cases.

3.4 Conclusions

I have not suggested that complete lives egalitarianism and prudential planning are irrelevant to justice. However, I have shown that complete lives egalitarians have missed out on an important aspect of equality and that there is a strong non-accidental connection between the complete lives view and the distributive paradigm. Indeed, I suggested that political philosophers may have engaged so

little with questions of age-group justice partly because of the dominance of the distributive paradigm (and luck egalitarianism) over egalitarian thought. I therefore argued that a view that fully rejects the appeal to relational egalitarianism and re-describes the problem as entirely distributive is very likely to be unsatisfactory. This is sufficient to infer that, even if we are distributive egalitarians, there are cases that can only be made proper sense of by appealing to the relational conception of equality.

A broader conclusion may be drawn from this discussion about the link between distributive and relational conceptions of equality. I have established that the *non-reducibility claim* – which states that the two conceptions cannot be reduced to each other - is true for two core reasons. First, the two conceptions pull in opposite directions: in the examples we offered, the distributive approach emphasizes diachronic equality and tells us to secure birth cohort equity, while the relational approach highlights the goal of synchronic equality and tells us to ensure age group equality. In the Luxurious Cars example, the relational egalitarian may not have reasons of their own to redistribute the luxurious cars, but they might not have strong reasons to object to their being redistributed. However, in our examples of synchronic inequalities, relational and distributive positions are more fundamentally in tension.

Second, the cases I assessed were not marginal in the way the Luxurious Cars example was. The Unequal City example touches on serious inequalities between young and old. This establishes that the two conceptions are irreducible in fundamental instances of inequalities, not merely in marginal cases. Given that the distributive and relational conceptions of equality have opposite implications in important cases, the distinction is relevant and the two views cannot be reduced one to the other. They constitute two different conceptions of equality, which appeal to different kinds of moral reasons.

Last but not least, a large part of this chapter has been concerned with arguing that adopting an exclusively distributive view may lead us to overlook some fundamental inequalities. I have shown that distributive egalitarians must acknowledge that some fundamental egalitarian commitments extend beyond the distributive paradigm and thus cannot be re-described as distributive. If we accept to take seriously the intuitive dystopian sense that the changing places and Unequal City examples leave us with, then I have argued that, even if we are distributive

egalitarians, we must endorse the relational conception of equality to explain it adequately.

The following additional principle can thus be spelled out:

- *Synchronic relational equality principle*: synchronic inequalities between age groups are unjust if they generate relationships of inequality (such as oppression, demonization, stigmatisation, marginalisation, and domination).

The synchronic relational equality principle is the third principle of intergenerational equality that I have highlighted so far. I must now make more explicit the overlaps and conflicts between these principles of intergenerational equality. Chapter 4 will be partly devoted to laying out the frame of a comprehensive theory of IG equality drawing on these principles.

In the past three chapters, I have discussed questions of justice between overlapping generations in general, but I have not explicitly emphasized the implications of such discussions for young people. This will be my main task in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4 - TREATING THE YOUNG AS EQUALS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Having discussed the normative value of equality over complete lives, prudent lifespan planning and simultaneous equality, I am now better armed to respond to the question of what counts as treating the young as equals. This chapter will draw on the previous discussions to determine what counts as an adequate institutional treatment of the young. I aim for this chapter to serve the double purpose of bringing together the different aspects of intergenerational equality discussed in previous chapters and to provide the theoretical basis for the two subsequent chapters, which look at the normative adequacy of specific youth policies.

To this end, I first briefly establish the contours of a comprehensive theory of intergenerational equality based around the three principles discussed in the three previous chapters: the complete lives egalitarian principle of approximate cohort equality, the two-part prudential requirement of lifespan sufficiency and efficiency, and the synchronic relational principle of age-group justice (Section 4.1). The remainder of Chapter 4 determines what the framework implies for what is owed to young people. I first ask what counts as an age-relative normal opportunity range for the young (Section 4.2). I then look at the double phenomena of clustering of disadvantage (Section 4.3) and scarring effects (Section 4.4). I suggest they provide a good basis for establishing the implications of, respectively, the prudential and complete-lives-cohortal requirements of justice for the young. Last, I examine the implications of the synchronic relational egalitarian principle for what treating the young as equals means (Section 6.5).

4.1 Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Equality Through Time

In previous chapters, I have highlighted important intuitions about time and equality, and critically assessed the theories that have been advanced in the debate, modifying each of them. The result of this critical discussion is a set of principles designed to answer the core question of which inequalities between overlapping generations are unfair. Inequalities in opportunities between birth cohorts, I have argued, are *prima facie* unfair on complete lives egalitarian grounds. I have referred to this as the *approximate equality between cohorts principle*. Inequalities between age groups, I have also argued, far from being irrelevant to justice, are only acceptable when they meet the following requirements.

First, inequalities between age groups are objectionable when they produce inequalities between birth cohorts (this derives directly from the approximate cohort equality principle above). Second, inequalities between age groups must be 'prudent'. That is, they must meet both: (a) the *lifespan sufficiency principle*, which requires that resources be distributed in a way that ensures the preservation of a normal opportunity range throughout people's lives (i.e. members of any age group should be maintained above an absolute basic threshold, and an age-relative threshold set at the level of a 'normal' set of opportunities for someone of a given age group in a given society); and (b) the *lifespan efficiency principle* which states that institutions should invest resources early in the lifespan when it maximises diachronic utility. Third, inequalities between age groups are problematic if they generate relationships of inequality - such as oppression, demonization, stigmatisation, marginalisation, and domination. I have called this last principle the *synchronic relational egalitarian principle*. The principles are summarized below.

1. *Approximate equality between birth cohorts*
2. *Prudential lifespan principles of age-group justice*
 - a. *Lifespan sufficiency principle*
 - b. *Lifespan efficiency principle*
3. *Synchronic relational egalitarian principle of age-group justice*

This list of principles is not quite properly action-guiding yet. In order to decide which specific inequalities between generations matter, we now need to establish how these principles may fit together as part of a theory of equality between overlapping generations. We must know the appropriate weight to give to each principle in case of conflict. I have offered some answers to this in previous chapters. My task in this section is to bring together the elements of response that have already been mentioned and to develop the further points that need discussion.

The best way to describe the relationship between principles 1, 2 and 3 is that they are *complementary*, since each principle is *individually insufficient*. Drawing on Daniels, I showed that the complete lives egalitarian perspective is implausible without a prudential component: the quality of whole lives matters as well as their equality, and it fundamentally depends on the distribution of resources between stages of lives. Drawing on McKerlie, I have also shown that the diachronic perspective, even when complemented by a prudential lifespan view, is not

satisfactory without a relational synchronic supplement. Some synchronic inequalities, I argued, matter for reasons that cannot be adequately captured by principles 1 or 2, because they matter for reasons that are irreducibly synchronic and relational. I have also shown in Chapter 3 that the ideal of synchronic relational equality does not exhaust discussions on age group and birth-cohort justice. On its own, the synchronic perspective is fairly age-insensitive and does not provide reasons for prevention or for age-based differential treatments that can potentially benefit us all in the long run. All three principles are important, they are not simply saying the same things in different ways, and none of them can be reduced to another – they are each independently insufficient.

We are thus left with three individually insufficient but jointly complementary principles of intergenerational equality. But the mere fact that they are complementary does not mean that they will not conflict. There are four possible lines of conflict: conflicts between the approximate equality between cohorts principle and the prudential principle; conflicts within the prudential principle, between its two components; conflicts between prudence and the synchronic relational principle; and conflicts between approximate cohort equality and synchronic relational equality.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the prudential ideal may recommend transfers towards elderly people that are difficult for a small cohort of taxpayers to afford; as a result, a larger cohort may benefit more than the smaller cohort from intergenerational cooperation. As also mentioned in Chapter 2, lifespan efficiency and sufficiency may pull in different directions too - for instance, when discussing the extent of our obligations to the elderly. The lifespan efficiency principle, on the one hand, emphasises preventive measures, early investments, and youth-first rationing when necessary. The lifespan sufficiency principle, on the other hand, works as a counterweight to the lifespan efficiency maximizing rationality that often works to elderly people's disadvantage. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the synchronic relational principle's injunction to direct spending towards combatting marginalisation may conflict with the prudential efficiency injunction to invest in the youngest members of society. Moreover, the synchronic relational equality principle will tend to direct resources towards those who are worse off now, while the complete lives egalitarian commitment will encourage transferring resources towards those who are likely to be worse off over their complete lives.

One way to give adequate weight to the principles would be to adopt a *lexical priority ordering*. The diachronic injunctions would be more important than synchronic relational equality, or the opposite. For instance, in the Unequal City example, given that diachronic requirements are met and that meeting synchronic requirements would disrupt it, we might decide to do nothing. On the contrary, we might decide that synchronic requirements are more important, and that we should ignore the goals of diachronic equality and prudent planning for synchronic equality when we cannot do both. However, such lexical ordering does not seem to capture what I argued in previous chapters. Indeed, since I have claimed that the diachronic principles are insufficient in Chapter 3, it would make little sense now to say that synchronic equality starts to matter only once diachronic requirements are fulfilled. Similarly, if we take the opposite view - that diachronic justice should only be paid attention to once synchronic equality is met, then we seem to be doomed to leave too little room for prudent planning and cohort equality to express themselves.

Therefore, I propose to develop an alternative pluralist solution. All three principles matter, and we should do our best to ensure that they are all promoted through institutional planning. In other words, we should try to find compromises that give adequate consideration to all three principles. Rather than lexical ordering, or trying to reduce each principle to a commensurable common unit, we should endorse a pluralistic decision-making way of proceeding. How then to reply to the previous trade-offs cases? We should consider that the Unequal City is unjust: institutions must ensure elderly people have enough in later life; they must also ensure that they are free from domination, exclusion and marginalisation. Further, they must ensure that such treatment is ensured in a way that is sustainable and gives equal consideration to the prospects of different cohorts.

An important conclusion that I will lean towards in this chapter and Chapter 5 is that, when asking what we owe the young, it is not very difficult to accommodate all three requirements. I will show that they often point in the same direction, but emphasise different aspects of the problem. For instance, limiting the risk of exploitation or domination at a young age tends to be prudent because of the long-term implications it is likely to have for the quality of their lives as a whole. Moreover, it is likely that a society in which the young are not viewed as equals will risk granting them with fewer opportunities than they should on prudential grounds. Another example is that it is impossible to ensure synchronic relational equality without ensuring lifespan basic sufficiency. These examples suggest that,

more often than not, we may be able to accommodate these three principles in institutional design and they may in fact work to facilitate each other. I will nevertheless proceed by analysing the implications of each principle one after another, rather than mixing them together, because they emphasize slightly different aspects of the problem.

Another remark that I am now able to make about which principles should be the primary focus of our concerns is that the cohort equality principle is less substantive and guiding for institutional planning than the two other principles. While prudence informs us about how goods should be distributed across the lifespan and synchronic relational equality informs us about how age groups should be treated and relate to each other, approximate cohort equality seems to be more of a side-constraint. That is, it tells us relatively little about institutional design because it says nothing of quality of life or community. It simply says, whichever quality you pick, distribute it approximately equally by cohort. This is not to say that approximate cohort equality is not an important moral goal. It is simply to say that it is likely to be less substantively guiding for institutional planning than the two other principles.

With the main lines of the comprehensive framework summarized, we are now equipped to ask what ‘treating the young as equals’ means. As I have discussed, the question must be answered both diachronically and synchronically. As I isolate the specific prescriptions of each principle, I will mention potential similarities and differences with the other principles, and will then synthesize the resulting guidance for youth policies. My primary focus will be on unemployment and prolonged parental dependency (although I will also touch on skill formation and relationships of domination). I will not provide a full fledged account of what is owed to the young, nor will I attempt to highlight the policy implications of my framework in detail. I only discuss a few implications of my principles for institutional design. My aim is to emphasize some of the directions the account points us towards. I thus aim for the next three sections to serve as transition from the theory of Chapters 1-3 to the detailed policy discussions of Chapters 5 and 6.

4.2 Lifespan Sufficiency: Ensuring Young People Have Enough to be ‘Normal’

To be above the absolute deprivation threshold, which is set to cover basic human needs, young people need to have access to roughly the same basic things as other

age groups. When I introduced this first sufficiency threshold, I noted that what constitutes basic human deprivation is largely ‘ageless’ – or in Paula Casal (2007)’s words basic human deprivation is ‘non-comparative’. For instance, we all need shelter, access to food and clothing, and so on regardless of our age. Children and elderly people may need more of some goods or they may need goods of better quality, but essentially, the young also need access to all of these basic resources not to be deprived. So let us move directly to the second component of the lifespan sufficiency principle, that people be maintained within the range of opportunities that is ‘normal’ for people in their age group to have. On this second view, we owe the young the necessary resources for them to enjoy an age-relative normal opportunity range.

Young adulthood is the transition from childhood to adulthood. It is a process that involves seeking economic and spatial independence from one’s parents. As we discussed in Chapter 2, the normal opportunity range describes the “array of reasonable life plans” people are likely to make for themselves. The plan to leave the family household seems to be among those ‘reasonable’ plans that constitute the youth normal opportunity range. So perhaps one of the implications of the lifespan sufficiency principle is that governments should help ensure that the young are able to gain parental independence at a normal age. It is reasonable for the young to want this opportunity, which is key for them to gain autonomy and live on their own conception of the good life. We may thus consider it as a crucial and legitimate aspiration for young adults to have. This opportunity may also be thought as derivatively valuable, because it facilitates other ‘reasonable’ life plans young people may have - such as building relationships of their own and having children.

Jonathan Wolff and Avner De-Shalit introduce the phenomenon of “planning blight” which occurs when people facing uncertainty in terms of income, employment or housing put off reasonable plans that they importantly value such as founding a family or leaving home (Wolff and De-Shalit 2007, 69). Perhaps such postponement of the reasonable plans that constitute the youth normal range should be seen as one of the primary targets of institutions trying to enforce the normal opportunity range principle. The opportunity to leave the parental household by a normal age can be seen as one of those important opportunities to be protected. I use this key opportunity as main example in this section. To shed some light to how the age-relative normal opportunity range may be implemented, I ask at which age young people should be able to leave the parental household.

For this purpose, I consider a series of possible indicators that may guide us in deciding what should count as the ‘fair age’ for a state to ensure the young are able to gain independence from their parents. The age for independence may be aligned with (1) the *average* age of independence, (2) the age culturally *perceived* as normal, (3) the age at which *middle-class* young people are able to leave home, or (4) the age at which most young people *want* to leave home.

First, we can derive the youth normal age from *the average age* - or the median age - at which young people leave home in a given time and place. Indeed, what is ‘fair’ on the age-relative normal opportunity range principle is for the young to have access to the opportunities that are ‘normal’ for a given society at a given time. In France and the UK, the average age at which young people leave the parental home is about 23,5 years old (Eurostat 2009, 29). If we index the range to the empirical average, then it seems that what we owe the young is to ensure that they do not have to depend on their families for much longer than age 23,5 in France and in the UK. This may have implications for how housing and income benefits should be designed.

However, it is important to note that indexing the sufficiency requirement to the average age means that, if it became normal for young people to be low-paid or poor for longer, and thus dependent for longer, then the State’s obligation would be to give young people the opportunity to leave home at the new (later) normal time. In Italy, Portugal, Spain and Poland, the average age for people to leave the family home is closer to 30 years old (Eurostat 2009, 29). Does that mean that young people should have access to the opportunity to leave their home at that later age in those countries?

One may worry that the appeal to what *is* to establish what *should be* is normatively problematic. In Chapter 2, I mentioned the limited normative adequacy of the appeal to normality to establish what the fair range is. Nancy Jecker (1992), for instance, has raised many criticisms against the PLA for its strong reliance on normality:

Although the history of ethics teaches that *ought* statements cannot be derived from *is* statements, this does little to deter such appeals. For, despite ourselves, we tend to think that what is ought to be. The upshot of this is that those attuned to the added force that appeals to nature give often refer to *is* statements in order to lend support to *ought* statements.

(Jecker 1992, 270)

The circular appeal to what *is* to establish what *should be*, Jecker argues, pervades Daniels's account and makes it normatively weak. However, as I argued in Chapter 2, the important added value of Daniels's appeal to the age-relative opportunity range is that it allows comparing what is owed to the young with what is owed to elderly people. It would not be fair to deny the elderly the necessary resources to live decently (both absolutely, with respect to their humanity, and relatively, with respect to their age) in order to provide a more than normal, or ideal, level of functioning to the young. Similarly, it allows us to explain the important intuition that: if we can either invest in an expensive Scheme A to restore the physical mobility of young disabled people, so they may be able to run like any other young person, or an expensive Scheme B to restore the physical mobility of disabled elderly people, so they may be able to run like they were able to in the past, we should favor Scheme A. The appeal to normality is helpful, in other words, to set *some* limits fairly. For these reasons, I accepted the PLA's age relative normal opportunity range as *one* important aspect of a theory of age-group justice.

Moreover, I showed that Daniels is conscious that under moderate conditions of scarcity, we may be able to ensure more than what is empirically normal. If there is widespread youth unemployment and precariousness, or during an economic recession, what the young are able to do is considerably reduced. So rather than, or in addition to, using the empirical norm to set the threshold fairly, we could index the normal range on the *cultural norm*: what people think *should be* normal at a given time in a given society. Even when prolonged dependency is becoming more common (in the average sense), it may still not be considered as what 'should' count as normal.

Louis Chauvel's (2010) sociological study of French young people is an illuminating example in this context. According to Chauvel (2010, 75-78), three stages of young adulthood have emerged in young adults' processes of socialization in France. The first stage brings together those under 25 years old and involves the first experiences of transition to adulthood. The second stage refers to the steps of partial independence through the labour market and occurs between 25 and 30 years old. This second stage is also characterized by long-term dependence on parents for economic support – mainly because wages do not match the costs of the housing market. The third stage involves those who failed to gain independence in the previous stages. Chauvel identifies this third stage as correlated with a situation of never-ending dependence on family (until 35 or even later). This stage

is made all the more difficult that economic dependence after 25 years old is viewed as abnormal (Chauvel 2010, 76).

So perhaps we could appeal to the stigma attached to the third stage of youth to set the age by which the State should ensure that the young are able to leave home. The stigma attached to prolonged dependency in Stage 3 is evidence that it is not perceived as a normal phenomenon. One underpinning reason for why we may care about both the empirical and the cultural norm in a given society is that it may have an important impact on the social basis of self-respect. Young people who are not able to leave home by the normal age may be suffering from low self-esteem and status.

We may thus consider that the normal opportunity range principle requires that institutions end the third (abnormal) stage of youth by the age that is considered normal at a given time in a given society, as indicated by cultural reactions to it. This way, for instance in France, we could consider that experiences of dependence before 25 years old are acceptable because no stigma is attached to it. This may justify emphasising Stages 2 and 3 of youth unemployment and poverty and ignoring dependency in Stage 1 as largely unproblematic. Interestingly, the absence of individualised ‘revenu minimum’ (the UK equivalent is the Job Seeker’s Allowance) for the young under 25 years old in France was partly justified in this manner. It is seen as quite normal for the young under 25 years old to be dependent on their parents for housing and shelter, the argument went, so the denial of income support to those under the age of 25 is acceptable (Bidadanure 2012).

Prolonged dependence on one’s family after 25 may be stigmatised, and this may indicate that it is not perceived as what should be, but perhaps if we give a new phenomenon a generation or two it becomes perceived as normal. For instance, nearly half of young adults in the US now return home after having moved out (Goldfarb 2014, 54). As Sally Goldfarb claims, while the phenomenon is new, expectations have already changed in such way that it is now unrealistic for parents to expect their children to become independent upon reaching adulthood (Goldfarb 2014, 54). We may thus consider that parental dependency is normal and, as a result, that institutions do not have to secure such opportunity. After all, in a society where it is normal to be dependent for younger, the young’s self-respect may not be affected. Both knowing at what age most young people are able to leave home and knowing from when it becomes stigmatising to still live with one’s

parents are indicative to establish the normal range. However, we may still worry that the principle does not push us to question the reality of norms at a given time in a given society sufficiently.

We may look at two further indicators to establish the age at which the young should be helped to leave home if they want to. We could find out what young adults of relatively well-off families are able to do. We may look at the age at which *they* are able to leave home and then try to ensure that the same opportunities are available to all. As Furlong and Cartmel (2007) argue, family affluence is strongly associated with early departures: “where parents are able to subsidize their children financially, early moves tend to be common” (Furlong and Cartmel 2007, 62). This may lead us to decide that the young should be able to leave home at 20 years old, for instance, even if most cannot until much later, and even if dependency on one’s family is not stigmatised until much later. Another way to set the threshold would simply be to look at what the young themselves say they want. From when do *they* feel as though living with their parents is not adequate anymore? If it turned out that the young expressed a strong frustration about not being able to leave home before 25 years old, for instance, then this could give us a reason to ensure that the young have access to the opportunity to lead an autonomous life before that age.

However, these two indicators (what young people want and what middle class young people are able to do) seem to do more than merely flesh out the normal opportunity range requirement. All the lifespan sufficiency principle instructs is making sure the young have access to the opportunities that are ‘reasonable’ or ‘normal’ for the young to have in a given society at a given time. The empirical and cultural norms seem to be more in line with the requirement. If we are still partly dissatisfied with this result and still think it is too indexed with the practicalities of the moment, then this may suggest that we have intuitions that are not captured by the sufficiency principle itself, and may be explained by the other principles. For instance, we may consider that the young should be able to leave home early to avoid risks of unwanted parental dependency, which may be associated with domination, control, and authority, as I will discuss in Section 4.5 on synchronic relational equality. In addition, we may worry that the unwanted postponement of independency will lead to further postponements over the young’s life as a whole. This worry may be better captured by the lifespan efficiency principle, as I will discuss in Section 4.3.

Besides the opportunity to make plans like leaving home and founding a family, the opportunity to educate oneself and to get training is another fundamental opportunity for the young to enjoy as part of their normal opportunity range, at least in Stage 1 (18-25 years old). Stage 1 is primarily about transiting from childhood to adulthood through schooling and training. This requires access to the relevant courses, apprenticeships, training and internships. An affordable access to such goods is a requirement of lifespan sufficiency since institutions must ensure that young individuals have access to the normal opportunity range of their age group.

David Cameron and Ed Miliband both claim that young adults should be earning or learning (Cooke 2013a, 11). However, the set of opportunities that young people have access to, depending on whether they pursue a university education, are not in education employment or training, are unemployed with a higher education degree or are employed in a precarious positions, are very different. How do we set what counts as a normal set of opportunities in light of youth heterogeneity? Further, the heterogeneity of youth results from many years of differentiation through unequal school attainment. For this reason, we can only say something quite general: the young are owed affordable training and educational opportunities, whichever these resources are (apprenticeship, higher education, internships, workfare). I will show in the next section that the lifespan efficiency principle is more informative for discussing educational and training opportunities than the sufficiency principle. The diachronic returns of such or such programmes are better indicators for deciding which kinds of such opportunities should be secured.

In Section 4.2, I tried to unpack some of the implications of the age-relative normal opportunity component of the lifespan sufficiency principle. The normal opportunity principle will not necessarily instruct that the young be given the required resources to be independent from their families, at least before 25 years old. But it will require that they have access to the necessary resources to be autonomous after an age where it becomes abnormal for a person to remain dependent - that is after 25 years old perhaps, and surely after 30. It will also require an access to training and educational resources. The range of what counts as adequate training and education can be defined more or less substantially, however: on the least radical account, unpaid workfare programmes would count as acceptable opportunities, while on more radical accounts young people would have access to quality training instead. I have tried to suggest, however, that the appeal to norms may give too much weight to the contingencies of the current

practices. It may provide useful indications as to what counts as ‘not enough’ in a given society at a given time (which is the point of a sufficiency threshold), but it does not tell us much about what else we may do for the young, once the quite minimal threshold is met. The efficiency principle, I will now show, provides the basis for a more ambitious forward-looking politics of youth. By focusing on lifespan returns, it elucidates better which opportunities *must* be secured at a young age.

4.3 Lifespan Efficiency: Regulating Diachronic Clustering

Other than lifespan sufficiency, Daniels’s veiled planners, I have claimed, also conclude that institutions must maximize lifespan efficiency. This principle is pivotal in establishing what we owe the young. To show why, I first need to introduce Jonathan Wolff and Avner De-Shalit’s (2007) concepts of *clustering of disadvantage*, *corrosive disadvantage* and *fertile functionings*. I aim to show that these concepts offer a good basis for deciding what counts as promoting lifespan efficiency in the context of youth policy. I argue that the principal way in which institutions should promote the lifespan efficiency principle is by preventing the lifespan clustering of disadvantage and investing in early fertile functionings. Moreover, I show that the strategy of connecting lifespan efficiency with the clustering of disadvantage model generates recommendations for youth policies that may work towards, rather than against, the egalitarian goal of reducing the development of inequalities between life courses.

4.3.1 Diachronic clustering of disadvantage

According to Wolff and De Shalit (2007), if we were all disadvantaged in one respect, then egalitarians would not have much to worry about. What is problematic from the point of view of equality, however, is that disadvantage clusters in such way that those who are disadvantaged in certain fundamental respects, such as the lack of access to an income or the lack of shelter, risk becoming disadvantaged in other respects. Their suggestion is that:

If by improving the lives of the least advantaged, governments can achieve a general declustering of disadvantage to the point where we can no longer say who in society is worst off overall, then they have every reason to claim that they have moved society significantly in the direction of equality. Moreover, we suggest that a good way of doing this would be to search for what we call corrosive disadvantages’ (namely, disadvantage the presence of which yields further disadvantages) and ‘fertile functionings’

(i.e. those functionings the securing of which is likely to secure further functionings) and to pay special attention to these.

(Wolff and De-Shalit 2007, 10)

The *clustering of disadvantage* phenomenon refers to the empirical fact that one serious form of disadvantage rarely comes alone. The least advantaged may, for instance, be unemployed, homeless, disabled and not have access to a network of emotional support. These forms of disadvantages will most probably not have occurred simultaneously. It is likely that they happened *one after the other*, and most probably *one as the result of another*.

The concept of *corrosive disadvantages* refers to the forms of disadvantages that are most likely to yield further disadvantages. Unemployment, for instance, is particularly corrosive because it induces further disadvantages through significantly increasing the risk of poverty, exclusion, unhappiness, and isolation. Lack of income as such is particularly corrosive too because it may provoke homelessness, bad health, stress and depression. Public policies, Wolff and De-Shalit (2007, 119-128) argue, should be targeted at corrosive disadvantages to prevent the phenomenon of clustering of disadvantage. This requires empirical work to identify which forms of disadvantage cause which. This would allow us to identify which kinds of disadvantage are most corrosive. Preventing the clustering of disadvantage by reducing the risks of corrosive disadvantages in the first place, or by blocking its clustering, should thus be the key goals of egalitarian public policy.

Fertile functionings, by contrast, are “those functionings the securing of which is likely to secure further functionings” (Wolff and De-Shalit 2007, 10). Identifying these functionings is as important as identifying corrosive disadvantages. While identifying corrosive disadvantages serves preventive purposes, identifying fertile functionings helps both in preventing initial (and potentially corrosive) disadvantages, and in reversing the trend once disadvantage has already clustered. Alongside identifying and precluding corrosive disadvantages, implementing policies that restore fertile functionings is thus a second way to contribute to declustering disadvantage (Wolff and De-Shalit 2007, 154).

One may think of corrosive disadvantages as mirror images of fertile functionings. However, the authors emphasize that in many cases, knowing which disadvantage caused the clustering will not directly help in declustering it:

‘Causation in’ is not always the same as ‘causation out’. To use a well-known example, if someone is run over by a steam roller, then the cure is not to have the steam roller reverse back over them.

(Wolff and De-Shalit 2007, 134)

We may know, for instance, that there is an important correlation between homelessness and alcohol addiction and that in many cases the former causes the latter. But, while we may learn from this that homelessness is particularly corrosive, giving people a home may not solve the addiction problem. This is to say that once disadvantage has clustered into many different forms, fixing the symptoms as well as fixing the cause itself is often required. Similarly, we should not always deduce the cause of a problem from its cure. Aspirin may fix a headache, but the cause of the headache is not the lack of aspirin (Wolff and De-Shalit 2007, 134). Policies aiming at declustering disadvantage should identify how some disadvantages cluster systematically into others. But they should also identify which functionings are fertile, and while at times such functionings will mirror the corrosive disadvantage that cause the clustering, this will not always be the case.

According to Wolff and De-Shalit (2007, 120), the phenomenon of clustering of disadvantage is “dynamic” - that is, the accumulation of disadvantages occurs over time, as in the example of a person who becomes unemployed, then depressed, loses his friends and eventually becomes homeless. The groups that are most at risk of such dynamic clustering of disadvantage, the authors argue, are those at whom we should aim our preventive policies. Instead of referring to the clustering as dynamic, I will refer to it as *diachronic*. Clustering of disadvantage is almost always dynamic, but the word diachronic emphasizes that some may have more long-term consequences than others. For instance, child obesity may cluster into many further health risks over time: such as increased risks of type 2 diabetes and heart diseases. Therefore, we may refer to such clustering as fundamentally diachronic.

I want to propose that the goal of lifespan efficiency principle finds an interesting expression in this model, especially if we are committed to making our politics of age-group justice work within the grain of social justice in broader terms. The diachronic clustering model of lifespan sufficiency, I will argue, is particularly helpful for understanding the normative significance of youth disadvantage. For Wolff and De-Shalit, success is defined as a society which “in effect gives priority to the worst off by making it unclear who the worst off are. Some will be less well off in one respect, others in a different way, but no one by multiple measures”

(Wolff and De-Shalit 2007, 131). For the lifespan efficiency principle, success means that we live in a society where disadvantage occurring at an early point does not cluster into further disadvantages later in life, either because we have prevented the first disadvantage from occurring, or because we have blocked its clustering. Success also means, more positively, that policies are designed so as to promote a high rate of returns on lifespan utility, through early investments in fertile functionings. The identification of how early disadvantage clusters into further disadvantages over time, or in other words, the identification of which forms of disadvantages are most diachronically corrosive, seems to form a first good basis for a politics that meets the lifespan efficiency requirement. One could therefore argue that, the younger the disadvantage, the worse the quality of life, and thus the more imprudent the distribution.

4.3.2 Toddlers and children as pre-distributive priorities

One implication of the lifespan efficiency principle is that investing in children makes more sense than investing in young people. Many studies have shown the considerable impact of disadvantage in childhood for cognitive, behavioral and emotional development. If we are determined to such an important extent by the quality of our childhoods, then arguably the lifespan efficiency principle requires that we invest resources much earlier than in young adulthood. James Heckman, for instance (2013) argues that our institutions should privilege “pre-distributive” over “re-distributive” policies. He understands the concept of pre-distribution primarily temporally – as policies that privilege early investments in the lifespan over compensatory policies once disadvantage has clustered. He justifies such early investments by the equity-efficiency equation: public policies, to be effective, must be aimed at early years because that is what will promote an equitable start best, and because “later intervention means hustling to correct one by one a whole cascade of inequalities that accumulate into adolescence and adulthood”, as Almagor (2013, 99) sums it up. Early investments in childhood are thus required by equity (between life courses), because it gives children a ‘fair start in life’, and by lifespan efficiency.

Identifying childhood as the key stage when resources should be invested is both intuitive and strongly empirically grounded. It corresponds quite well to the two policy goals of identifying corrosive disadvantages (such as childhood disadvantage) to minimize its diachronic clustering, and identifying fertile functionings (such as adequate cognitive and emotional functionings in childhood) to maximize their lifespan returns. So why should we spend much on adults,

including young adults, if it is relatively much less efficient than investment in childhood? Heckman in fact partly answers this question. Investing in adolescence, especially in IQ boosting and problem-solving ability, he argues, is much less effective than similar investments earlier on, given that most cognitive skills develop in childhood. However, there are still worthwhile investment strategies for young people which consist in boosting other kinds of skills:

social and personality skills are another story. They are malleable into the early twenties, although early formation of these skills is still the best policy because they boost learning. Adolescent strategies should boost motivation, personality, and social skills through mentoring and workplace-based education.

(Heckman 2013, 38)

Heckman thus supports relatively light investments in young adulthood, primarily in behavioural skills, while he favours extensive investments in childhood on grounds of fairness and efficiency.

Carol Dweck (2013) ran a series of psychological tests on adolescents that seem to give some more weight to the view that investments in behavioural skills tend to have a positive impact on young people. She simply *taught* a group of teenagers that their brains were malleable, that their neurones formed new connections as they learned, and that such processes enhanced their intellect. As a result of this simple intervention, the students started getting better grades, while the students in the control group saw no improvements. The main reason for the positive result, she hypothesizes, is that the motivation of the students in the first group was enhanced after learning the simple scientific fact (Dweck 2013, 71). This result, Dweck believes, gives at least some support to Heckman's view that adolescent policy strategies should aim at boosting behavioural and motivational skills. On such an account, while the lifespan efficiency principle would require us to invest in the development of 'cognitive skills' primarily in childhood, what we would owe adolescents and young adults is to develop their 'social and personality skills'.

Investing in cognitive developments in childhood may well be the most cost-effective way to allocate resources. It may also be true that investing in cognitive skills improvements for adolescents and young adults will be expensive and produce smaller returns. There may be some efficiency-based reasons to favour motivational and work-based (or workfare) programmes for the young. Nevertheless, there are very strong lifespan-efficiency-based reasons to believe that

investments in young adulthood (beyond spending on personality and social skills) are also crucial pre-distributive policies, as I will now show.

4.3.3 In defence of prudential investments in young adults

Young adulthood remains a fairly early phase to effectively tackle corrosive disadvantages and prevent its clustering. Youth unemployment increases risks of further negative experiences across the lifespan. The good news is, if young experiences of unemployment risk generating further experiences of unemployment later in life, the converse is also true: experiences of employment at a young age produce positive outcomes in terms of employment rates and wages in the future (European Commission 2012, 9). In other words, while youth unemployment is corrosive and may provoke a clustering of disadvantage over the lifespan, employment at a young age increases one's chances of having jobs later in life and of earning a good wage.

The quality of the job opportunities in question also has an important impact on life courses. Guy Standing worries that many jobs may generate *negative* outcomes in the long run. Such bad jobs may involve: a mismatch between a person's skills and interests and the job in question (as is the case for unemployed graduates who cannot find a job in their field); no wage (as is the case for some work placements where the only income earned is the JSA); a job that does not pay a decent wage; a precarious contract (for instance, fixed-term contracts, zero-hours contracts, part-time contracts, or short contracts with no promise of employment at the end); a job that is demeaning, or boring and feels pointless.

Of course, this is not an exhaustive list. Moreover, some of these features may not be sufficient for a job to be detrimental to a young person's interests. For instance, a part-time contract may be just what one may want to accommodate other life plans, and an unpaid work placement or training may also be a stepping stone to a good job. However, it is clear that precariousness at a young age, when it involves several of the above, is fundamentally imprudent because the "earlier someone can define their skills and ambitions, the longer they have to let them roll, accumulating size and power. If early precious years are spent groping around in precarious jobs, the capacity to develop will be permanently impaired" (Standing 2011, 78).

Let us take the recent example of a young biology graduate doing an unpaid work placement in Poundland to keep her JSA entitlement (Malik 2011). The reason why

Shiv Malik argues that there is something particularly wrong with this example is that it is a bad job in many of the respects mentioned above: the individual in question had graduated from a higher education course but could not find a job and was compelled to accept a work placement without a wage, without a promise of a contract after the placement, and without experience gains because she had worked in sales already. The long-term negative effects of this kind of bad job are consequent: “if an unemployed person takes a job for which they are unsuited it has a negative effect on their long-term earnings and capacity to work” (Standing 2013, 25). On lifespan efficiency grounds what young people need is not any job, but rather opportunities that will have positive returns over their lifespans.

Similarly, Mike Rose (2013) complains that policies aimed at young disadvantaged adults are overwhelmingly about “soft skills” that have to do with behaviour - such as perseverance, individual responsibility and motivation (as apparent in workfare programmes) - and neglect “hard skills” - such as literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving. The risks of such an approach, he argues, is that programmes aimed at young people and adolescents are likely to be built around “un-engaging tasks or exercises” (Rose 2013, 51). Spending on hard skills for the young may be more costly than for children for relatively lower returns. Still, investments in young adulthood will mitigate risks of diachronic clustering of disadvantage given that the transition from schooling to work has a significant impact on the life course too.

Ideally, perhaps, meeting the requirement of lifespan efficiency would mean eliminating poverty and inequalities in childhood and creating a society where very few compensatory redistributive programmes were needed. But in a society with unequal young adults facing high risks of unemployment, there is much need to seek to prevent further clustering of disadvantage later on. In other words, investments in young adults should still count as pre-distributive policies. Moreover, the fact that young adulthood is such a significant transitional moment in our lives means that important investments in young adults are always likely to be needed. If risks of youth unemployment are fairly high, for instance, the young will still need to be assisted, even if important resources were devoted to their early years as children. The further fact that young people are likely to be or become parents of young children themselves offers another (indirect) lifespan-efficiency based reason to focus on young people.

Furthermore, as Lelac Almagor remarks (2013, 103), it is unlikely that we will ever design a society without disparities between children - and hence without resulting

life course inequalities. Direct early investments in childhood are thus insufficient and must be complemented by investments in young adulthood. From the point of view of complete lives equity, it gives a second chance to those who have not benefited from suitable support in their early years. From the point of view of lifespan efficiency, there are still some lifespan returns associated with investments in older age groups, even if they are smaller than the returns to investments in young children. One can thus reject the solely children-centred focus and argue that there is a strong case to be made for investments on young adults on grounds of lifespan efficiency; and so, beyond investments in behavioural skills and without, of course, denying that investments in childhood are also strongly required.

The social investment model helps demonstrate what this might mean for social policy. This refers to the idea of investing in future and younger generations. That is, primarily investing in childhood through family policies, labour market policies that include training for the young unemployed and for the unemployed in general, and also educational policies as a key investment strategy. Rita Nikolai (2012, 93), for instance, distinguishes social investment policies from compensatory social policies which are primarily aimed at elderly people. Social investments are pre-distributive, in Heckman's sense, while compensatory policies are redistributive. But social investment policies are not just aimed at children and young people, directly. They are also aimed at parents (family policy including programmes for gender equality for instance, given that economic insecurity fuels child poverty) and at future generations (infrastructures, sovereign wealth funds, research). So this seems to be an economic model that emulates the lifespan efficiency pre-distributive proposal more inclusively.

Actions necessary to de-cluster diachronic disadvantage from a young age also works towards the goal of reducing inequalities between social classes over their complete lives. The reduction of inequalities between life courses comes as an outcome of lifespan efficiency. By appealing to Wolff and De-Shalit's vocabulary of clustering and declustering, I thus highlight a suitably egalitarian way to apply lifespan efficiency in an otherwise unequal world. I suggested that making institutions more prudentially efficient would not only be compatible with but would also promote the reduction of inequalities between life courses. I have suggested, with Heckman, that pre-distributing resources towards children works to equalize starts in life and would tend to reduce the diachronic development of inequalities between life courses. But investments in young adults have the same effects.

To take the example of France, there are at least three variables that constrain the social attainments of new cohorts of young adults: inherited wealth, education (which Chauvel argues has become more necessary but less sufficient for social success), and family economic support (Chauvel 2010, 75). While in the 1970s the economic participation of the parents was not crucial for the young, Chauvel argues, in today's France, young people have very little chance of success without economic support from their families. These processes of fragmentation along educational, family support and inherited wealth lines have created important divisions among the young. Young people have to go through the same institutions but their social advantage makes them more or less armed to face adversity. These first experiences have a fundamental impact on future attainments. What this analysis shows is that quality education, wealth, and income are three key factors to focus on if we are to limit the clustering of disadvantage and, as an outcome, reduce inequalities between life courses. The basic capital and basic income proposals I introduce in Chapter 5 aim precisely to radically redistribute assets and income (respectively) in a way that would reduce the fragmentation of youth through declustering diachronic disadvantage.

In Section 4.3, I hope to have shown that Wolff and De-Shalit's focus on controlling the clustering of disadvantage, if made more explicitly diachronic, can serve as a good basis for promoting the prudential requirement of lifespan efficiency, in a way that also reduces the development of social inequalities in general over life courses. Adequate youth policies, from the lifespan efficiency point of view, will prevent corrosive disadvantages from clustering in the first place, as well as invest in fertile functionings - through investing in hard skills, quality training, and through providing the young with the wealth or income required for a successful transition to adulthood.

4.4 Approximate Cohort Equality: Mitigating Scarring Effects

4.4.1 Treating young cohorts equally: three problems

It is not an easy task to ensure that the young, as a birth cohort, enjoy roughly the same burdens to benefits than their co-existing generations. Any attempt to do justice to the young in this sense will run into at least three problems: uncertainty, incommensurability, and priority. First, there is the important problem of uncertainty. We may predict that the young will have worse or better lives on average than their parents. But such approximations stand on weak foundations.

Given that many unexpected events may occur, such as an energy-related event, technological discovery, or a war, it is difficult to know which generation will actually be worse off than another.

Second is the problem of incommensurability. The young as a birth cohort may be worse off in some respects - for instance in terms of their job prospects over their lifetime. But they will also probably be better off in other respects - for instance, they will be in better health on average, live longer lives, and have access to many more technological resources. In establishing what counts as treating a cohort equally, how should we weight different kinds of resources one against the other?

The third problem – priority – is that it is not clear why we should be too concerned with the goal of approximate cohort equality when there are so many more urgent problems of justice. This problem is not as important in the context of justice between co-existing generations than it is in the context of asking what we owe to future generations. When it comes to co-existing generations, the question becomes whether we should help those who are worse off now, or those who are likely to be worse off over their complete lives.

One way to solve the incommensurability issue is to contend that there are a number of things that matter to a life well lived, and that we cannot fully compensate some important kinds of goods with others. One way to treat young cohorts adequately, therefore, could be to make sure that across each important aspect of their life, such as access to decent job opportunities, they fare approximately as well as the prior generation. For instance, even if the young fare better in health-related terms than the prior generation, if they fare worse in terms of job opportunities they could still be treated unfairly. I will put forward an argument for basic income or basic capital on this basis in Chapter 5. This approach is helpful for designing policies because we can consider that policies that are concerned with income, jobs, and pensions must take into account matters of cohortal equality and sustainability, regardless of the cohortal distribution of other goods.

One way around the priority problem is to follow the lifespan efficiency requirement. Social investments of the kind described in the previous section have an important cohortal dimension. For instance, if Generation 1 (G1) invests in programmes aimed at alleviating child poverty in G2, this will also determine the quality of life of G2 when they themselves are parents and grand-parents. This

means, for instance, that G3 and G4 (children and grand-children of G2) will have to spend less on its elderly population than they would have had to otherwise. But when G1 invests in G2, they contribute to redistributing resources intra-generationally, towards the poorest parents in G1. In conclusion, pre-distributive social investments may work to reduce risks of intergenerational transmission of poverty and inequalities between cohorts at the same time. It helps solve the priority problem because it breaks the false dilemma between assisting the worse off *now* and promoting cohortal equality.

One way around the uncertainty problem is to focus on minimizing risks. If we cannot predict what will happen for sure, we can anticipate a certain number of risks, so we may invest in research to confirm those risks and act upon them. When it becomes a concern that younger generations will be disproportionately burdened by debt, or when the lifetime job prospects of the young seem endangered, then there is scope to take particular care in reducing such risks as a requirement of approximate cohort equality. Treating the young as equals, in this sense, would be about mitigating risks that may affect their lifetime prospects unduly. Here I want to focus particularly on one kind of risk: the *scarring effects* of youth unemployment, precarious jobs and poverty over a lifespan. I will show that there is scope for striving to substantially mitigate such risks on grounds of approximate cohort equality. The call for mitigating such scarring effects does not run into the three problems pre-identified: the incommensurability problem is avoided because I focus exclusively on young people's long-term employment and income prospects; the priority problem is avoided because the young who are likely to be among the worse off over their complete lives are also those who are currently among the worse off; and the uncertainty problem is addressed by focusing on the mitigation of 'risks'.

4.4.2 The scarring effects of youth unemployment

Many sociologists and economists contend that youth unemployment brings with it lifelong *scarring effects* for the concerned cohorts (Gregg and Tominey 2005, Chauvel 2010, Khan 2010, Standing 2011). Because of these effects, early experiences of unemployment and precariousness are problematic from the point from the point of view not only of lifespan efficiency, but also of approximate cohort equality. This discussion has many similarities with the previous discussion of diachronic clustering of disadvantage. The two analyses reinforce each other. However, scarring effects apply to a birth cohort as a whole, thus creating risks for approximate cohort equality.

In France, Chauvel argues that there is a generational “fracture”: those born in the 1980s are experiencing specific trends which will render them vulnerable in the long term. In 1970, the gap between the earnings of the 25-30 and the 50-69 age groups was 18%. For the past ten years, the difference is of 50% (Chauvel 2010, 79). Moreover, over the past twenty years, the wages of the youngest workers have stagnated while there was a 20% increase in the wages of older workers (Chauvel 2010, 79). The problem here, according to Chauvel, is that the citizens who are 55 years old today were relatively better off than their seniors when they were young and are now better off than the young: “The generational gaps result from double gains and double pains” (Chauvel 2010, 79).

Scarring effects work as follows. When jobs are scarce, new entrants have to accept lower wages in order to find a job; then there is a lack of a catch-up on earnings, so they remain low because of the point at which they entered the labor market. Similarly, the lack of valued work experiences causes a decline in ambitions, and self-confidence, which in turn sends negative signals to employers. This leads to further experiences of unemployment, a slowdown in job progression, and it explains why such workers often suffer from low earnings. Paul Gregg and Emma Tominey (2005) conducted a study on the wage scar of youth unemployment in the UK. They found a significant wage penalty of early experiences of unemployment with long lasting effects, especially when the individual surveyed had been unemployed several times. Those who were unemployed during youth suffered a wage penalty of up to 13-21% in their forties (Gregg and Tominey 2005, 500-506). Similarly, Lisa Khan’s study of graduates in the US shows that “the labor market consequences of graduating from college in a bad economy are large, negative and persistent” (Khan 2010, 303). She also finds negative correlations with wages and occupational attainments. As a result of this series of scarring effects, “when the difficulties disappear, the cohorts who faced these problems continue to suffer from long-term consequences of past handicaps” (Chauvel 2010, 84).

The long-term economic consequences of youth unemployment are likely to be supplemented by another set of negative outcomes. Standing (2011) explains the unhappiness, dissatisfaction and eventually violence of some youth groups by the psychological affects that arise from the discrepancy between what they feel they are entitled to and what they end up getting. Because they studied more than their parents, for instance, they expect at least similar jobs. Such feelings of frustration and insecurity are likely to persist over the lifespan or to transmute into other forms

of resentment and unhappiness. Another long-term consequence affecting the ‘jilted’ generation is disengagement from political participation and political power (Howker and Malik 2010, Standing 2011). According to Chauvel, young people in the elites respond to these challenges by dedicating most of their energy to their own careers; the middle class oscillates between lack of participation and short periods of activism; and the less educated and lower classes become hostile to politics. The result is that the young do not exist as a political force. This political disengagement is ramified by the physical absence of the young from the structures of political representation (Chauvel 2010, 87), as I will discuss in Chapter 6.

Because of these scarring effects, young people who are socialized in contexts of job scarcity are unlikely to be ‘naturally’ compensated later in their lifespan. On the contrary, there is a risk that the birth cohort of current young people will do worse than the previous cohort over their complete lives, at least in terms of their relative job (and related) prospects. Scarring effects make it harder to achieve approximate cohort equality for cohorts who have experienced a particularly high rate of unemployment when young, as is the case for the current cohort of young people in many OECD countries. If a generation is scarred by abnormal levels of precariousness at a young age, there are reasons to worry that the long-term prospects of the cohort will be substantially affected by this. An important precaution to take thus seems to be fundamentally in line with the lessons taken from the lifespan efficiency discussion: we must attempt to preclude scarring effects such that, for the current cohort of young people, even if rates of unemployment are higher than when their parents were the same age, their lifetime prospects are not destined to be significantly lowered. Treating the young equally, as a birth cohort, would require at least mitigating the scarring effects that early poverty and unemployment may provoke.

4.5 Synchronic Relational Equality: Ensuring the Young Are Able to Stand As Equals

As I discussed in Chapter 3, inequalities in rank, status and power are to be approached with great suspicion. This does not mean that any relationship involving hierarchies will be objectionable from an egalitarian standpoint. But it does mean that, to fully understand the demands of equality, egalitarians must “investigate the specific respects in which egalitarian relationships must be free from regimentation by considerations of rank or status” (Scheffler 2005, 18). What I have shown in Chapter 3 is that relational inequalities between age groups are no

different. They should be approached with the same suspicion. This section considers what the synchronic relational equality principle has to say about what counts as an equal treatment of the young.

First, in order to stand as equals without the risk of entering, or staying, in wrongful relationships of inequality, young people need to have access to some of the same basic resources that I identified as required by the lifespan sufficiency principle. Indeed, it follows from the goal that no one should have to alienate one's freedom from domination to survive, that we must ensure that people have access to sufficient resources to avoid or escape domination throughout their lives.

However, there is an important distinction to be made between the requirements of lifespan sufficiency and synchronic relational equality. While parental dependency on one's parents in Stage 1 of youth may be perfectly adequate to satisfy the sufficiency principle, the synchronic relational principle encourages us to question relationships of dependency between young adults and their parents. If we are worried about relational domination, then we should ask whether there is something problematic about the fact that young adults may live under the authority and control of their parents, being potentially infantilized and patronised. The assumption that we can trust parents with their young-adult children is understandable, but the fact that young adults are *expected* to depend on their parents' support for survival has to be questioned. On synchronic relational egalitarianism, we may want to make sure that there are exit options available earlier than 25 years old, whereas as I have shown earlier, it is not clear why this would be required from the appeal to lifespan sufficiency. The synchronic relational equality principle can potentially justify granting the young more independence than the sufficiency principle.

The young may be forced into taking pathways that they do not want as a pre-condition of their staying in the family home. At worse, they may be severely abused or neglected by their families and then have to turn to further abusive or exploitative relationships to survive. One extreme example is that of young homeless people in the US. A recent study by the Williams Institute at UCLA showed that at least 40% of young homeless people in the US are LGBT (Durso and Gates 2012, 2). The most common reasons why they were homeless (or at risk of becoming homeless) were that: they had ran away because of family rejection and stigma (46%); they had been forced out by their parents because of their sexual preferences (43%); they had been sexually, physically or emotionally abused at

home (32%); or they had been financially or emotionally neglected by their families (14%) (Durso and Gates 2012, 4). Moreover, homelessness itself increases risks of sexual exploitation and dependence on an abusive partner: 42% of young LGBT homeless surveyed have been subject to sexual exploitation at some point, and a third of young LGBT homeless young people surveyed had been or were in an situation of domestic/partner abuse (Durso and Gates 2012, 10). Studies also show that approximately 30% of the young homeless population in urban areas in the UK are LGBT (O'Connor and Molloy 2001, 15).

This example is extreme and surely not generally applicable as an account of the risks associated with relationships of dependency between young adults and their parents. However, it shows that parental control, authority and domination in relation to adult children, just like any other relationship of dependency, must meet a certain number of criteria to be unproblematic. This case also speaks against the 'normalization' of young people staying with their families until age 25 and urges us to acknowledge that, since not all young people can be expected to depend on their families for survival, we must provide exit options for young people. This is a first sense in which we may respond to the question of what it means to treat the young as equals on synchronic relational grounds. We must ensure that they are able to lead lives free from domination or other wrongful forms of relational inequalities, which entails that they be able to leave the parental home when necessary.

Another important aspect of the synchronic relational response to what we owe the young is that they must be recognized as equals in their communities. I have already suggested that control and authority within the family context may itself be questionable, but we should also be concerned when other age groups do not respect the young - if they are despised, demonized and patronised. In his report on the stereotyping of young people, Maurice Devlin (2006) led focus groups with young people in Ireland and concluded that there was strong agreement among young people that they were stereotyped and treated unequally by the population in general: "Overall, the message emerging from the focus groups is that, while there are certainly exceptions, the young people see their institutional relationships with adults as for the most part unequal, troubled, and rooted in stereotypical ideas about their attributes and abilities" (Devlin 2006, 65).

The persistence of such negative stereotyping of young people not only in Ireland, but also in England and in the US, Maurice Devlin argues, is itself "a diminution of

their status” and is therefore problematic from the point of view of equality. Particular attention must thus be paid to stereotyping and to labels used to refer to young people. This may apply to the way they are represented in the media, the way they are referred to by politicians and treated by the police, social workers, police officers, JSA advisers, trainers, etc. A conclusion of both Devlin’s focus groups and qualitative analysis of media reporting on young people is that the media plays an important negative role in such feelings of exclusion: “stereotyping young people in very negative ways, ‘tarring them with the same brush’ by constantly associating ‘youth’ with crime, deviance, delinquency, drug and alcohol problems, sexual promiscuity and general disorderliness” (Devlin 2006, 64).

If we are to ever live in a community of synchronic relational equals, older age groups must relate to young people with a presumption of equality. Young people must be appreciated in their status as equal citizens and treated with respect. The political sphere is a particularly important and symbolic context from which some groups may become marginalised. Particular attention should be taken in ensuring that the young are able to voice their concerns. For this reason, Chapter 6 is devoted to the introduction of youth quotas in parliaments.

4.6 Conclusions: Four Responses

In this chapter, after having brought together the key requirements of equality through time, I discussed the implications of the principles for the question of what it means to treat the young equally. I argued that while the principles sometimes implied that they ought to be treated the same as others, at other times they implied that they had to be treated substantially differently. Young people are treated equally if they are acknowledged as relational equals by their communities; if they are able to stand free from domination; if institutions ensure access to sufficient resources to enjoy age-relative normal opportunities; and if institutions pre-distribute resources so as to promote a life of good quality and block the diachronic clustering of disadvantage and scarring effects that undermine their lifespan prospects, also creating unequal life courses. The four paragraphs below summarize my argument.

Drawing on the *lifespan sufficiency* requirement, I argued that the young must be sustained above two levels. First, they must have access to the required resources to be free from basic human deprivation. This fairly minimal threshold, I claimed,

consists of what any human requires, regardless of age, to survive. Second, more substantially and differentially, I suggested that institutions must make it possible for young people to enjoy the normal opportunity range that young people in their society at a given time are meant to enjoy (for instance, that they must be able to be independent from their families from 25 years old in France). An important concept I appealed to as part of this discussion was Wolff and De-Shalit's *planning blight* - the normal projects and plans (such as leaving home) that young people are unable to carry through by lack of means. I highlighted some limits with the appeal to empirical normality to establish what *should* count as a fair treatment of the young. The appeal to normality may provide useful indications as to what counts as 'not enough' in a given society at a given time, but it does not tell us much about what else we may do for the young, once the quite minimal threshold is met.

I then spent a substantial part of Chapter 4 discussing the implications of the *lifespan efficiency* principle, which I showed is particularly informative and ambitious. The lifespan efficiency principle points towards pre-distributive policies and is thus relevant when it comes to asking how the young should be treated. I drew on Wolff and De-Shalit to put forward the following interpretation: maximizing lifespan efficiency requires investing resources early in the lifespan to both prevent diachronic clustering of disadvantage and to promote positive diachronic returns. I argued that the younger the disadvantage the worse the quality of life, and thus the more imprudent the distribution. I showed that one implication of this view, however, was that our pre-distributive effort should be aimed primarily at children and not at young adults. In defence of prudential investments in young adults, I showed how important a negative impact youth unemployment, bad jobs and poverty can have for young people's life courses, and argued that the label 'pre-distributive policies' could thus also be applied to some youth policies. I also argued that the strategy of regulating diachronic clustering from a young age could also be expected to work towards the reduction of social inequalities between life courses.

Third, I discussed the implications of the *approximate cohort equality principle* for what we owe the young. I pointed to the triple problem of uncertainty, priority and incommensurability that arises when taking a complete life approach. I proposed solutions to avoid these three problems: adopting a focus on how well the young are likely to fare on one single aspect of their life (to solve the incommensurability problem); attempting to promote policies that are contributing to several co-existing generations at the same time (such as social investments strategies); and

focusing on minimizing risks (as a limited answer to the uncertainty problem). Cohort equality will always be a very approximate outcome, but I argued that one implication of the cohortal injunction is to mitigate the risk that poverty, unemployment or precariousness at a young age may scar cohorts who are socialised in a context of job scarcity. I concluded that we must attempt to preclude scarring effects such that, even if they are subjected to higher rates of unemployment than the previous generation at the same age, their lifetime prospects will not be substantially undermined over their lives as a whole. Such implications are substantially in line with the implications of the lifespan efficiency principle.

Finally, I discussed the potential implications of synchronic relational equality. I highlighted four main implications. First, the implications of synchronic relational equality are likely to overlap a great deal with the requirements of lifespan sufficiency. Second, the relational approach urges us to worry about the kinds of relationships young adults may have with their parents when they depend on them for financial support. This gives some weight to the view that it is important to secure the opportunity for independence from a young adult age. This argument will be particularly important to my case for basic income in Chapter 5. I also pointed to the important idea that we must ensure that older age groups relate to the young as equals and that the young are respected rather than demonised, stereotyped and marginalised. I suggested that this meant that we should be cautious about the way young people are portrayed in the media, but also about the ways in which they are treated by the police, and other state officials. I also suggested that the acknowledgment that the young were afforded in the political sphere could also play an important part in the symbolic recognition that the young are political equals. These conclusions play an important part in my argument for the introduction of youth quotas in parliament in Chapter 6.

PART II – POLICIES

In Part II, I now discuss two public policies in light of the theoretical framework set out in Part I. In Chapter 5, I consider the radical egalitarian proposal of enforcing a right to unconditional cash. I ask *when* the unconditional payment should be made: in a lump sum at the beginning of people's adult lives – as proponents of the *basic capital grant* argue; or in regular instalments throughout people's adult lives – as proponents of the *basic income guarantee* claim. I show that my previous conclusions on equality through time and justice between overlapping generations allow us to see the basic income versus basic capital debate in a new light. In Chapter 6, I take issue with the political marginalisation of young people and evaluate a policy proposal for youth quotas in parliaments. Both chapters start with an extensive introduction to the problems in question.

CHAPTER 5 - BASIC INCOME VERSUS BASIC CAPITAL: A TEMPORAL PERSPECTIVE

The past three decades have seen the elaboration of a vast body of literature¹⁴ on basic income – a policy proposal Philippe Van Parijs referred to as a “disarmingly simple idea” (Van Parijs 1992, 3). It consists of a monthly cash allowance given to all citizens, regardless of personal desert and without means-test “to provide them with a standard of living above the poverty line” (Wright 2006, xi). For instance, in the UK, basic income would be set at about £800 per person per month to ensure individuals are free from poverty.¹⁵ Basic income proponents have identified, evaluated and deconstructed many potential and actual objections against this radical proposal. They have identified the various benefits basic income (BI) could have both for society as a whole and for specific disadvantaged groups. For instance, proponents of BI have discussed whether women, workers in poor countries, and the unemployed could particularly benefit from its implementation.¹⁶

Showing that a specific group would benefit from unconditional monthly cash transfers is not sufficient or indeed necessary for a successful defence of basic income. However, if BI is likely to be detrimental to specific vulnerable groups, its case will inevitably be weakened. On the contrary, when we are able to show that a specific vulnerable group - for instance unemployed women in abusive relationships - would benefit from the policy proposal, we strengthen the case for BI. And yet, very few articles focus specifically on young people and how they would benefit from an unconditional basic income. The age and generation-specific arguments for and against BI are in fact still largely unexplored.¹⁷

¹⁴ For instance see: Philippe Van Parijs (1991, 1992, 1995, 2000, 2006), Stuart White (2003, 2006, 2007), Louise Haagh (2007), Karl Widerquist (2013). The following edited books also offer an extensive series of essays on basic income: Dowding, De Wispelaere and White (eds) (2003); Erik Olin Wright (ed) (2006), Vanderborght and Gosseries (eds) (2012), Widerquist, Noguera, Vanderborght and De Wispelaere (eds) (2013).

¹⁵ The amount considered varies from one proposal to another. Philippe Van Parijs (1995), for instance, calls for a maximized unconditional income in his ideal theory of real libertarianism, but has also pragmatically defended the introduction of a much lower basic income. For instance, he recently put forward a proposal for a euro-dividend of 200 euros per month (Bidanure 2013). In this chapter, I focus on a basic income set above the poverty threshold. In the UK, for an individual without dependent children the poverty threshold is set at £500 per month after housing costs or £700 before housing costs (MacInnes et al. 2013, 12). So the monthly basic income would have to be set above this level at the very least for an individual without children.

¹⁶ For instance for discussions of the positive impact of basic income on gender equality, see Anca Gheaus (2008), Ingrid Robeyns (2008), John Baker (2008).

¹⁷ It is informative to see that in a recent anthology of basic income edited by Widerquist, et al. (2013) (featuring 74 key texts) there are no articles directly on intergenerational justice, age-group justice, cohort justice, young people, or the elderly and basic income. One of the

Despite the lack of attention to the generational dimension of BI, I think that there are at least two crucial reasons why more research on the youth-based arguments for basic income is needed. First, the primary objective of BI is to break the correlation between unemployment and under-employment, on the one hand, and poverty, on the other. Because they are disproportionately affected by unemployment, the young seem to constitute evident candidates for a basic income. Moreover, as Armano and Murgia (2014) argue: “Young people are far more likely than other age groups to be employed in precarious jobs, independently of their education and skills” (Armano and Murgia 2014). Because young people, both as an age group and as a cohort, are particularly vulnerable to the harmful conditions basic income proponents object to – such as poverty, unemployment, and exclusion - they need to be more directly acknowledged and emphasized as potential recipients of unconditional cash.

Second, as I have already highlighted, current political discourses on youth are largely dominated by anti-benefits attitudes. Young people seem to be considered as essentially undeserving and their legitimacy as welfare recipients is always questioned. For this reason, putting forward a defence of unconditional cash for the young goes against the wind. And yet, because anti-benefits discourses on the young are exacerbated versions of the arguments against cash benefits in general, the youth-based case for basic income may operate on the same level as Van Parijs’s famous Malibu surfers’ example (Van Parijs 1991). The logical structure of Van Parijs’s argument is to demonstrate that if even the apparently individualistic and ‘useless’ Malibu surfers should be entitled to a basic income, everyone else should be entitled to unconditional cash. Just like showing that even surfers should be fed is a strategic way of showing that everyone should be fed, showing that the young - who are perceived as lazy and individualistic - should be provided with sufficient means to live a decent life has implications for what we owe the more ‘deserving’ remainder of the population.

There is another way to help the young through cash. Instead of delivering a continuous income monthly to people, we could give it all in one go, at the beginning of their adult lives. Basic Capital (BC), which consists in a substantial grant that all citizens receive in one lump-sum in early adulthood “sufficiently large that all young adults would be significant wealth holders” (Wright 2006, xii),

only existing papers directly on age groups and basic income is Robin Blackburn’s paper on a Global pension and Youth Grant in Basic income studies (2011), although he does not engage with the intergenerational justice literature.

seems like a more specifically youth-oriented solution. Ackerman and Alstott introduced the policy in their book *The Stakeholder Society* (1999) and developed a specific proposal: “At age 21, as each liberal citizen steps forward to begin her adult life, she should receive a stake of \$80,000 from the government (...) The money is hers to spend or invest. She may go to college, or not. She may save for a house or a rainy day – or blow her money in Las Vegas” (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 45). Julian Le Grand and David Nissan (2003) put forward a similar basic capital project that is more sensitive to the UK context than Ackerman and Alstott’s proposal (which was largely developed for the US).¹⁸

BI and BC are similar in a number of respects. They share “a common heritage and set of objectives” - as Guy Standing (2006, 182) argues. They both provide people with financial assets *unconditionally*: they are delivered without means test and can be used to pursue any ends. They are both designed to enhance real freedom and foster a more egalitarian society, without directly challenging capitalism as a mode of production. Proponents of both policies share egalitarian commitments and see in their proposals a way to prevent the production of unequal outcomes by making sure those who do not inherit wealth have access to sufficient means to live good lives. They can also both be seen as having a strong intergenerational dimension: “stakeholding and basic income are universalistic programs, responding to the right of each individual citizen to his share in the achievements of past generations” (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 45).

Basic capital is thus an alternative to basic income from within the paradigm of unconditional cash and for this reason, it has largely been seen as the “main competitor” to basic income (Dowding, Wispelaere, and White 2003). This chapter will therefore ask which of the two policies is most relevant if we adopt a temporal egalitarian perspective. This debate is especially important for this thesis given that basic capital is more explicitly directed at young people and might therefore be more directly relevant than basic income. Nissan and Le Grand, for instance,

¹⁸ However, Nissan and Le Grand’s BC proposal was of only £10,000, which is much lower than Ackerman and Alstott’s proposal. The main reason for this substantial difference is that the proposals were designed with the costs of a higher education degree in mind. It is important to acknowledge here Robert Van der Veen (2003)’s remark that existing BC proposals offer a quantitatively much lower income than a lifetime of basic income provision does. This suggests that for BC and BI to be commensurable, BC grants must be made more substantive. I will thus evaluate the prospects of the highest BC proposal of the two - Ackerman and Alstott’s. The difference between what BC and BI would grant is still very substantive. This should give us a presumption in favour of BI as more radical, or in favour of BC, if we are considering which policy is most politically feasible. In this chapter, I will however disregard this quantitative difference to consider the ethical principles that underpin the two proposals.

describe the policy as “helping the young to help themselves” (Nissan and Le Grand 2003, 29). And yet, if the two policies so extensively relate in justification and scope, then it may be a strategic error to address them in opposition to each other. One may thus find it more tactical to defend both at the same time, saying that “either would do”, instead of weakening the argument for one, whenever we praise the other.

In this chapter, I will nonetheless carry on with the tradition of juxtaposing the two policies because, beyond the shared common commitments, there are important normative grounds for disagreement. For this reason, most of those who engaged in the debate strongly felt that there was something to be said in defence of one *over* the other. Ackerman and Alstott (2006a), for instance, argue that BC promotes “macro-freedom” while BI only allows “micro forms” of freedom; that is, BI enables time-limited opportunities while BC permits long-term planning. In response, Standing (2006) argues that while BI promotes the fundamental value of basic security, BC would merely equalize “the opportunity to become more unequal”. As for Stuart White (2007), he remarks that BI promotes freedom as non-domination, while BC promotes freedom as autonomy, i.e. the capacity for people to make life plans and live upon them.

My aim in this chapter is to provide a temporal account of the normative distinctions that underpin the two policies. Participants in the debate between BC and BI have always touched on issues of time, age and prudence, but without explicitly engaging with the intergenerational lens. For instance, White (2003) mentions that a major issue in this debate has to do with “how we ought to trade off the interests of younger and older generations in the transition to a society that realizes the civic minimum” (White 2003, 220). I will show that the distinctiveness of each policy is better captured by appealing to the diachronic, prudential and synchronic language of equality through time.

To this purpose, I assess both policies in light of my comprehensive theoretical framework and argue that BI is superior to BC from the point of view of both sets of requirements of IG equality (diachronic and synchronic). I first show that, even though at first sight BC seems to be a good candidate, closer scrutiny shows that BI is preferable on prudential lifespan grounds (Section 5.1). I then consider the impact of both policies on social inequalities between people’s lives as a whole and on the goal of approximate cohort equality. Here again, I put forward BI as a preferable solution (Section 5.2). I then argue that the synchronic relational

egalitarian principle provides another strong reason to prefer BI to BC (Section 5.3).

Before starting, two important preliminary clarifications deserve consideration. First, an important distinction can be made between *universal* basic income (BI), on the one hand, and what we may call the *youth basic income* (YBI), on the other. Basic income is a proposal for a monthly cash grant *from adulthood to death*. Youth basic income, on the contrary, can be thought of as a monthly cash granted to each individual *throughout young adulthood* – for instance from 18 to 30 years old. Throughout this chapter, I will be discussing BI rather than YBI except for Section 5.2.2 where I will consider what can be said in favour of the introduction of a basic income exclusively for young adults. However, even then, I will give a series of reasons why BI should be preferred. This chapter is thus a defence of BI rather than YBI.

The second clarification that must be made concerns the background conditions this discussion assumes. It does not seem to make much sense to compare the two proposals (BI and BC) in the abstract. As White points out: “In so far as the proposals are put forward as parts of packages that also involve specific taxes and specific cuts to other existing public expenditures, the task of comparison is made all the more difficult” (White 2011, 69). Depending on the background conditions one assumes – that is depending on which other welfare services are provided and depending on which benefits would be replaced by either scheme, we may change our minds on which policy is best. Whenever possible, I will make explicit the background conditions my claims and conclusions rely on.

Last, I do not set out to compare either policy, or both policies, to the welfare state. Governments owe many things to young people and I do not pretend to exhaust or encompass all the things we owe to the young with cash grants. One could highlight the benefits of quality training, career advice, affordable education, social housing, and universal healthcare in offering the basis for a politics that prevents diachronic clustering of disadvantage. Cash does not capture adequately a number of things we owe each other in the form of public institutions. Moreover, some resources, such as healthcare are more efficiently delivered in kind than in cash.¹⁹ In this chapter, I thus focus my efforts on the question of whether and how BI and BC can enable existing welfare states like the UK or France to deliver the demands

¹⁹ Discussions on the importance of both in kind and in cash resources can be found in Van Parijs (1995, 41-45), Elizabeth Anderson (2000), and Louise Haagh (2007).

of equality through time. In other words, I will consider the prospects of BI and BC as supplements to the welfare state, rather than as alternatives to it. But I will not assume that an extremely generous welfare state is in place either.

5.1 Which One Is Most Diachronically Prudent?

What we want to find out, first, is which policy expresses best the ideal of prudent planning - that is which one promotes best the double goal of lifespan *efficiency*, on the one hand, and lifespan *sufficiency*, on the other hand. Both the introduction of BI and BC would have a highly significant impact on the reduction of poverty and deprivation at a young age. However, as this section will show, the two proposals seem to have opposite advantages. BI delivers a lifetime of basic economic security, while BC consists of an early investment in young adulthood. It thus seems as if, while BI primarily furthers lifespan sufficiency, BC principally promotes lifespan efficiency through adopting a youth-centered investment strategy. If this were the case, it would be difficult to decide which of the two proposals to go for on prudential grounds. I argue that, although at first my framework seems to highlight the respective irreducible advantages of the two proposals, closer scrutiny shows that while BC can only take a gamble with regards to lifespan sufficiency, BI can in fact deliver both lifespan sufficiency and efficiency. For this reason, I conclude that BI should be preferred on prudential grounds.

5.1.1 A dilemma: efficiency with BC or sufficiency with BI?

Norman Daniels's veiled planners apply the *requirement of equal concern* - they do not favour one stage of their lives over the other. Being unbiased, they want to make sure they have enough at any point to live and act on their conception of the good life. They therefore want to make sure that, whatever age they turn out to be, they have access to sufficient income to lead a good life. Planners know that their conception of what a good life entails might evolve as they age, and for this reason, they put forward the prudential principle of *income preservation*, which states that one must have access to sufficient income to live on and to develop one's time-sensitive conception of the good life at any point. Planners thus would not find it prudent to allocate all resources to their younger self whilst denying basic security to their older self. On this basis, a monthly basic cash grant *ad vitam aeternam* seems more appropriate than a one-off cash grant at the beginning of one's life. Robert Van der Veen (2003) puts forward a similar argument for BI over BC:

“people have a good reason for pre-committing themselves to spreading their fair share across time, so that they will be protected from predictable failures to take care of their future interests” (Van der Veen 2003, 151). As a matter of definition, through delivering a continuous flow of income from upon reaching adulthood to one’s death, BI enables a lifetime of basic economic security and freedom from deprivation. It thus ensures the preservation of a decent income over a lifetime and enforces the prudential requirement of lifespan sufficiency.

In defence of BC, one may argue that if invested properly, the basic capital investment may also generate lifespan returns. Such returns may even turn out to be higher than a lifetime of basic income. In other words, it is not clear that one’s older self will be better served by a basic income entitlement than with the returns to investments of one’s basic capital grant. Let us imagine that a young citizen invests her capital in a very successful firm or in estate property that greatly gains in value over the years. In this case, the lifespan return to capital investments could be higher than the basic income guarantee. She may also invest her capital to pay for a degree, and as an outcome, land a well-paying and fulfilling job. In these cases, the basic capital grant would perhaps not be thought of as objectionable from the point of view of age-group justice because lifespan sufficiency would be an outcome of the diachronically efficient investment.

It may well be true that BC can deliver a lifetime of basic security for those who have invested their capital reasonably, and for those who have been lucky. However, it is not the case that BC *ensures* lifespan sufficiency. Whether the early investment will generate sufficient returns to guarantee a life free from poverty is largely conditioned by the quality of the investment. Indeed, those who oppose BC often highlight the issue of *stake blowing*, which consists in wasting one’s assets through brute or option luck. In either case, the result is that the individual in question will not live a life free from basic economic insecurity. BC will thus only promote lifespan sufficiency in the absence of stake blowing. Of course, this depends on the background conditions. If BC was introduced in a society with a generous means-tested minimum income scheme for those who fall below a certain level, the risks associated with stake blowing would be importantly limited. The advantage of BI over BC in terms of lifespan sufficiency does not hold in all contexts. But in the absence of a generous extra means-tested scheme, there is a worry with BC that the goal of a lifetime of economic sufficiency is a simple possibility, rather than a guarantee on which one may rely throughout one’s life. By making such lifetime of basic security a given, BI thus meets the continuous

sufficiency requirement better than does BC.

However, there are important advantages to the BC proposal. In fact, the flipside to BC's risky nature in terms of lifespan sufficiency is its fundamental diachronic power. By granting a substantial lump sum to young people, basic capital allows them to invest in their future, hence enabling the young to shape their lives as a whole: it "offers everyone an opportunity to take their life-shaping decisions seriously" (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 51). Ackerman and Alstott refer to the power BC would confer to young adults as enabling the realization of their fundamental interest in "self-definition". BC, the argument goes, prevents young people from being caught up in basic survival strategies thus protecting their fundamentally "imaginative moment" from being wasted. It is responsibility-driven and encourages people to make long-term choices (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 48). BC promotes the opportunity for ambition formation because it enables investments in lifetime projects: every young person is empowered to make plans with ambition, shape their conception of the good life, with significant implications for their lives as a whole.

Another way to express this advantage of BC is to say that it promotes young people's autonomy over their lives as a whole. An autonomous person is, according to Marina Oshana (2006), an agent "who directs or determines the course of her own life and who is positioned to assume the costs and the benefits of her choices" (Oshana, 2006, vii). Autonomy is therefore partly a diachronic value: one is only truly autonomous if he or she has the means to make choices and to then assume the costs and consequences of its actions. This view echoes Stuart White's (2007, 2011) conceptualization of the advantages of basic capital. In his paper on the difficulties of the republican argument for basic income, he argues that BC is better than BI at least insofar as it promotes people's fundamental interest in autonomy: "people have an important interest in having the capacity and opportunity to be the authors of their lives, to make their goals and life-plans ones they have endorsed following serious reflection on a range of alternatives" (White 2007, 2). Similarly, in a more recent paper, White argues that Basic Capital has an important "horizons effect" because it enables young people to make long-term plans (White 2011, 77).

BC thus seems better than BI in promoting autonomy, understood in this diachronic sense. Ackerman and Alstott argue that BI, because it cannot be withdrawn in a lump sum, treats young people as "presumptive spendthrifts"

which “demeans their standing as autonomous citizens and radically constrains their real freedom” (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 47). Basic income, they argue, only provides very small means and will not enable poor individuals to pay for a degree or buy a home, both of which may substantially improve their lives as a whole. BI, also “runs the risk of underwriting adult irresponsibility: how to justify letting the 40-year-old default on her credit-card debts while keeping her basic income intact?” (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 49). Indeed, on most proposals, BI is *non mortgage-able*; that is, you cannot alienate your future basic income for a current project. Even if you are due to pay back a loan, your creditor is not legally entitled to your monthly BI. At the other end, BC gives young people the power to shape their lives; it increase diachronic utility and may thus have a more substantial impact on the overall quality of people’s lives than BI.

Ackerman and Alstott have an interesting way of highlighting the comparatively low diachronic power of BI in comparison with BC. On their view, BC provides *macro-freedom* to young people – that is the power to make long-term investments in their lifespan and to make decisions that will make their life as a whole better. For instance, a university degree, they argue, is the kind of investment that grants the young macro-freedom. BC shapes people’s lifetime opportunities, and allows young people to enjoy “macro-freedom, not only micro” (Ackerman and Alstott 2006a, 210). Many young people cannot think about macro freedom and their overall life, they can only worry about making ends meet (Ackerman and Alstott 2006a, 210). This seems to provide a strong reason to favour BC over BI. BC promotes lifespan efficiency through allowing early investments, with potential returns for their life as a whole, thus fostering lifespan efficiency.

Ackerman and Alstott interestingly mention the connection between this debate and the topic of age-group justice. Through their BC proposal, they claim to engage in a “redefinition” of age groups. They recognize early adulthood as a key stage in one’s development, mainly based on the lifetime consequences this crucial stage may have on future outcomes. On this basis, they argue for most resources to be allocated in young adulthood: “early years of subordination can profoundly shape self-understanding – rather than seeing themselves as actively engaged in the construction of their lives, they [the young] see themselves almost entirely as passive agents of economic necessity” (Ackerman and Alstott 2006a, 210). This way, BC can also be seen as preventing diachronic clustering of disadvantage, and potentially helping promote its positive contrary. BC thus maximizes lifespan efficiency in several ways. BI may render possible a series of micro-freedoms, but

nothing of the sort of a life-shaping, life-changing, macro-freedom. In terms of lifespan efficiency, therefore, BC seems better than BI.

It thus seems that we are faced with a prudential dilemma in comparing BI and BC. While BI ensures lifespan sufficiency, BC promotes lifespan efficiency. If we are only concerned with the young's best interest, then we may want to go for BC. By only providing enough for young people to be above the poverty line, BI does not offer to change their destiny in a similarly radical way. Perhaps BI is too focused on reducing risks of poverty later in life and misses out on the goal of maximizing lifetime opportunities. One may claim that the risks that go with the one time lump sum being blown do not justify depriving most young people of the potentially radical lifetime returns of the lump sum. In this thesis, however, I am concerned with intergenerational equality and therefore, even though I focus on the young, I consider that what institutions owe the young is determined by what institutions owe the elderly too. We are thus faced with a dilemma given that each proposal gets one prudential requirement right, with important implications for age-group justice.

5.1.2 In defence of basic income as lifespan-efficiency promoting

One way to solve this apparent dilemma is to rescue BI by insisting on the importance of the goal of lifespan sufficiency. In previous chapters, I contemplated making the requirement of lifespan sufficiency lexically prior to the goal of lifespan efficiency. Having enough at any point, one may say, is what primarily matters to prudent planning. What would the point of early investments in the life course be if it only promised what basic income delivers: a life of basic economic security. In other words, if lifespan sufficiency ultimately matters in this way, then BI seems preferable to BC. However, I have rejected the lexical ordering of the two prudential principles in Chapter 2 on the basis that it unnecessarily restricted the scope of what prudent planning may involve. Let us thus consider that the lexical ordering does not apply and that the lifespan sufficiency and lifespan efficiency principles are equally important, which some may find more plausible in this context. The BI versus BC debate is then still unsettled.

There is another way to rescue BI. Basic income can indeed also be said to have a positive effect on lifespan efficiency. Think of what impact the prospects of a lifetime of security would have for a young person shaping her life plans. Think of the many life choices one might be able to make. Arguably, like BC, the allocation of BI to young people would spur long-term thinking on what one's life should be

about. Instead of asking, ‘how do I want to invest my capital?’ young people may ask ‘what do I want to do with my time?’. Guy Standing even argues that basic security throughout a lifetime is in fact a *prerequisite* for the real freedom to shape one’s life:

We should wish to provide basic security for all, since that is essential to facilitate the individual freedom to develop. It is a freedom to develop ourselves through a creative, multi-sided existence, in which our work and our contemplative sides are balanced and balancing.

(Standing 2006, 177)

Moreover, BI is also likely to contribute to preventing the phenomenon of diachronic clustering of disadvantage. As such, being under an adequate sufficiency threshold at a young age has a direct impact on the quality of people’s lives as a whole. Poverty at a young age is particularly diachronically corrosive and BI would eradicate it. It would prevent a wave of clustering of disadvantage associated with poverty and would thus minimize a number of lifespan risks. BI would also reduce the lifespan scarring effects of bad jobs. As I claimed in Chapter 4, when work is demeaning, exploitative or unrecognized, the experience can be more destructive than rewarding (Chauvel 2010, Standing 2013). Here lies one of the key promises of the basic income proposal: it takes the labour market as it is and empowers individuals by giving them more options to choose from by broadening the range of opportunities available. With £800 a month, one may move abroad and learn a language, volunteer, care for others, study, train, found an eco-village, work on community building, start an online business, write Wikipedia articles, etc. Through eradicating youth poverty and broadening the range of opportunities opened to the young, BI contributes to precluding diachronic clustering of disadvantage, thus promoting lifespan efficiency. This suggests that BC may therefore not be the only route to lifespan freedom and autonomy in shaping one’s life. It offers one possible way to meet the lifespan efficiency requirement, but BI may be able to do equally well.

We could even go further and argue that BI, through granting a life of basic economic security, promotes *better* diachronic returns than BC. Arnsperger and Johnson (2011)’s discussion of the likely impact of BI is interesting in this context. They defend basic income “as an equal opportunity tool in the transition toward sustainability” (Arnsperger and Johnson 2011, 61). They contend, ambitiously, that true equality of opportunity includes the freedom to produce and live outside of capitalist markets and call for a basic income to enable non-capitalist experiments:

the real freedom—to freely choose not just some intra-capitalist life style (...) but to choose between an intra-capitalist way of life and an extra-capitalist one (e.g., moving to an ecovillage and exchanging goods and services within a network of user[s] of mutual-credit currency, instead of staying in the hyper-competitive agrochemicals company with whose salary one can consume all one's fill).

(Arnsperger and Johnson 2011, 63).

Arnsperger and Johnson argue that “marginal people” who explore frugal modes of living are currently unfairly stigmatized. On the contrary, they should be encouraged as pioneers since they experiment with the humanly and environmentally sustainable lifestyles to which societies need to transition. Not only young people's macro freedom could be promoted thanks to BI, but it may enable activities that are more personally fulfilling and sustainable.

There is now an extensive literature on the prospects of BI to contribute to the dematerialization of culture (Boulanger 2009) and promote more “ecologically sustainable paths to wellbeing” (Birnbaum 2009). For Boulanger (2009), the two key green ideals of “sufficiency” and “decommodification” can be advanced through the basic income guarantee. By providing sufficiency, basic income renders possible more frugal and autonomous modes of living and enables non-consumerist lifestyles. It would also help in promoting the decommodification ideal because with basic income, people would be more likely to pool, share, lend, and repair instead of buy and waste. Such sustainable practices would be facilitated through basic income simply because it would give people much more free time. Time is key to the green ideal, the argument goes, because market consumption is easier and quicker and will only decline when people have time to coordinate alternative avenues for consumption.

Goodin and Van der Veen similarly argue that post-productivism requires both “temporal adequacy” and “minimal conditionality” – that is, respectively, greater control over one's use of time, and an income non-dependent on market or state compulsion (Goodin and Van der Veen in Fitzpatrick 2009, 2). Basic Income, Fitzpatrick argues, would promote temporal adequacy through ensuring minimal conditionality (Fitzpatrick 2009, 2). Young people might thus be seen as potential experimenters of new modes of living. High levels of unemployment among European youth may then be seen as an opportunity to start a paradigm shift to a post-productivist society, with potentially positive effects for the opportunity of future cohorts to a less environmentally risky future.

However, such enthusiasm about the prospects of BI should not be taken too far in the argument against BC. First, as Van Parijs (2009) argues, one should not be overly optimistic about the prospects of the autonomous sphere that would emerge through basic income. We cannot expect that it will be all green and ethical. Second, it is not the case that people cannot lead an alternative existence with access to an early BC. Early access to assets and to the means of production may also enable an opting out of markets. Access to land, space, capital, or farming equipment would be immensely facilitated by a substantial BC. BI may also enable access to the means of production through sharing, pooling, or crowd funding, but BC can accomplish this too. Third, as is now evident, the likely outcomes of BI and BC vary a great deal depending on what one does with their stake and with their time. This makes the discussion of which make lives go best largely conditional.

Last, if our concern is primarily in deciding which policy enables better diachronic returns in terms of opportunities, we should perhaps focus on the variety of opportunities created rather than on which types of lives we find more fulfilling. If we are to be fairly neutral on what counts as leading a good life, as Daniels is, then we should not evaluate the respective quality of the opportunities from a post-productivist standpoint and take this as the deciding factor. For these four reasons, concluding that BI promotes lifespan efficiency better than does BC would be taking a step too far. I have nonetheless shown that BI can also promote lifespan efficiency. The alleged macro power of BC is not as exclusive as its advocates make it seem.

We are now in a position to offer an answer to the question of which policy is most diachronically prudent. I first highlighted a trade-off between what seemed like the key advantage of BI on prudential grounds – its lifespan-sufficiency-promoting nature – and the advantage of BC – its lifespan-efficiency-maximising power. I briefly hinted at the possibility that BC may, if invested adequately, also produce lifespan returns of the same kind than a lifetime of basic security. However, I dismissed this possibility on the grounds that BC cannot *ensure* lifespan sufficiency. The lifespan sufficiency requirement then provided us with a strong reason to prefer BI.

To solve the dilemma, I then proposed that BI can promote lifespan efficiency too: through delivering the scarce resource of time, BI opens up the opportunity for a multi-sided or alternative existence, broadens young people's opportunities and

precludes the clustering of disadvantage associated with poverty and bad jobs. I argued that BI could also be seen as promoting long-term ambition formation. Just not the same kind of ambitions will be formed. Van der Veen (2003) has an illuminating way of expressing a similar idea: while BC promotes a “culture of property ownership”, basic income promotes a “culture of disposable time”. Both, however, generalise “the privilege of being a ‘person of independent means’” (Van der Veen 2003, 150). Therefore, if (1) BI is best at promoting lifespan sufficiency and (2) BI and BC can both promote lifetime efficiency, then we should favour BI on comprehensive diachronic prudential grounds. We do not have to settle which types of ambition formation are best here because it is sufficient to show that they both promote lifespan efficiency, while BC only promotes one of the two prudential requirements.

5.2 Which Policy Promotes Complete Lives Equality Best?

As argued in Chapter 4, the institutionalization of prudent planning can work towards the reduction of existing social inequalities between complete lives. We should not lose sight of the important intersection of intergenerational issues with the transmission of poverty from one generation to another and with the lifespan clustering of disadvantage, which reinforces existing inequalities. Having shown that BI can meet the prudential requirements better than BC, I now evaluate the two proposals’ respective ability to reduce inequalities over complete lives, that is both social inequalities between life courses and cohort inequalities. In other words, the questions that I aim to ask here are the following: (1) from the point of view of the goal of reducing social inequalities between complete lives, which policy is most effective, and (2) from the point of view of approximate cohort equality, which policy is best?

5.2.1 Social inequalities between life courses

At first, one may think of BC as more “egalitarian” in a diachronic sense than BI because, as Van Parijs argues, BC delivers most resources to young recipients, which decreases the distributive inequality between those who die young and those who die old. BI, on the other hand, would unfairly advantage those who live long lives, as people would have received more resources over their complete lives than those who die young. In their paper “Compensating the Dead”, Fleurbaey, Leroux and Ponthiere (2014) make a similar point. They point out that we can in fact compensate those who die young simply by giving people cash early in their lives,

or by encouraging early consumption. They argue that the earlier resources are spent, the lower the risks of people having been treated unequally over their complete lives. Since we do not know which unfortunate people will live short lives, the best way to be fair to them is thus to give them most resources in one lump sum, early on. In this respect at least, BC seems to do a better job than BI.

However, as Van Parijs (2006) argues, this strategy is only superficially egalitarian. BC risks exacerbating existing interpersonal inequalities for two reasons. The first reason, which Van Parijs puts forward, is that those who will blow their stake are more likely to be people who are already disadvantaged. Those who have already been socially advantaged will have access to better information, support and coaching than those who have a more disadvantaged background. BC, instead of disrupting existing social inequalities, might thus reinforce them because those already advantaged would use their capital more successfully. A corollary worry with the stakeholder society is that those who do not succeed will be more likely to then be considered responsible for their own failure. And yet, as I have shown drawing on Heckman (2013), social inequalities are heavily determined by unequal childhoods, including unequal access to educational opportunities. BC is often described as a “starting gate” egalitarian measure (Wright 2006, xii). But it does not even provide fair ‘starts’ since it tries to disrupt inequalities, at an early, but still late point in the lifespan. Worse, it makes it sound as if it constitutes a fair start and may thus contribute to a society that treats harshly those who fail to succeed through their capital investments.

One may reply, however, that there are ways around this problem with BC. Ackerman and Alstott (2006b) for instance, argue for a series of measures to reduce the risk of the least well off youth blowing their stake. Their BC proposal includes compulsory high school training on how to best spend ones’ lump sum. Moreover, Ackerman and Alstott would deny the lump sum (or hold it for a while) to those who have not graduated from high school and to those who have been engaged in criminal activities as teenagers. This, however, may not reassure those worried that BC may exacerbate existing inequalities. If BC excludes poor disengaged and criminalized youth, it may aggravate the existing imbalance in privilege, contributing to even more unequal life courses. It may also worsen the clustering of disadvantage effect given that early school disengagement would become associated with even more costs. It is difficult to feel at ease with such denial of BC to some of the most ill placed young members of society. Thus, if BC seemed preferable on complete lives egalitarian grounds, at first sight, it would in

fact dangerously risk exacerbating existing social inequalities, thus reinforcing interpersonal inequalities between life courses. If given the choice, most egalitarians would probably find the exacerbation of existing social inequalities to be more problematic morally than the randomly produced inequality between those who will die young and those who will live a life of normal length, as I already argued against Lazenby in Chapter 2.

In defence of BC, however, one may argue that the anticipated risk of BC exacerbating existing inequalities is exaggerated and that, if given a chance, most disadvantaged young adults would make good use of their lump sum. Moreover, BC proponents could make the case that BC can be much more disruptive of existing inequalities than BI by giving substantial assets to individuals who would never have had access to such capital otherwise. To evaluate this claim, let us consider different life plans the least advantaged may follow and whether such pathways would be substantially more enabled by a BC than a BI. Let us consider would-be: (1) artists, (2) farmers, and (3) high-risk entrepreneurs. Of the three, it seems that the high-risk entrepreneur is the one that would need a basic capital most. The artist primarily needs time and security. The farmer may equally need capital and income. She may use capital to acquire land and equipment. But she may be able to get it through a loan or through associating with other farmers by pooling resources. Given how precarious small-scale farming is in terms of the chances of poverty at any given time in her life course, she may benefit from the lifetime of basic security.

The high-risk entrepreneur however - who has a risky but potentially life changing idea - primarily needs capital. If she cannot find an investor, she may never be able to realize her potential. Of course, the project may not work, but the potential returns to investments could be really high. There is little the high-risk investor can do with a non-mortgage-able BI for life. In this sense BC, could be disruptive of existing social inequalities. By affording the means to high-risk entrepreneurs to realize their projects, it has the potential to accelerate social mobility. BC could be really disruptive in a way that BI cannot be. One could reply that, even though BI is non-mortgage-able, the attitude of lenders could positively change in a basic income society. BI could increase the bargaining power of the high-risk entrepreneur trying to get a loan. Lenders would know that whatever people will earn can be used to pay back a loan, given that the borrower's basic needs would already be covered by the basic income. This way, one could possibly speculate that, in a basic income society, people could fairly easily borrow the capital they

need to invest in their high risk/high return projects.

However, even if we grant that BC may be more disruptive of social inequalities than BI, in some cases, through promoting social mobility, there is another problem with BC from the point of view of social inequalities over life courses. I have already mentioned the fact that it may render some already disadvantaged people even more relatively disadvantaged. But the other problem is that it will inevitably *create* important inequalities between complete lives. BC, some argue, will create a society structured by a drift between winners and losers. Standing, for instance, worries that BC will contribute to a winners-take-all versus losers-take-all society: “it would be equalizing the opportunity to become more unequal” (Standing 2006, 188). Instead of creating a society in which people can all live secure lives, BC would enable a two-speed society to emerge:

One could imagine TV chat shows and tabloids having endless items on “how Jane splurged her \$80,000, and another patting Jim on his broadening shoulders for having been an exemplary young adult (...) If anything, it would help legitimize the unequal society by encouraging people to adopt a casino-type set of attitudes.

(Standing 2006, 192)

If some will blow their stake through genuine imprudence or irresponsible behaviours, others will simply be unfortunate and have to pay for it for the rest of their lives.

BC thus seems to be quite a risky policy from the point of view of inequalities between life courses. At best, BC would generate and tolerate very substantial inequalities between winners and losers, but further some social mobility in the process. At worse, it will reinforce existing social inequalities between life courses and harden attitudes to those who do badly. BI, on the other hand, does not leave the lifespan distribution of cash to luck and promotes instead a lifetime of security for all. Through freeing up time, it equalizes the opportunity for all to do what they may want to do with their time. Depending on whether the basic income is just above or well above the poverty line, it may free up more or less time. In the UK, a £800 basic income per adult individual would ensure a life free from abject poverty. As such, the income may be sufficient to open up a set of opportunities: caring for one’s own family, volunteering, travelling, working part-time instead of full time, taking a year off work. BI ensures that these opportunities are open to all. The monthly grant may be insufficient on its own to lead a more expansive lifestyle, but it generalises the opportunity to have more time to do the things we

may want to do, without losing our basic economic security.

5.2.2 The goal of approximate cohort equality

As far as birth cohorts are concerned, it seems that BI and BC would both offer a ‘compensation’ for current disproportionately high rates of unemployment and poverty that fall on younger cohorts. Both would increase young people’s chances of living a better life. Both would also compensate the young for the loss of income resulting from higher rates of unemployment and would enable the young to take the time to gain skills. The question to know which policy would reduce scarring effects most however depends on our previous discussion of the likely impact of both policies for lifespan efficiency. It may be the case that particularly scarred generations would be best served by a basic income, which would top-up their comparatively lower incomes. It would make coping with stages of unemployment easier. At the other end, basic capital could allow scarred cohorts to create their own opportunities, by starting a business for instance, and would thus also count as a relevant compensation. One could think of both proposals as opening up a broader range of opportunities for particularly impaired generations.

Perhaps there is one way to distinguish the policies from the point of view of approximate cohort equality. Let us first assume that, at least as far as job-related opportunities are concerned: (1) there is such a thing as a ‘jilted generation’ in the UK and in France, where more than 1 in 5 young people in the labor force between 15 and 24 years old are unemployed, and even more so in Spain or Greece where rates of youth unemployment are higher than 1 in 2; and (2) the generation will be scarred in the long run. Given (1) and (2), there may be a case to be made for proposals that target the young generation exclusively. In terms of approximate cohort equality, we could argue that, in order to compensate the young generations for the long-term impact of their joblessness, we ought to give cash only to their generations. Indeed, what is the point of a compensation that targets both advantaged and disadvantaged generations? Basic capital may thus be thought as a better cohort compensatory measure than basic income, which is aimed at everyone.²⁰

²⁰ Stuart White (2011) interestingly sees this exclusionary aspect of Basic Capital as a drawback: “When we introduce a basic capital scheme, there will be one generation that is the first to get the capital grant. All following cohorts will get it too. But earlier generations will apparently get nothing. By contrast, when we introduce a basic income, members of all living generations will get something. Again, it looks as if intergenerational inequality might be sharper under basic capital than basic income. Consequently, if we care about

However, basic income could also be made to compensate younger generations if it was introduced *exclusively* for young cohorts. Consider the following proposal for a Youth Basic Income (YBI). The basic income proposal as such emphasizes the importance of delivering cash continuously from adulthood to death. But we could institutionalize basic income only for the current younger generation. We would exclude, say, anyone over 35 years old from the scheme. This way, BI could be made to work to compensate the ‘jilted generation’. The resulting inequality between birth cohorts in basic income provision would come to compensate the inequality in job opportunities. Here, we can make a further distinction between age-specific YBI and cohort-specific YBI. To compensate the ‘jilted generation’, we could introduce a cohort specific YBI to which they would be entitled until their death. This scheme would be for the jilted generation exclusively. Age-specific YBI, on the other hand, would be for the current young and the future young exclusively. To clarify, on cohort-specific YBI, the jilted generation gets a basic income monthly *ad vitam æternam*; on age-specific YBI, the jilted generation gets a basic income for a few years, until they reach 35 years old.

However, there are a number of problems with YBI - in both its cohort and age specific forms - and in general with the view that our unconditional cash scheme should exclusively target the young. First, as I have discussed in Chapter 4, it is difficult to consider that there is such a thing as an all-things-considered jilted generation. In terms of job prospects, a particular generation may be doing worse through no fault of its own. But there are other benefits that they may be enjoying such as better access to healthcare and better technologies and knowledge. The basic phenomenon of intergenerational growth of knowledge and technology means that it is unlikely that we will be able to say that younger generations are worse off all things considered.

In Chapter 4, I argued that one way around this incommensurability problem was to focus only on job prospects, for instance, and to aim at restoring job-related inequalities between cohorts. For this reason, while it may be justifiable to help the young preferentially in other ways, for instance through a job guarantee, making them the only recipients of either cash proposal seems objectionable from the point of view of approximate cohort equality principle itself. One could still argue for the possibility to introduce cash grants just for the young on the grounds of them being

intergenerational inequality, we have another egalitarian reason for preferring basic income to basic capital” (2011, 72). If we accept my claims that (1) there is a jilted generation and (2) that it will be scarred in the long run, then the exclusionary nature of BC becomes an advantage.

worse off in terms of their current and future job prospects. But then the cash grant would have to be justified purely as compensation for unequal generational job prospects.

However, there is a second problem with the exclusive focus on the young. If we allocated basic income only to younger cohorts, then we would not include the least advantaged member of earlier cohorts in the scheme. If it is the case that a generation may be thought of as worse off in job prospects in average, the social class one belongs to is one of the most fundamental determinants of people's life courses. If we are concerned with reducing such inequalities, then granting basic income only to younger cohorts may be unsatisfactory. Gosseries and Gaspart (2007), for instance, put forward the basic principle that one generation owes the next as much as it has received from the previous one and *only* as much (with some exceptions). Once the accumulation phase is over, savings are prohibited. We should instead focus on reducing existing social inequalities. Moreover, given that transfers between generations largely occur within families, one may hope that a basic income for all, by making young adults, but also their parents and grand parents better off, will benefit the worse off in whichever generations they are, with direct and indirect benefits for children and young people.

Furthermore, as was argued in previous section, both the sufficiency and efficiency advantages of BI are reliant on its capacity to ensure a lifetime of basic security. By introducing YBI, we would compromise the positive prudential impact of BI. In other words, if we introduced age-specific YBI, then the previous mentioned benefits of BI would vanish. Note that this is only true of age-specific YBI. Indeed, cohort-specific YBI is a lifelong BI, but for some cohorts only. However, the previous argument that cohort-specific YBI misses out on the least well-off individuals in other generations and compromises their access to basic security seems to push against the policy.

In sum, knowing whether we should deliver basic income only to younger generations would require knowing whether current middle aged and older generations have passed on enough to the young generation or not. The transfer that would be required for a BC or YBI to be transferred to the next generation would be so high that it seems difficult to make the argument that it is a required rate of saving. It seems equally difficult to argue that the least well off in other generations should not benefit from radical cash grants. As argued in Chapter 4, in face of uncertainty, what we can do is reduce risks, including risks of scarring effects across the lifespan, and introduce the grant universally. Given the prudential

benefits of BI highlighted in Section 5.1, implementing a BI just for the young (at least as an age group) is a poor option on prudential grounds.

To conclude, in Section 5.2, I have shown that, on complete lives egalitarian grounds, BC is too risky. The upside of this risk is that it may disrupt existing inequalities quite efficiently by promoting social mobility. However, BC's downside is that it risks exacerbating existing inequalities over life courses if those who are better equipped end up making better investments, and if those who are disengaged and have a criminal past are excluded from the scheme. Regardless, it also risks contributing to a winner-take-all society that is in tension with the complete lives egalitarian goal, at least if the losers blow their stakes through no fault of their own (through brute luck or as a result of previous lack of training, education or information).

As for the goal of approximate cohort equity, both YBI and BC may help in compensating the jilted generation for the disproportionate risks of unemployment and poverty they suffer and may thus both reduce the scarring effect phenomenon. However, I have suggested that compensating younger cohorts exclusively may not be desirable, especially if we favour the next generation and leave behind the least advantaged in older generations. On the approximate cohort equality principle, there did not seem to be a conclusive case to be made for one policy over another. This seems to reinforce my suggestion in Chapter 4 that, as a principle of justice, approximate cohort equality does not seem to be as action-guiding as the requirements of lifespan prudence, or as I will now show, as the synchronic relational egalitarian requirement. If we are primarily concerned in reducing the scarring effects phenomenon to make sure the young are not too scarred over their complete lives, on approximate cohort equality, then we ought to simply do what prudent planning instructs. Rough equality between cohorts may then be partly captured as an outcome of adequate prudent planning.

5.3 Which Is Best for Synchronic Relational Equality?

Philip Pettit and Stuart White both suggest that a fundamental advantage of BI is that, by providing an income continuously, from young adulthood to death, it promotes freedom as non-domination, understood as the absence of “dominating control” (Pettit 2007, 4). BI provides the material conditions for relational equality because it makes sure that no one needs to enter relationships of submission in

order to survive. It provides the basis for Rousseau's requirement that no one should be so poor as to be obliged to sell oneself (Rousseau [1762] 1998, 52). BI would strengthen the position of flexi workers, increasing their bargaining leverage (Standing 2006). It would empower individuals to refuse entering wrongful relationships (for example, in the labour market), and would enable them to quit abusive relationships (for example, in cases of dependence on an abusive partner). Therefore, if one is primarily concerned by freedom as non-domination, then one will have a strong presumption for basic income over basic capital (White 2011, 75-76). Through reducing the risks of dependency under duress, BI thus seems to ensure relational synchronic equality.

An important distinction here can be made between *exit* and *voice*, as conceptualized by Albert Hirschman:

There are two main types of activist reactions to discontent with organizations to which one belongs or with which one does business: either to voice one's complaints, while continuing as a member or customer, in the hope of improving matters; or to exit from the organization, to take one's business elsewhere.

(Hirschman 1978, 90)

Voice – that is the ability for people to express their views, interests and concerns – is constitutive of a community of equals. BI provides citizens with the right of *exit*, but at the same time increases people's ability to voice their complaints. If workers need their jobs to a lesser extent, they will be able to set their conditions more easily. The added value of basic income from a synchronic relational perspective is that it offers individuals a right to exit that is very likely to have a positive impact on their bargaining power. In turn, workers with a BI are thus likely to have a more powerful voice. This double benefit of BI seems to be in line with what Karl Widerquist sees as the key advantage of basic income: it empowers people with freedom as the “power to say no” (Widerquist 2013).

Young people are more likely than any other age group to be unemployed or poor, so the argument for basic income from a synchronic relational standpoint seems particularly appealing. In the example of LGBT homeless youth highlighted in Chapter 4, for instance, it is clear that BI would have a positive impact on the young not becoming homeless in the first place. BI would protect young people from either having to stay in abusive households or having to become homeless and suffer further risks of abuse and domination.

By contrast, with its resolutely individualistic fundamental principle - “One person, one life, one stake” (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 49) - BC primarily focuses on distributive equality over complete lives, and does not address the kind of wrongful relationships that can be generated in the synchronic temporality. BC is primarily luck egalitarian: “Each person is her own person. Each is entitled to real freedom to shape her own life. This precious freedom should not be compromised merely to save others from the consequences of their own choices” (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 51). BC aims to reduce brute luck through giving the means to almost all young adults to shape their destinies, but accepts inequalities in outcome that result from different choices individuals may make. BC is thus susceptible to the harshness objection often raised against luck egalitarianism (Fleurbaey 1995, Anderson 1999, Lippert-Rasmussen 2012). It does not offer significant forms of protection to those who make bad investments and blow their stake. This is unsatisfying from the comprehensive egalitarian approach I endorse in this thesis.

The winners-take-all society is particularly problematic from the point of view of synchronic relational equality, both between age groups and within a cohort. Those who have blown their stake will lose both their prospects for ambition formation, as I argued earlier, but they will also lose the basic security that would be needed to stand free from the risk of domination. As a result, with BC, people would be free as non-dominated only if they had invested their stake in the right way. This is a first reason why synchronic relational egalitarianism demands a BI rather than a BC. Once again, however, this argument for BI over BC only applies against specific background conditions. If BC was introduced in a society that also proposes a means-tested minimum income to ensure that no-one fell below the poverty line, the synchronic relational egalitarian presumption against BC would not be as strong. Let us assume here again that the generous minimum income background condition is not met. Then there is an important worry about the equal standing of those who blow their stake.

In response, BC proponents may reply that relational equality and freedom as non-domination is compatible with an early investment in the lifespan. Institutions may give you the opportunity to be free from poverty, through a capital investment for instance, and this precisely treats you as an equal. Why would we interpret Rousseau’s claim that no one should be too poor to be dominated synchronically and not diachronically? Perhaps we could take it to mean that people should not be too poor at the start of their life to avoid that their life course be one where they risk having to sell themselves into slavery. I have argued in Chapter 3 that the

relational egalitarian ideal, however, provides strong reasons to ensure that people are able to stand as equals *at every point in their lives*. The egalitarian goal of ending relationships of domination cannot be satisfied simply by providing a fair chance to young people. If in the middle of their lives, winners hold a higher status and more political power than those who blew their stake, the mere fact that they all had been given the same stake in the past does not make up for the fact that the community they now live in cannot be considered as a community of relational equals.

Furthermore, BC only privileges one stage of people's lives: young adulthood. Ackerman and Alstott realize that this is a problem, which they identify as the "time slice problem", in the traditional vein initiated by the equality through time debate. They ask: "What is the appropriate relationship between stakes to the young and government pensions to the elderly?" (Ackerman and Alstott 2006b, 53). I have argued that egalitarianism demands more than just equality between complete lives and also more than prudential lifespan planning in Chapter 3. Egalitarianism properly understood also demands that people be able to stand as equals regardless of their age and without risk of marginalisation, stigmatisation and exclusion. BC would prevent the young homeless case mentioned previously, but similar cases would be possible at an older age, or as soon as one has used one's stake.

Moreover, as Standing argues, by targeting young entrants, BC will give them an advantage over older workers because it would allow young people to accept lower wages (Standing 2006). This would risk excluding older workers from the productive sphere, which would not be unproblematic for older workers' standing as equals. And paradoxically, that would not even radically enhance young people's freedom to say no, in Widerquist's sense. Their basic security not being secured in the long run, the young would still have to do what ensures that they will be able to make ends meet in the future. BC would thus give the young more weight in their power struggle against older people in the labour market, but without even increasing the young's freedom 'to say no' more than basic income. BI, by contrast, would give young people the "freedom to say no" (Widerquist 2013) to various relationships of inequality, without giving "one group an inbuilt advantage" (Standing 2006, 189).

There is a third synchronic relational reason why BI may be preferable than BC. It has to do with the multisided existence that a lifetime of basic security may enable.

People would be more likely to participate in their local communities if they had more time. They would be able to develop the political side of their existence, simply because they would regain control over their time. This, arguably, is important if we are worried about the young's political disengagement. Indirectly, therefore, BI could thus be the means the young require coordinating and expressing their political interests. BI would thus shoot two birds with one stone: it would directly contribute to meeting the interests of the young in a non-risky present and future, and it would give them more time to participate in the political struggles that they feel they should take part in.

My comprehensive account of intergenerational equality does not say that synchronic relational equality is more important than diachronic prudence or equality. Therefore, this presumption for BI on relational egalitarian grounds is not sufficient to make a conclusive case in support of BI over BC on grounds of intergenerational equality. However, given my previous argument in support of BI on diachronic grounds, it seems fair to conclude that BI expresses the requirements of equality through time in an intergenerational perspective better than does BC.

5.4 Conclusions

In conclusion, I have shown in this chapter that there are several reasons to prefer BI to BC on intergenerational egalitarian grounds – as summarized in the table below.

	Basic Capital	Basic Income	Which is best?
Lifespan sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BC, if invested properly, <i>may</i> generate returns commensurable to a lifetime income - However, if the stake is blown, lifespan sufficiency will <i>not</i> be ensured - BC does not <i>ensure</i> lifespan sufficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BI <i>ensures</i> lifespan sufficiency through delivering a lifetime of basic economic security 	BC<BI
Lifespan efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BC encourages long-term thinking and promotes ambition formation - BC promotes macro-freedom through investing in the youth ‘self-imaginative’ moment - BC thus <i>promotes</i> lifespan efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BI <i>does not permit</i> early investments in lifelong projects (because it is non-mortgageable) - But, through freeing up time, BI allows the formation of other kinds of ambitions - BI <i>promotes</i> lifespan efficiency too. 	BC = BI
Inequalities between life courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BC seems more egalitarian, at first, because it reduces inequalities between longevity groups and may promote social mobility - However, BC risks exacerbating existing inequalities between social classes, and even if it does not, it risks creating a winners-take all society - BC is not likely to effectively reduce inequalities between life courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BI enhances everyone’s long-term real freedom - It does not risk to exacerbate existing inequalities because lifetime returns are pre-defined - BI contributes to limiting inequalities between life courses 	BC<BI
Approx. cohort equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BC can contribute in compensating the jilted generation - however, excluding other cohorts or age groups seems problematic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BI may also contribute in compensating the jilted generation, if we introduce YBI (age or cohort specific) - however, excluding other cohorts or age groups seems problematic 	BC = BI
Synchronic relational equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BC misses out on the risks of synchronic relational equality between winners and losers - BC misses out on the risks of synchronic relational inequalities between young and old - BC does not ensure synchronic relational equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BI promotes freedom as non-domination - BI gives people a right to exit and strengthens their voice and power to say ‘no’ - BI, may enable more active political engagement - BI thus promotes synchronic relational equality well 	BC<BI

Table 4 - BI versus BC: a summary

In her paper on the debate between BC and BI, Cecile Fabre interestingly argues that BC is not an egalitarian proposal because it pays little attention to misfortunes that may befall people over the course of their lives. A proposal that “allows for large brute-luck based inequalities between individuals in the course of their lives” she argues, “is not an egalitarian proposal” (Fabre 2003, 118). However, after all, as this thesis argues, on the dominant complete lives view, it may well be fine from the point of view of equality if individuals are afforded the same benefits over their complete lives, even if they are unequal in some portions of their lives.

Cecile Fabre (2003)’s claim that BC is not an egalitarian proposal has found three concrete elaborations in this chapter. First, BC is not prudent in at least one important respect - it does not ensure lifespan sufficiency. For this reason, it does not fulfil one important requirement of equality through time. Second, BC would insufficiently reduce existing inequalities between life courses. It may have some positive impact on social mobility, but would also risk exacerbating existing inequalities developed earlier in the lifespan (for instance between those who graduated from high school and those who disengaged). Moreover, BC would certainly create new life course inequalities between those who succeed through investment and those who do not. Third, BC would not ensure synchronic relational equality at specific points in the lifespan and would also risk entrenching some inequalities in standing in the productive sphere between young and older workers. This chapter has shown that the temporal theoretical tools I developed in previous chapters informs an important policy-oriented debate, and possibly, in settling the debate in favour of basic income. If we must chose, I argued, we should therefore prefer the basic income proposal.

However, there are also some advantages to BC such as its important diachronic macro-freedom promoting power and its potential positive impact on social mobility. These advantages of BC are likely to be even more important in contexts where higher education is costly or unaffordable. By enabling more young people to get a higher education degree, BC may increase the chances of disadvantaged young people leading more equal lives. Similarly, in a capitalist economy, ownership of the means of production is an important variable in predicting how one’s life course will unfold. For these reasons, we may not want entirely to abandon BC, even if we contend that BI is superior. What we may be able to conclude, therefore, is that basic income should be the baseline, but that we may also integrate other unconditional cash proposals. Here are two hybrid proposals

that accommodate the lifespan efficiency and disruptive power of BC with the diachronic and synchronic advantages of BI.

Consider first the following addition to BI that can be referred to as the *Baby Bond proposal*.²¹ This BI proposal could be designed as a right from birth, saved for the first 18 years of one's life and given as a cash grant at 18. Part of the basic income from birth to 18 years old could go to the parents as family allowance. Indeed, as we have seen from James Heckman's account of pre-distribution, lifespan efficiency requires that children be made key recipients of any serious investment scheme. The other part of the child basic income would be saved monthly and would be available in the form of a Basic Capital at 18 years old. At age 18, individuals would receive their BC and in addition, from 18 on, the monthly allowance. In a generous welfare state economy where education is affordable or even free, such as in France, such scheme may not be needed. If education is difficult to afford for the least well off, as in the US (or increasingly in the UK), such BC may enable the young to make life plans and stimulate social mobility more effectively. The Baby Bond proposal may thus allow us to accommodate this concern without undermining BI as baseline.

An alternative to the Baby Bond Proposal, but still with basic income as the underlying baseline, can be referred to as the *Mortgage-able Income proposal*. We could introduce a basic income but allow individuals to alienate part of their future basic income guarantee to fund costly projects they may have at any point. At 20 years old, Mary could decide to ask for a certain portion of her future monthly basic income to be given to her in one lump sum so as to pursue a higher education degree. For instance, she could agree to receive only half of her monthly basic income for ten years and to withdraw the other half in one lump sum. For the next ten years, instead of receiving, say £800 a month she would receive £400 a month, and she would get a lump sum of £48,000. This proposal gives leverage to individuals to decide how and when they want to make life-changing plans.

Both proposals have important advantages. However, I find the Mortgage-able Income proposal less satisfactory than the Baby Bond proposal for two main reasons. First, unless the basic income guarantee is so large that it goes well beyond the poverty line, alienating part of one's future income threatens the fundamental principle of lifetime basic security. In implementing the proposal, one

²¹ The phrase is taken from New Labour's policy proposal of investing £250 to £500 for each new-born child. For a discussion of the proposal see White (2012).

would have to ensure that there are still enough safety nets in place for lifespan sufficiency to be ensured and for people to be able to stand as relational equals at any point in their lifespan. My second reason for preferring the Baby Bond over the mortgage solution is practical and pragmatic. The Baby Bond idea is simpler because it can essentially be reduced to the ‘disarmingly simple idea’ of basic income as a right to existence. From birth to death, we would be entitled to this monthly cash grant, but as children, part of it would be saved for our adult lives. In some sense, the Baby Bond proposal reinforces and strengthens the simple message of basic income. The Mortgage-able Income proposal, on the contrary, risks threatening the basic foundations and moral significance of basic income by undermining the ideal of continuous guaranteed economic security.

These concluding remarks have left us with a presumption for Basic Income over Basic Capital as the baseline for a radical egalitarian proposal for unconditional cash. But we have also acknowledged the need to consider hybrids of BI that also deliver some capital to the young. I have suggested that a Baby Bond/Basic Income proposal could help us meet the increasing need of the young for capital, especially in the US and in the UK, without undermining the basic income proposal. In fact, if anything, the Baby Bond strengthens the value of basic income by asserting it as a *right to existence*, from birth to death.

In the coming chapter, I will now examine the intergenerational fairness of the democratic processes in which policy decisions are taken. Chapter 6 is devoted to discussing the problem of the political marginalisation of the young. I focus on whether the absence of young people in parliaments is problematic, intrinsically and instrumentally, for intergenerational equality. I discuss the introduction of youth quotas in parliament as a potential answer.

CHAPTER 6 - YOUTH-ING POLITICS: THE HOPES OF YOUTH QUOTAS

When, before the 2005 general election, the Electoral Commission launched a campaign to persuade young people to vote with the shout-line: 'If you don't do politics... there's not much you do do', they missed the point entirely. It's not that young people don't do politics, it's that modern politics doesn't do young people

(Howker and Malik 2010, 154)

In 2005, Ipsos MORI calculated that the voting power of those over 55 in the UK was worth over 4 times that of 18-34 year-olds (Howker and Malik 2010, 157). The low political power of the young can be explained both by their low voting turnout and by the ageing of the electorate. When populations age, the median age of the electorate ages too. In the UK, the median voter's age in 1991 was 44, and it is projected to be 51 years old in 2050 (Berry 2012, 21). Young voters are also much less likely to be registered for the elections: in 2011, only 56% of young people between the age of 19 and 24 were registered, whereas 90% of people between 55 and 64 years old and 94% of people aged above 65 years old were registered (The Electoral Commission 2011, 5). Voters' turnouts are strongly correlated with age as well. In the 2009 local elections, only 10 per cent of 18-24 year-olds said that they had voted compared to 85% of people of 65 years old and over (The Electoral Commission 2009, 27). The quantitative difference between potential voters, registered voters, and actual voters is directly correlated with age: the younger the voters, the higher the difference between potential and actual voting turnouts will be (Berry 2012, 34).

In a report on young people's political participation, Berry argues that there is an emerging "intergenerational democratic deficit" whereby young people are becoming marginalised within the democratic process (Berry 2012, 5). "While it may be premature or sensationalist to proclaim the rise of a 'gerontocracy'", Berry argues, "it is clear that today's young people have become relatively disenfranchised" (Berry 2012, 5). There is a rising sense that the political marginalisation of the young is a growing problem for democratic legitimacy and that young people's interests may get sidelined (Griffith 2011, Howker and Malik 2010, Willetts 2010, Sloam 2012) This concern is not new. As Philippe Van Parijs (1998) claimed 15 years ago, the concern is that "they [the elderly] may use it

[their vote] in excessive manner to benefit their unavoidably short-term self-interest” (Van Parijs 1998, 293). Similarly, Longman argued that "in an aging population, the great danger is that the electorate will become more and more focused on the short term, for there will eventually be fewer and fewer voters who are parents of young children and more who are concerned with having the state provide either for their own aged parents or for themselves in retirement" (Longman 1987, 143).

One may find this intergenerational democratic deficit concerning from the point of view of intergenerational justice. First, the political marginalisation of the young may put in jeopardy the goal of achieving a community of relational equals professed by the synchronic relational egalitarian principle. If the young do not feel included in their political communities and disengage, we may worry that their status as equal citizens may be affected. Second, the democratic deficit may matter for instrumental reasons. If the young are politically marginalised, then there will be little incentive for politicians to take their interests seriously. There are a number of challenges the young face, such as higher rates of unemployment, which may not be given adequate weight, even though they can be expected to have a central impact on the life courses of those who are young. If, as Van Parijs (1998) claims, there is some evidence for thinking that voting behaviour is affected by “age-related self-interest”, then the goal of implementing intergenerationally fair policies may be undermined. For these two reasons at least, it seems that there are some *prima facie* intergenerational reasons to examine ways to enhance youth participation.

There are a number of possible ways to improve youth involvement in formal politics. We may enfranchise the young more through lowering the voting age, for instance, or through making voting compulsory. We may facilitate youth participation through implementing easier voting systems or making registration simpler. We may also increase funding for youth political initiatives and provide political training to more young people. In a recent report aimed at identifying ways to enhance youth participation, the UNDP (2013) also suggests encouraging parties to recruit more young people, supporting the development of youth wings in political parties, and developing civic education in schools and universities. The following diagram by Craig Berry categorises and lists a series of such possible changes to the democratic system to challenge the intergenerational democratic deficit.

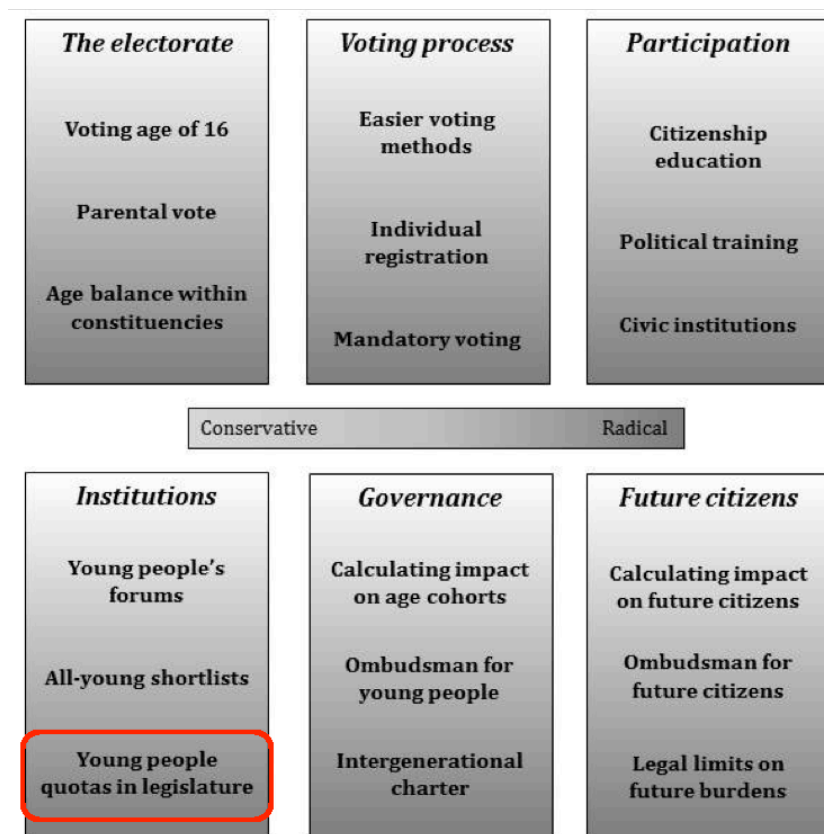


Figure 9 - Range of possible changes to democratic systems (Berry 2012, 45)

The categories illustrated include changes to the demography of the electorate (such as lowering the voting age to 16 years old), to the voting process (such as mandatory voting to make sure the young vote), and to the institutions (such as the introduction of youth quotas in legislatures). As I highlighted in red in the figure above, youth quotas (YQs) are the most radical institutional solution to the democratic deficit. Drawing on existing examples of youth quotas in the form of reserved seats for young people in parliament in Uganda, Kenya and Morocco, the UNDP (2013) also puts forward the introduction of youth quotas in electoral laws as a way to enhance youth representation and participation. The average age of the members of the European Parliament is 55 years old and the average age of the members of the UK parliament is 50. In France, there is currently only one MP under the age of 30 years old, 37 MPs under the age of 40 and 386 MPs between the age of 50 and 70 years old. Young people between the age of 18 and 35 years old are thus quantitatively under-represented in these three parliaments, but also as a general rule in most parliaments.²²

²² The global average age of a parliamentarian is 53 years old when the median age of the global population is about 26 years old (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2012).

There is very little research available on the topic of age quotas²³ and European politicians have not yet acknowledged it as a relevant policy to consider. How should we explain this lack of critical engagement with the invisibility of youth in parliament? Whether we believe in representation as the ideal of democracy or as the second best option after participatory democracy, it seems that the possibility of implementing quotas in order to prevent some social groups from becoming politically marginalised is now broadly acknowledged. Gender and ethnic quotas are studied, deliberated, tested or implemented. Why aren't age quotas, in general, and youth quotas, in particular, discussed too?

One response to this question is: 'because age is special'. If women and ethnic minorities are not represented in parliaments, they will have been treated unequally in comparison with other citizens. On the contrary, if you adopt a diachronic perspective, if young people are not represented, they will not have been treated unequally over their complete lives when compared with other age groups, who were young themselves at some point. This specificity of age partly explains why the absence of young people in parliaments is not seen as an injustice as are inequalities in representation between other social groups. As Philips argues in a brief paragraph on the underrepresentation of young people in politics: "The situation of women looks more obviously unfair [than young people's] in that women will be under-represented throughout their entire lives" (Philips 1995, 63).

There is another relevant distinction to be made between the justification of gender or ethnic quotas and the discussion of youth quotas. If women are not represented in parliament, then it is likely to mean that they do not stand a fair chance in the competition for these social positions. The history of gender domination and exclusion substantiates the suspicion (Philips 1995, Mansbridge 1999, Williams 1998). Gender and ethnicity are not relevant grounds for exclusion from such positions. On grounds of fair equality of opportunity therefore, and against unfair discriminations, one may support the introduction of quotas in parliament for these groups to restore equality of opportunity. However, this argument is unlikely to work for young people. Indeed, the main explanation and justification for the absence of young people in parliament is likely to be their lack of experience. Experience, unlike gender or ethnicity, is a relevant feature of the position of being

²³ Both Philips (1995, 63) and Van Parijs (1998) noted the absence of engagement with age quotas two decades ago. More recently, in 2012, the German Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations and the London based Intergenerational Foundation launched a call for paper on Youth Quotas and intergenerational justice (2012).

a MP. In other words, it is not the case that the exclusionary criterion in the case of young people is irrelevant to the position of being a MP.

For these two reasons at least, it is likely that the best defences of youth quotas will rely on an instrumental justification. Rather than arguing, as for gender, that the inequality in representation is *prima facie* unfair, one may want to insist on both the negative consequences that the absence of young people in parliaments causes and the positive outcomes that introducing youth quotas could bring about. This chapter provides this instrumental justification and claims that youth quotas, insofar as they can indeed help in bringing about intergenerationally fairer outcomes, deserve to be seriously considered.

In the literature on quotas, two kinds of grounds for quotas are often emphasized: on the one hand, the policy level or *substantive representation* and, on the other hand, the symbolic level or *symbolic representation* (Philips 1995, Mansbridge 1999). The first is about the impact that quotas can have for the policies that will be discussed and implemented. The second is about the impact that the implementation of quotas could have, beyond the parliamentary room, for social cohesion. In this chapter, along those two lines, I put forward two instrumental arguments for the introduction of youth quotas and argue that they jointly provide a good basis for a *politics of youth presence* in parliaments. In Section 6.1, I evaluate the impact that youth quotas can have on enhancing the chances of intergenerationally fair policies being implemented. In Section 6.2, I show that youth quotas can play an important symbolic role in the promotion of a community of political equals, with potential implications for youth political participation. I argue that YQs can be expected to have an impact on IG equality for both policy and symbolic reasons. In Section 6.3, I introduce an original distinction between two kinds of quotas: cohort and age quotas.

6.1 Substantive Representation: What can YQs Do for Deliberations

Jane Mansbridge (1999) argues that one key ground for supporting the introduction of *descriptive representatives* – that is representatives from selected marginalised groups – is that it enhances “the substantive representation of the group's interests by improving the quality of deliberation” (Mansbridge 1999, 628). In this section, I evaluate the kind of impact the introduction of youth quotas can have on parliamentary deliberations - that is on the ideas discussed and ultimately on the

policies implemented. I argue that a correlation between a youth presence in parliament and fairer intergenerational outcomes is likely, and that this gives us a first reason to support the introduction of youth quotas in parliaments on grounds of justice between generations.

In *The Politics of Presence*, Anne Philips (1995) puts forward a justification for gender and ethnic quotas based on: “the need to tackle those exclusions inherent in the party packaging of political ideas, the need for more vigorous advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged groups, and the importance of a politics of transformation in opening up a fuller range of policy options” (Philips 1995, 37). My defense of youth quotas formulates similar arguments. Mitigating the underrepresentation of young people, I argue, is desirable: to prevent the exclusion of some age-related concerns from *the party packaging of political ideas* – for instance, concerns related to affordable housing, education, and unemployment (Section 6.1.2); to increase the chance of *more vigorous advocacy* on behalf of the young – for instance, through speaking out against misrepresentations of the young as lazy and self-serving (Section 6.1.3); and to open up a *fuller range of policy options* – for instance, because intergenerational diversity promotes more innovative and competent deliberations, and for epistemic reasons (Section 6.1.4). I conclude by explicitly articulating these three hopes of youth quotas with the goals of intergenerational justice (Section 6.1.5.). But I will briefly start with two important limitations of the substantive argument for quotas (Section 6.1.1).

6.1.1 Narrowing the scope of the substantive representation argument

The idea of *substantive representation* presupposes that there are such things as ‘group interests’ such as ‘women’s interests’. In my case, assessing the potential impact of youth quotas on the substantive representation of ‘youth interests’ presupposes such group-based conception of interests. However, this approach risks unduly essentialising groups: “Essentialism involves assuming a single or essential trait, or nature, that binds every member of a descriptive group together, giving them common interests that, in the most extreme versions of the idea, transcend the interests that divide them” (Mansbridge 1999, 637). In the case of young people, we may too quickly assume that they have common substantive interests. We may also presuppose that older MPs cannot represent any such interests adequately. We may also disregard more important differences, such as those stemming from class membership.

Appealing to such an overly essentialist understanding of the category of young people to justify quotas is likely to be farfetched. The impact of age on political ideas is not prevalent. In the UK, in the 2010 General Election, for instance, young people voted equally for the three dominant parties: 30% of young people between 18 and 24 years old voted Conservatives, 31% Labour and 30% Lib-Dem (Cracknell, McGuinness, and Rhodes 2011, 36)²⁴. The support for pensions among the young is often high, as attested for instance by the solidarity demonstrations in France in support for pensions in 2010. Promoting an essentialist conception of age groups is also potentially counterproductive because, given that society is ageing anyway, the last thing we want is for institutions to reinforce the view that one should only vote for what is best for one's own age group. This would in fact ensure that institutions would be age biased because the majority age group would be encouraged to shape institutions in a way that meets its own temporal interests as they age.

However, one does not have to be in the grips of an overly essentialist view of age to make a successful argument for youth quotas. One merely has to assume that there are *some* age or cohort-related interests, concerns or goals that have *some* impact on people's voting behaviours. Age seems to have at least some impact on people's views on which policies should be implemented: "voting at referenda on long-term ecological issues such as whether or not a country should abandon nuclear energy has been shown to be strongly related to age" (Van Parijs 1995, 298). For instance, Van Parijs uses the example of a 1990 referendum in Switzerland organised for a phase-out on nuclear energy: 64% of the 18-29 age range and 57% of the 30-39 supported the proposal, but it was rejected since only 47% of the overall population supported it – the favourable votes of the youngest were outweighed by the negative votes of older voters.

More recently, Berry also showed that age has some impact on how people vote. For instance, drawing on Furlong and Cartmel's research based on the British Election Survey 2009/10 he showed that 'unemployment' was an issue that concerned the members of Generation Y (15-30 years old) significantly more than members of the baby-boomers generation. The topic of 'health care' was seen as a priority over unemployment by both the baby-boomers and the generation before them (the 'silent generation') (Berry 2012, 13). In short, one simply needs to recognize that age groups, because of their position in the lifespan and their cohort

²⁴ Note that, although young people were equally likely to vote for the three parties, voters aged over 65 years old were 44% likely to vote for conservatives and only 16% likely to vote for Lib-Dem. They were however 31% likely to vote for Labour (just like the 18-24).

membership, share a series of common concerns, goals and experiences. I will only appeal to this weak understanding of youth interests in the rest of this section.

Another important limitation of descriptive representation as substantive representation must be raised here. There is a fundamental distinction to be made between the underrepresentation of young people on the electors' side, on the one hand, and on the representatives' side, on the other. The possible correlation between age, cohort and voting power, does not seem to provide evident reasons to consider modifying the composition of representative bodies. All Van Parijs, Longman and Berry seem to claim is that there is a correlation between *voting* and age. The problem would then be the ageing of the electorate, not the age of parliamentarians per se. Young MPs may find themselves victim of the problem of having to meet the short-term interests of their electorates too, just like older MPs. If anything, population ageing may give us reasons to consider a number of voting reforms, but not directly to bring in more young people in parliaments. This is an important limitation on what quotas can do alone if the young remain relatively disenfranchised. The aim of this section is precisely to establish the special significance and hopes of descriptive representation itself, independently from what voting can do.

6.1.2 Preventing the exclusion of youth interests from the party packaging of political ideas

Regardless of the party membership of young MPs, they may contribute in expanding the available party policy package through pushing for a better inclusion of youth concerns in political agendas. Anne Philips (1995, 27-57) identifies such party packaging as a fundamental argument for quotas. It does not rely on a too substantive conception of youth interests. Some groups may have common concerns but its members may interpret them in different ways based on their goals, values, party lines or social class. Quotas can help in making sure that political parties include those concerns, whatever their responses may be. It may therefore promote more deliberations in parliaments on these issues. This seems particularly relevant when studies show that the young do not feel that politicians take their concerns seriously. In a survey on young people's attitudes towards political parties, for instance, Hen and Foard showed that only 7% of 18 year-olds thought that political parties were interested in the same issues that concern young people (Hen and Foard in Berry 2012, 40).

Older MPs have been young too and can thus relate to some such concerns. However, they are not young *now* and may thus miss out on some cohort-related concerns. Indeed, there is an important difference between *period effects*, on the one hand, and *age effects*, on the other hand (Chauvel 1998, 286-289). The period effect designates the impact of an event at a given time: for instance, the effects of a financial crisis can be described as period effects. Arguably, many people suffer its consequences, regardless of their age. However, there are also age effects, which designate the impact of age and membership in a generation on given outcomes. Poverty or unemployment as a result of the same financial crisis will be experienced very differently if lived at a young age or towards the end of one's career, for instance. For young people, youth unemployment and poverty can lead to dependency on one's parents, including for accommodation and income. Youth unemployment may also lead to the postponement of projects young people might value, such as founding a family or buying a home (Wolff and De-Shalit's (2007)'s planning-blight phenomenon referred to in Chapter 4).

In parliaments, younger MPs may thus pick on specific problems relating to housing, education and unemployment in a different way than older MPs would. The 28-year-old MP Jo Swinson, in 2009, complained about the lack of age diversity within the UK parliament:

There are a huge number of Oxbridge-educated lawyers elected as MPs when they are middle-aged. There is not a single MP who has paid tuition fees. We have a large part of the population with debts from these or who face working well into old age because of pension changes, but there is no person in Parliament who shares, or will share, their experience.

(Swinson in Parkinson 2009)

The absence of age diversity, Swinson suggests, has an impact on the kinds of social experiences represented. One may thus hope that a more age-diverse parliament can better account for the age and cohort related plurality of experiences. The virtue of shared experience thus offers an important ground for descriptive representation, as Manbridge argues. One first argument for youth quotas, therefore, is that more age-diverse parliaments will be better able to represent the range of concerns that constituents may have. YQs would introduce more experiential diversity into deliberations.

6.1.3 Increasing the chance of more vigorous advocacy on behalf of the young

We may also defend the introduction of youth quotas on the ground that there is an important risk that policies and debates will be driven by misrepresentations, if conducted solely within some age groups and in exclusion of others. If an age group is absent from the debates, its aspirations and problems may become distorted. French and British youth policies, for instance, can be said to have been driven to a large extent on false representations and often unfair prejudices (Buckingham 2012, Howker and Malik 2010, Intergenerational Foundation 2012). Malik and Howker complain: “More than anything we’re vulnerable and yet the attitude of much of the society towards us is that we’re lazy and undeserving” (Howker and Malik 2010, 69).

The Intergenerational Foundation recently published a report on the perception of young people in European countries. The results are quite compelling and account for the poor perception of younger people in the UK: “British people in their 20s achieved the lowest scores of any country in relation to being viewed with respect. (...) In terms of contempt, British people in their 20s came first” (Leach 2011). Because of these misrepresentations, as Furlong and Cartmel argue, “when issues emerge that have a core relevance for young people, they are often tackled from a paternalistic and condescending ‘we know what’s best for you’ perspective” (Furlong and Cartmel in Berry 2012, 16). An example they put forward is unemployment policy: politicians “tend to focus not so much on creating opportunities, but on (...) motivating young people who are presented as feckless and even as ‘inadequate citizens’” (Furlong and Cartmel in Berry 2012, 16).

An example of the impact such misrepresentations may have is the denial of a means-tested minimum income guarantee to French Citizens under 25 years old. Since its introduction in 1988, the access to a minimum income guarantee in France has been restricted to citizens over the age of 25 years old. In 2009, the scheme was finally reformed to include young people under 25 years old, but with much more restrictive requirements: to be entitled to benefits, they must have already worked for at least two full time years in the past three. As a result, only a few thousand young persons have access to a basic minimum income when they need it, while over 20% of French youth live in poverty. In fact, most arguments that were provided were either infantilizing or paternalistic: young people do not deserve it, they will be idle and lazy if they receive it, they do not really need it and they should not be given something for nothing (Bidadanure 2012). If young

persons had had a stronger voice, including stronger representatives, when this age-based discrimination pertained²⁵, it would possibly have encountered more resistance. We may hope that bringing in more young persons in parliaments can have the modest impact of not leaving the misrepresentations unchallenged.

Youth quotas can thus have the second important benefit of increasing the chance of ‘more vigorous advocacy’ on behalf of the young for instance through speaking out against misrepresentations of the young as lazy and self-serving. We can hope that the young will be fiercer challengers of some misrepresentations and can act as watchdogs for age-based discriminations.

6.1.4 Opening up a fuller range of policy options and instigating change

For the two reasons previously mentioned - that quotas increase experiential diversity and that young people may be fiercer advocates on behalf of the young - descriptive representation may also contribute to opening up a fuller range of policy options. In the UK, the Labour and Conservative parties both emphasize personal desert and an obligation-to-work rhetoric in relation to youth unemployment (Cooke 2013b, 11). Including more young people in deliberations may contribute to diversifying further the range of possible options. Of course, there is no guarantee that it will in fact diversify policies substantively, but it is another potential outcome of YQs. As Anne Philips argues, one of the key potentials of descriptive representation is precisely this opening of possibilities. It is about “what would emerge under more favorable conditions”, that is if parliaments were more diverse (Philips 1995, 52). Mansbridge and Philips also suggest that the descriptive representation of some groups is likely to further innovation and change. I want to take this case for diversity in parliaments a bit further and argue that intergenerational diversity may increase innovation in problem solving and promote change.

Hélène Landemore makes an interesting argument about cognitive diversity in representative bodies. She argues that diversity in fact trumps individual expertise and she vouches for a collective understanding of competence. Drawing on Page and Hong, she argues that cognitive diversity is what matters most to the quality of collective problem-solving (Landemore 2012, 251-289). She defines cognitive diversity as the range of perspectives through which people approach a problem or

²⁵ The first version of the scheme, which completely excluded young people under 25 years old, was considered an illegitimate discrimination by the French Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Commission (HALDE 2008, 8-10).

a question. In a footnote, Landemore suggests that, if there is a connection between cognitive diversity and other forms of diversity, like gender, then the argument of cognitive diversity may also be an argument for descriptive representation: “the argument suggests that positive discrimination is not just a good thing on fairness grounds but also for epistemic reasons. I will not enter that complicated debate here but it is clearly one of the potential implications of an argument advocating the epistemic properties of cognitive diversity” (Landemore 2012, 261). One may want to take this intriguing thought of Landemore’s further in the context of the descriptive representation of the young.

If it were the case that both age diversity and cohort diversity increased cognitive diversity, which is very likely to be the case, then this would support the claim that more intergenerationally diverse parliaments may be more competent than less intergenerational ones. There is in fact an extensive literature²⁶ on the benefits of intergenerational practices and collaborations for the transmission of knowledge and the development of original and innovating problem-solving mechanisms. The French President François Hollande, for instance, introduced the “contrats de générations” (generational contracts) in firms to encourage the recruitment of young people and to facilitate their training processes, while protecting the job positions of senior workers. The launch of this programme was defended on the basis that intergenerational environments foster a better understanding and resolution of problems and spur more innovation and originality (Ministère du Travail).

Another example is a study conducted on intergenerational partnerships by the Institute of National Economy in Bucharest, which tested the hypothesis that there could be a positive correlation between research performance and intergenerational practices (Zaman, Sandu, and Anghel 2009, 607). Their study drew on research that shows that diversity, in general, constitutes an advantage for innovation and showed that it is also the case for age-diversity:

Older researchers bring greater abilities in doing research projects proposals, higher level of accumulated integrated knowledge in a certain scientific field, a wide relationship network and greater propensity and desire to cooperate. On the other hand, young researchers contribute to the teamwork with their enthusiasm, higher documentation and data electronic processing capacity, experienced gained along postgraduate or postdoctoral education programs they have attended abroad, greater

²⁶ The Beth Johnson Foundation’s Centre for Intergenerational Practices, for instance, provides much research on the benefits of intergenerational practices (Beth Johnson Foundation 2013).

mobility, greater ability to adapt to electronic systems and procedures for accessing national and international funds and the determination to build a career in research.

(Zaman, Sandu, and Anghel 2009, 611)

One may then ask, if intergenerational collaboration fosters innovation and efficiency in firms and academic spheres, then why would it not do so in parliaments? This shift to a more holistic conception of expertise provides an indirect reason to introduce youth quotas in parliaments: if it can be shown that collaboration between young and old promotes innovation and efficiency, then the absence of young people in parliaments risks undermining the quality of parliamentary discussions (compared to what they could be). The burden of proof then lies on those opposing the introduction of quotas to show why we are not missing out, or why the costs of youth quotas would be higher than the benefits of IG cooperation.

There is an important risk with this epistemic argument for the significance of diversity for deliberation. It seems to glorify ‘competence’ as the right sort of consideration for reforming legislatures. However, I only want to suggest that intergenerational diversity may be one advantage of the introduction of youth quotas. So far, I have put forward two other arguments for youth quotas: they may help in preventing the exclusion of some youth concerns from the party packaging of political ideas; they can also be seen as increasing the chances of more vigorous advocacy on behalf of the young. I see the epistemic value of diversity as an extra argument rather than as the deciding consideration. Let me now articulate these potential benefits of YQs in parliaments more directly with the demands of intergenerational justice.

6.1.5 Youth quotas, policies and intergenerational justice

As I have argued in Chapter 4, young people may be said to share a number of justice-based interests. Such interests include their diachronic interests, as a cohort, in having access to at least roughly the same opportunities as the generation before them, and their correlated interest in prudent institutions that show sufficient concern for lifespan efficiency, and prevent the phenomenon of diachronic clustering of disadvantage. The young also have a synchronic interest in being treated as equals, as defined through the synchronic relational egalitarian principle. It is a requirement of intergenerational equality that such justice-based interests be advanced as much as other age groups’ justice-based interests. Do the three

previous arguments highlighted for youth quotas contribute to the promotion of such goals?

First, if representatives underestimate, at best, and misrepresent as laziness, at worst, the challenges that young people are facing, then policies are likely to be inadequate. As Daniels suggested, the best way to establish the requirements of lifespan prudence would be to appeal to a veiled representative body - as this would preserve impartiality and prevent age bias. In practice, it is of course impossible to reproduce the age-neutrality of the prudent planners. However, in non-ideal circumstances, it seems that the least we can do is to make sure that deliberative bodies do include representatives from all age groups to limit the risk of age bias. Drawing on previous discussions, we may therefore argue that, in non-ideal circumstances, the *politics of prudence* requires a *politics of presence*, defined by Philips's as the enhancement of the political representation of disadvantaged groups through quotas.

Second, as far as equality between cohorts and synchronic relational equality are concerned, it also seems that quotas can help. Unless we assume that there is absolutely no impact of age and cohort-related self-interest, the total absence of a given cohort from deliberations is unsatisfactory. Even if older age groups are able to represent young people's concerns, to a certain extent, they may miss out on important concerns they may have. Take the example of internships. To a recent online survey conducted by Arte on young people (16-35), 84% of young respondents expressed the view that unpaid internships were exploitative and should be abolished (Europe Arte TV 2014). And yet, just over half of young people in the EU who work as interns received compensation for their last internship (European Commission 2013, 11). If the young feel this way and their representatives tolerate unpaid internships nonetheless, then we can see how the synchronic relational egalitarian principle may be both directly and indirectly undermined. The young may also need to take part in deliberations to define what should count as 'normal' in terms of their opportunity range. As discussed in Chapter 4, the age-relative normal opportunity range requirement is limited if it is defined through what the empirical norm actually is at the present time. Inclusive deliberations may be particularly instrumental in defining what counts as a 'reasonable' set of opportunities for the young to have access to.

I have also identified innovation in problem solving as a potential benefit of youth quotas. However, it is not clear that this helps improve intergenerational fairness. It

may just be a side advantage of quotas. Innovation and efficiency may be beneficial, but they may not lead us closer to justice. The only way to articulate this more directly with IG justice is if we endorse a *substantive epistemic* understanding of deliberation. A procedure is referred to as epistemic when it brings us closer to the ‘true’ understanding of justice. We could argue that intergenerationally diverse parliaments have epistemic value in that they bring us closer to justice, properly understood. However, I do not share this substantive epistemic understanding of deliberations. For this reason, I cannot conclude that the third argument for quotas for the young brings us closer to the requirements of intergenerational justice.

In Section 6.1, my argument revolved around the view that there is a possible *substantive* impact of a certain kind of *presence* in parliaments on the ideas that will be expressed, and ultimately on the policies that will be adopted. As Anne Philips puts it, “part of what sustained the development of an autonomous women’s movement was the arrogance of those who thought that ideas could be separated from presence” (Philips 1995, 7). By this, she challenges the view that there is no correlation between gender and ideas. I have tried to show, like defenders of gender or ethnic quotas, that there is a potential negative correlation between the total absence of young people in parliaments and the adequate representation of their concerns. I have also argued that there is a potential epistemic advantage of intergenerational diversity in parliaments and that the absence of young people is also problematic on such grounds. These claims provide the first basis for a politics of youth presence: the absence of young people is detrimental for the quality of deliberative bodies and for the adequate representation of some youth interests. Ultimately, I have articulated these arguments for quotas with my intergenerational framework, and concluded that youth quotas can increase our chances of meeting the demands of intergenerational justice.

However, I have also suggested that a certain kind of presence is no ‘guarantee’ as such of certain kinds of ideas being expressed and of certain policies being implemented. I have started this discussion with two limitations of descriptive representation: we cannot over-essentialise the young and assume that young MPs will be better at promoting youth concerns; and even if they are, it will not directly affect imbalances in power at the voting level. The impact of quotas on substantive representation is thus potentially not as radical as one may hope.²⁷ This does not

²⁷ Note that we may also consider that the burden of proof lies on those who oppose the introduction of quotas to show that the absence of descriptive representatives from

mean that youth quotas will have no impact on intergenerational fairness. As I have shown, there are several reasons to believe that the introduction of quotas will have a positive impact on deliberations. However, this limitation shows that the substantive case for quotas may not provide on its own a sufficient basis for youth quotas in parliaments. This leads us to another important argument in favour of YQs. I will now show that regardless of the impact that descriptive representation can have on the quality of deliberations, YQs can also be defended on symbolic grounds.

6.2 Symbolic Representation: Promoting a Community of Equals

The symbolic value of representation is, in Philips's account, one in four legitimate grounds for a politics of presence. I already have highlighted the other three earlier in this chapter - the need to tackle exclusion in the party packaging of ideas, the need for more vigorous advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged groups, and the importance of a politics of change open to a fuller range of policy options. I have categorized the three first arguments as being about the *substantive value* of descriptive representation and will now focus on the *symbolic value* of descriptive representation. "If subsequent scrutiny established that an under-participation of women (...) had no observable consequences (an unlikely outcome, but still in principle possible)" Philips argues, "this would not significantly alter the judgement that such inequality is undesirable" (Philips 1995, 33). The symbolic value of descriptive representation is such that, even if there was only little evidence that quotas affect the substantive representation of the marginalised group's interests, there would still be independent reasons to advocate for a politics of presence. Jointly the substantive and symbolic arguments provide a good basis for the introduction of youth quotas in parliament.

In this section, I distinguish two interrelated sides of the symbolic significance of descriptive representation. First, drawing on Tim Scanlon's work on the value of choice, I argue that descriptive representation can be said to have *demonstrative* symbolic value – it publically attests the equal political value of marginalised groups and creates a social meaning of ability to rule (Section 6.2.1). Second, I argue that descriptive representation also has *instrumental* symbolic value – that is, it may have a positive impact on the social inclusion of marginalised groups and on

marginalized groups would have no impact on deliberations from the three substantive point of views I have highlighted (party-packaging of political ideas; vigorous advocacy of group's interest and innovation through enhanced diversity).

their political participation (Section 6.2.2). These two sides of symbolic representation are causally interrelated: the demonstrative value underpins and explains the instrumental effects descriptive representation may have. For this reason, Philips and Mansbridge, for instance, do not separate these two kinds of symbolic values. However, the analytical separation is the best way to account for the fact that, while the symbolic instrumental value of quotas may potentially be empirically verified or disproved, the demonstrative symbolic value may not (or at least not as easily). The demonstrative value of quotas touches on something more fundamental: the fact that a certain kind of presence matters for political equality.

6.2.1 The demonstrative symbolic value of YQs

In his Tanner Lectures on the significance of choice, Tim Scanlon (1986) distinguishes three reasons we have to value individual choice: choice has *predictive* value, *demonstrative* value, and *symbolic* value (Scanlon 1986, 177-185). If I order my own food at the restaurant, instead of letting someone else choose for me, then the order is likely to match my preferences better than it would otherwise (Scanlon 1986, 177-179). This way, choice has predictive value – in many circumstances, the fact that I choose for myself predicts that the results of my choices will accurately match my preferences. However, Scanlon argues, the predictive value of choice is relative and conditional: I may not know much about the cuisine in this given restaurant or I may be drunk. In which case, someone else may be better than I am at ordering the right thing for me. This often justifies paternalistic policies. The predictive value of choice, however, is not the only value of choice. In other words, it may be valuable for me as a person to choose for myself even if I am not the best judge of what my own interest is. Indeed, Scanlon argues, choice also has demonstrative and symbolic value.

Scanlon illustrates the demonstrative value of choice by appealing to the following example (Scanlon 1986, 179): when you buy a gift for someone, the best way to make sure that they get what they prefer is often to let them decide what they want or to give them money. However, getting them exactly what they prefer is partly beside the point. Gift giving is an opportunity to demonstrate care, affection and knowledge. Likewise, the symbolic value of choice is unrelated to the predictive value. In a situation where people are normally allowed to make their own choices, Scanlon argues, “I may value having a choice because my not having it would reflect a judgement on my own or someone else’s part that I fall below the expected standard of competence” (Scanlon 1986, 180). In some circumstances, if I am not allowed to make a choice, it may mean that I am considered as ‘inferior’.

This matters all the more, Scanlon argues, if the members of my group are systematically questioned in their capacity to choose for themselves. The demonstrative and symbolic values of choice are both unrelated to the predictive value of choice precisely because they are non-instrumental. Regardless of whether I may get the results wrong, my choice may have demonstrative and symbolic value.

How do these distinctions relate to the symbolic value of descriptive representation? Scanlon is primarily concerned with individual choices, not with the representation of these choices by suitable people. There is a big stretch between saying that my individual choice matters for demonstrative and symbolic reasons, on the one hand, and saying that my being politically represented by people who ‘look like me’ has demonstrative and symbolic value, on the other hand. In fact, Scanlon’s discussion of the symbolic value of choice already makes some claims about groups, categories and norms. Scanlon is partly concerned that paternalistic policies respect the multiple ways in which choice matters: even when people are not able to decide what is best for themselves, part of what must be taken into consideration is whether some particular groups are “being held inferior in the argument for legal regulation” (Scanlon 1986, 181).

In many circumstances, group identity has a meaning for whether given individuals are acknowledged as equals or not. In this way, descriptive representation may be considered as contributing to the self-image of marginalised groups. If there are no women in parliaments, this has negative value for women’s self-image as political equals. If there are women in parliaments, this has positive demonstrative value for women’s self-image. Scanlon’s two non-instrumental concepts thus seem to work together in the case of descriptive representation. I will thus keep the distinction between predictive value, on the one hand, and symbolic and demonstrative values, on the other hand, but collapse the two latter non-instrumental values into one. Descriptive quotas may thus be said to have what I henceforth refer to as *demonstrative symbolic value* – they attest that the relevant groups are political equals, entirely regardless of their potential substantive contributions to parliamentary deliberations.

Robert Goodin (1977) draws a parallel distinction between self-interest and self-image. Regardless of the substantive impact quotas can have for the representation of the interests of marginalised groups, political representation matters for self-image as well: “people's self-images are, at least in places and in part, tied up with

politics” (Goodin 1977, 259). Goodin highlights this distinction between self-interest and self-image to contradict social scientists who object to quotas on the ground that they have little impact on the substantive representation of the group’s interests. Goodin argues that demonstrating the inapplicability of one argument (self-interest) does not dismiss the other (self-image) (Goodin 1977, 260).

Similarly, Philips (1995, 27-57) emphasizes the importance of the composition of parliaments for attesting to the political equality of women. Some men may be better at advancing the cause of women than some women will (for example, for ideological reasons). But this is unlikely to exhaust our reasons for thinking that the absence of women in parliaments is a problem for political equality. We need women in parliaments *regardless* of whether they will advance the cause of women. We need ethnic minorities *regardless* of whether they will in fact have a concrete positive impact on antiracism. We hope that it will be the case and this gives us extra reasons for implementing quotas in general, but the potential substantive impact on deliberations and policies is not the only justification. Diversity of geographical origins, ethnic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations, and occupation has an important symbolic value. As Mansbridge argues, descriptive representation is likely to play a key role in creating “a social meaning of ability to rule” for groups that are not considered as fit for politics (Mansbridge 1999, 648-650).

Drawing on this demonstrative symbolic value of quotas, one may argue that youth quotas would consist in a “public acknowledgment of equal value”, to borrow Charles Taylor’s expression (Taylor in Philips 1995, 40). It would signal to society and young people that their contribution is valued and that they are considered with equal respect. Their status of equal citizens would be attested, recognised and emphasized. The absence of young people in parliaments on the contrary, may signal the opposite and create a social meaning of inability to rule. It may contribute to an apolitical self-image of young adults, generate a sense that the young are of lower social, or at least political, status, and reinforce the sense that older people are more fit to rule.

If we care about the goal of a community of equals where people relate to each other as equals throughout their adult life, as I have discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, then the existence of such social meaning of political inferiority is problematic and must be undermined. Youth quotas could thus participate in a redefinition of young adulthood. They could contribute to the construction of a

social understanding of the young as able to rule and reinforce their image of equal citizens. Gender and ethnic quotas contribute to undermining the view that only white men are able to be in parliaments.²⁸ Youth quotas have the potential to undermine the age norm that young citizens under 30 years old are not fit to rule, thus contributing to the political equalisation of young people.

Like Philips, Mansbridge does not consider the case of young people. She only mentions young people as needing “role models” as diverse as possible in positions of authority, including parliaments (Mansbridge 1999, 651). Goodin (1977), however, elaborates his argument about the importance of self-image in the context of the 1972 Democratic National Convention, where quotas had been introduced for women, black people and also for young people in each state legislature. Quotas were introduced to remediate the critical underrepresentation of all three groups in previous Conventions. In the context of the Vietnam War, the absence of young people was considered all the more concerning given that their age group was disproportionately affected by the war. The idea that the young would not be included in political deliberations and did not enjoy an equal status of authority exacerbated the perceived generational tension. The value of quotas could thus be expressed partly in this symbolic vein of asserting the political equality of marginalised groups. Legislative bodies, as figures of political authority and power, are particularly suitable contexts for the symbolic demonstration of political equality.

In this section, I claimed that descriptive representation in general, and youth quotas in particular, can be said to hold *demonstrative symbolic value*. The introduction of youth quotas would explicitly attest to young people’s political equality, thus contributing to a social meaning of ability to rule. It is tempting to consider the symbolic argument as merely non-instrumental. After all, I introduced the symbolic argument by stating that we want young people in parliaments ‘regardless’ of the impact it may or may not have on procedures. However, it would be a mistake to consider the symbolic value of youth quotas as merely non-

²⁸ There is a possible counterargument that quotas for underrepresented groups in fact have the opposite outcome of reinforcing, rather than undermining, the view that only white men are able to be in parliament on merit. If this were true, then it would weaken the claim that quotas help creating a social meaning of ability to rule for marginalised groups. One possible way to answer this objection is that, far from abandoning quotas, we should find a way to improve the political communication of quotas. In an interesting paper, Rainbow Murray (2014) argues that we should emphasize the ‘over-representation of men’ rather than the ‘underrepresentation of women’ and should introduce ‘quotas’ for men to reframe the debate. The burden of proof would then be on men to justify that they “deserve” to be overrepresented.

instrumental. I will now introduce the *instrumental symbolic* value of YQs. This instrumental value of quotas fundamentally differs from what I have referred to as ‘substantive representation’ in the first section of this chapter. As Mansbridge claims, symbols are instrumental too, but they differ in that they promote goods unrelated to substantive representation. I was first concerned with the impact of youth quotas on the substantive representation of youth interests in parliaments. With the instrumental symbolic value of quotas, however, I will now examine the society-wide effects that the public acknowledgement of equal value can be expected to have.

6.2.2 The symbolic instrumental value of YQs

The presence of descriptive representatives, as Mansbridge argues, is likely to have some positive effects on the feelings of inclusion of politically marginalised groups: “From this perspective, if the costs are not too great, we should promote diversity in positions of authority and excellence” (Mansbridge 1999, 651). Age diversity may be an important kind of diversity, especially if some age groups, like the young, but also maybe the very old, are politically marginalised. More age diversity in parliament may be particularly instrumental in bringing about a more cohesive society.

Youth quotas could indirectly play a role in encouraging young people to vote, for instance. As Malik and Howker argues, it would be too simplistic to believe that young people simply do not want to engage to explain the fact that their voting turnout is so low:

When, before the 2005 general election, the Electoral Commission launched a campaign to persuade young people to vote with the shout-line: ‘If you don’t do politics... there’s not much you do do’, they missed the point entirely. It’s not that young people don’t do politics, it’s that modern politics doesn’t do young people.

(Howker and Malik 2010, 154)

We may hope that quotas would contribute to increasing young voters’ turnout. To reply to Shiv Malik’s quote, one may hope that youth quotas may send the explicit message: “Politics does young people now”. The presence of some young people in parliaments may thus act as a strong symbolic gesture to reengage young people in political communities, potentially increasing their voting turnouts.

Youth quotas also have the potential to increase the vertical communication between constituents and their MPs. Increased diversity amongst MPs, Mansbridge

(1999, 641-643) argues, can have an impact on people's likeliness to visit their MPs. She draws on studies that suggested that Black people in the US were more likely to go see their Congressperson if they were Black. Age membership is very different from other identities, but one could speculate that older people may feel more confident in sharing their concerns with a MP from their generation. Similarly, we can imagine cases where young people may feel more comfortable communicating their concerns to representatives roughly their age instead of people the age of their parents or grand parents. They may fear, for instance, paternalistic or contemptuous responses to their problems.

There only needs to be a few young MPs for this to work. Mansbridge (1999, 642) argues that one of the advantages of descriptive representation is that it can allow communication beyond formal constituencies. Women representatives may act as surrogate representatives for women who share their views across various constituencies. So the vertical communication may be improved, through an increased communication between populations and surrogate descriptive representatives. This way, age diversity could contribute to enhancing the vertical communication between constituents and MPs. The absence of young representatives, on the contrary, prevents such opportunities for vertical communication between young people throughout constituencies and young surrogate representatives.²⁹

Notice that the introduction of youth quotas may also have effects on youth participation in politics that do not result from the symbolic effects of quotas. Quite straightforwardly, the introduction of youth quotas would have to be followed and supported by the introduction of other measures. Upstream, the young will have to be trained earlier and this may involve better civic education in schools. Parties will have to actively engage in recruiting young people and in developing their youth wings so as to meet the quota requirements. Governments may have to fund campaigns, education programs and design training. De facto, the introduction of youth quotas would thus have to be followed by a series of other measures to enhance youth participation. Youth quotas must therefore be understood in light of this institutional ripple effect. As such, this is an argument for focusing on the introduction of quotas since it presupposes a series of other measures to be put in

²⁹ Note that this is potentially also a point that falls into the substantive representation argument. If there is a better vertical communication as a result of youth quotas, this is also likely to improve the substantive representation of youth concerns in parliaments. Mansbridge classifies enhanced vertical communication under the category of substantive representation (Mansbridge 1999, 641-643).

place. It is properly radical in this sense because its implementation necessitates an entire rethink of how to train and integrate more young people into politics.

To conclude, in Section 6.2, I introduced the demonstrative symbolic value of descriptive representation and argued that youth quotas could be seen as an attestation of the equal political status of the young, and that it could contribute to the creation of a social meaning of equal ability to rule. I then showed that youth quotas also had a more directly instrumental symbolic value: youth quotas could contribute to enhancing young people's feelings of inclusion and can help in reengaging young people in their political communities. One potential impact of youth quotas could be an increase in voting turnouts from the young. Another potential impact of youth quotas could be an enhanced vertical communication between young people and MPs. For these two kinds of symbolic reasons, youth quotas could thus bring us closer to the ideal of a community of relational equals. If, somewhere down the line, quotas can contribute to increasing the political participation of young people, then we will not have to be concerned about the interests of the young being sidelined as much. In this way, quotas can be said to increase legitimacy and to enhance our chances of meeting the demands of intergenerational justice.

The two kinds of symbolic values I have highlighted – demonstrative and instrumental – are extensively connected. The symbolic effects of youth quotas arise from the demonstrative potential they have. However, separating them adds one level of argumentation for quotas. While the impact of youth quotas on 'feelings of inclusion' and on youth political participation can be measured, the properly demonstrative political value is not quantifiable. It is valuable because of what it means and attests. It is difficult not to have in mind potential symbolic effects when considering their value, but analytically at least, they can be separated. And, while the symbolic effects can be proved or disproved, the demonstrative value may be thought as more intrinsically valuable.

6.3 Age or Cohort Quotas?

Let me now discuss what I take to be an important distinction that has been running through my argument for youth quotas in this chapter. A fundamental distinction can in fact be made between two types of youth quotas: age quotas and cohort

quotas³⁰. We can either introduce age quotas to make sure that there are always a certain number of young people in parliaments, or we can introduce cohort quotas to make sure that minority cohorts like the ‘jilted generation’ get fairly represented throughout their lives. Implementing age quotas for young people would consist in having, at any time a certain number of MPs under the age of 30 (or 35) years old. We could for instance say that at any time there always needs to be over 50 young people in national parliaments. Implementing cohort quotas, on the other hand, would consist in having a certain number of seats reserved for each cohort. The idea here would be to protect some minority cohort from being underrepresented. If we consider that at any given time there are about four voting birth cohorts (for instance currently the baby boomers generation, their parents, generation X and generation Y) then we should consider that none of these generations may have fewer representatives than 50 (for instance). Consider the following age composition of the French Parliament.

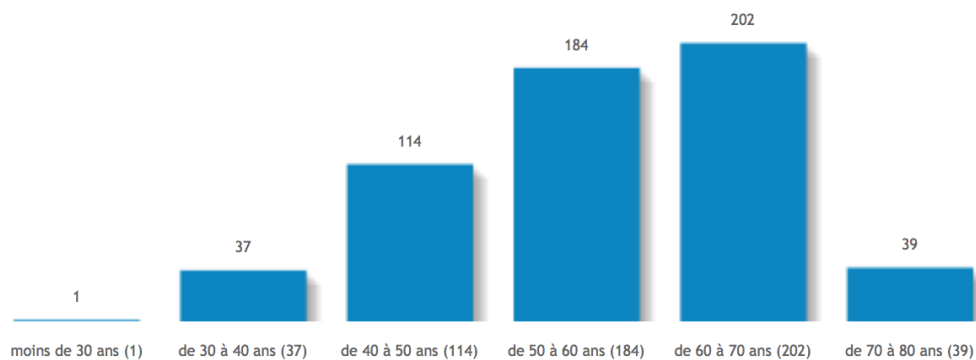


Figure 10 - French MPs by age (Assemblée Nationale 2012)

This diagram represents the number of MPs per age group. Even though it represents age groups, it gives us information on how different birth cohorts are being represented: the baby boomers, born in approximately 1946/64 are between 50 and 68 now. They clearly constitute the most represented cohort.

We must now separate age effect from cohort effect. It is likely to be the case that most MPs will always be between 40 and 70 years old. Older MPs will perhaps consider that they cannot keep up with the position’s workload and younger MPs will perhaps feel like they want to gain more experience first, including studies, training, and jobs. If this trend remains over time, then different cohorts will be represented fairly over their whole lives. In this case, we would not need cohort quotas. However, if it turned out that minority cohorts were underrepresented over

³⁰ I am indebted to Axel Gosseries for very insightful discussions on the implications of the distinction.

time, introducing cohort quotas could be an important option. It could guarantee that representations do not become too disproportionate by securing a minimum number of seats to avoid the risk of majority generations getting a better representation of their interests over their complete lives. In light of the distinction between age and cohort quotas I just introduced, let me briefly go back to previous discussions to examine which quotas have been under discussion in the arguments of substantive and symbolic representation.

It seems that age quotas would help in accounting better for the experiences and interests of the young, because, as I have argued, a diversity of age-related experiences is likely to improve the understanding of challenges faced by different age groups and reduce the risk of misrepresentation. If we are concerned about youth unemployment and poverty and are dissatisfied about imprudent and short-term institutional planning, then it seems that it is the absence of young people in parliament, as an age group, that we are primarily concerned with. The hopes that youth quotas may prevent the exclusion of some age-related interests, increase the vigor of advocacy on behalf of the young, and instigate change through a broadening of policy options would be primarily served (if at all) by the introduction of age quotas for the young. The need for age quotas is reinforced by the current trend of the aging of most European countries. If the young constitute a decreasing minority, then the relevance of age quotas will persist over time.

As we saw earlier, however, the various problems that we have identified also have a cohortal dimension. There are in fact a few reasons why we may call for the introduction of cohort quotas for the young. First, as I have already mentioned, while older MPs have been younger, they have been younger at an earlier time. For this reason, if we are concerned with accounting for a larger variety of experiences, what we really need is to introduce some cohortal diversity in parliament. In fact, making it all about age would be misleading, since it would give more strength to the complete life intuition that all MPs have been young once and can therefore voice youth experiences and concerns. The conjunction of age effect with period effect, however, gives rise to a series of cohortal experiences that need to be accounted for in parliament.

Second, imprudent planning often leads to diachronic disadvantage and can scar a whole generation. For this reason, the members of the 'jilted generation' are expected to fare relatively worse than the previous generation over their complete lives, at least in terms of job opportunities and economic security (Chauvel 2010). I

have already discussed how high rates of poverty and unemployment are likely to be correlated with further experiences of unemployment, poverty and exclusion throughout the lifespan, but youth disengagement from politics is also likely to lead to further disengagement from politics in the long run. In his paper on young citizens and voting turnout, Edward Phelps (2004) for instance analyses data that suggests that lower voting turnout among the young today may not result from an age effect but from a cohort effect. Comparing different cohorts as they age, he worries that turnouts among younger cohorts will not increase as they age. To address this double cohortal challenge, institutions should give a voice to particularly impaired and disengaged cohorts throughout their lives, and not only when they are young.

The introduction of cohort quotas could be needed to mitigate the risk of a skewing away of policies towards the interests of majority cohorts. The problem is not only the political absence of young people, as an age group, it is their exclusion, as a birth cohort. Both problems currently overlap, but over time, two different problems could develop. The baby boomers, as a majority generation, will still have disproportionate power over the next generation when they will not be 'young' anymore. To gain and keep power, politicians are likely to shift their policies towards the interests of the growing majority of pensioners and to neglect the interests of younger members of society. It is not that there is a conscious plot by the baby-boomers to disregard the interests of their children. As Malik and Howker claim, there is a "skewing of policy away from the interests of the jilted generation and towards those of their parents – not by any conscious effort by voters, but simply because of the numbers" (Howker and Malik 2010, 157).

The result is a risk that institutions that meet the needs of different age groups will be framed according to this concern for pleasing the majority cohort rather than based on what is prudent, urgent, fair or sustainable. Implementing cohort quotas by making sure that there are at least a certain number of members of the minority cohort in parliament at any given time may thus lower the risk of the political exclusion of smaller or relatively more disenfranchised cohorts – at least at the representation level. Of course, such impact, as I have mentioned throughout this chapter, would be limited since it would only undermine the representation problem downstream and not directly the upstream voting problem. However, while the underrepresentation of such cohorts in parliaments would risk reinforcing the problem, more equal representation can reduce it.

Last, the epistemic value of diversity may provide reasons for both age and cohort quotas. If it is likely that age-diversity is correlated with cognitive diversity, then this is likely to be both due to the fact that we change when we age, and that we are educated differently based on when we were born. Indeed, over time, educational systems significantly modify the knowledge they deliver, the methods they employ, the relationship to knowledge they transmit and the technologies they use. For this reason, different generations are likely to have a different kind of input into deliberations. Intergenerational diversity is thus likely to be both valuable for age-based reasons and for cohortal reasons.

In practice, cohort quotas could take the form of age quotas for the jilted generation's members, as they age. If it turned out that there was a very low number of 40 years old MPs in 20 years and then a very low number of 60 years old MPs in 40 years, then the political inclusion of the jilted generation would have been threatened for their entire lives. Since age is an indicator of the birth cohort one belongs to, cohort quotas might turn out to be implemented *through age*: the best way to implement these cohort quotas may perhaps be to set a minimum number of 40 year-olds and then a minimum number of 60-years-old MPs (if a problem arises in terms of their representation). The distinction is nonetheless important to identify better what kind of problems we are dealing with. Imagine the following two hypothetical examples, which I name *age-unjust parliament* and *cohort-unjust parliament*.

In age-unjust parliament, on the one hand, policies are always biased against the young. There are no representatives under the age of 35 years old and decisions are always based on misrepresentations. Decisions violate the lifespan efficiency principle – the age-unjust parliament is dominated by a middle-aged-centric perspective on what a good life requires. Their motto is: 'frugal young age and opulent old age'. Now imagine that, in such society, the motto 'frugal young age opulent old age' applies to everyone as they age. This society can be described as unjust for prudential reasons: lifespan sufficiency may be violated if the frugal youth involves insufficient resources for the young to live a minimally decent life, and the lifespan efficiency principle is infringed on. This society may also be unjust from the point of view of synchronic relational equality: the young may be at higher risk of being dominated, controlled or exploited by older age groups. The approximate cohort equality principle, however, is fulfilled if it is the case that every cohort is treated the same over time. Here it seems clear that mitigating the

risk of such age-unjust parliament requires the introduction of age quotas for young people.

In cohort-unjust parliament, on the other hand, deliberations are also biased against the young, and the ‘frugal youth opulent old age’ lifestyle is preferred too. However, there is no continuity: as they age, the young have to endure a frugal middle age, and then a frugal old age. Cohort-unjust parliament shapes policies in a way that always serves the majority cohort as they age. Such planning thus threatens approximate cohort equality: it is cohort quotas, rather than age quotas, that are needed to mitigate the bias in deliberations. Members of younger cohorts in parliaments may act as watchdogs for the sustainability of policies. The age unjust and cohort unjust parliaments illustrate the two distinct problems that give rise to the need to conceptualize cohort representation as well as age representation.

Let me now consider a real example. Pieter Vanhuyse (2013) designed an index to calculate intergenerational fairness. One of the measures he uses is the Elderly Bias in Social Spending’ (EBiSS). He compares the per capita spending per elderly person (65 years old or over) to the per capita spending on 20-64 year-olds in OECD countries. The following spending was included in the measurements:

On the *elderly*-oriented spending side, the *EBiSS* numerator includes old-age-related benefits in cash and in kind, survivors benefits in cash and in kind, disability pensions, occupational injury and disease-related pensions, and early retirement for labor market reasons. On the *nonelderly*-spending side, the *EBiSS* denominator includes family benefits in cash and in kind, active labor market programs, income maintenance cash benefits, unemployment compensation and severance pay cash benefits, and all education spending.

(Vanhuyse 2014, 6)

Healthcare is not included in the calculations, so the EBiSS is very likely to significantly underestimate the ratio. The EBiSS is only one measure among many others (including levels of child poverty, ecological footprint, debt per child, etc.), but it is interesting to illustrate our discussion of age and cohort unjust parliaments. The results Vanhuyse found are illustrated in the graph below:

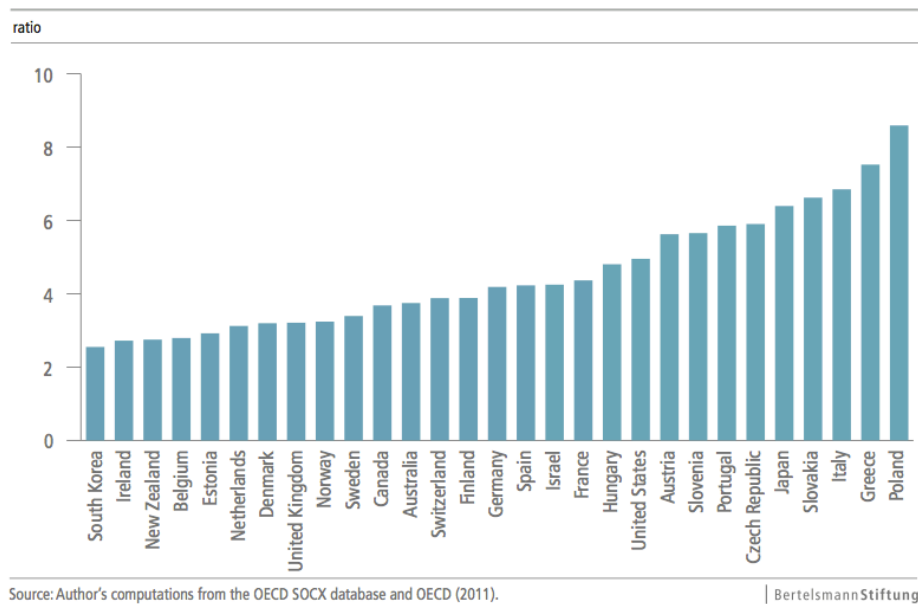


Figure 11 - Elderly bias in social spending (Vanhuyse 2013, 27)

The OECD countries surveyed operate very different levels of EBiSS, from over eight times as much per elderly person than non-elderly person in Poland, to slightly over four times as much in Germany, to under three times as much in South Korea. There is nothing intrinsically unfair about these ratios as such. Such imbalances in ratios may just be required to meet the demands of the lifespan sufficiency principle: only it takes much more to bring the elderly above this threshold than it does younger people.

However, it could be the case that some of these imbalances are unjustified. Take the case of Greece: the state spends seven times more for every elderly Greek as for every non-elderly Greek (2007-2008). Such imbalances may be morally unproblematic if (a) the ratio is in fact the best expression of prudent planning and synchronic relational quality, and (b) if such spending are sustainable over time. However, if it is the case that no young persons have taken part in the deliberations, then this increases the suspicion that decision may be taken by age or cohort unjust parliament. If (a) is not met, we may be in an age-unjust parliament. If (b) is not met, then we may be in a cohort-unjust parliament. One could perhaps argue that, the lower a country scores in terms of intergenerational fairness as measured by Vanhuyse (when examining EBiSS ratios, ecological footprints, child poverty, youth unemployment, etc.), the more problematic the absence of young people in parliaments may be.

This case further exemplifies the implications of the distinction between age and cohort quotas for the question of the substantive representation of youth interests in parliaments. When the EBiSS is abnormally high, or when young people's poverty and unemployment is very high, the burden of proof lies on those who are in the cohort or age group that seems to be privileged by social spending to explain why this is not problematic. If the political system that legitimises those imbalances is itself in the grip of an intergenerational democratic deficit, then the least we can do is to make sure some representatives of the relevant age group or cohorts take part in the deliberation, on substantive representative grounds.

Would age or cohort quotas be better placed to help achieve the aims of symbolic representation? It is young people *as an age group* that are not included in the community of political equals, because they have only recently become adults. People are more likely to find the silence and invisibility of the young acceptable in comparison with other age groups because they are seen as inexperienced. For this reason the young are always likely to be politically marginalised. And yet, for the symbolic reasons we have highlighted in the preceding section, the political exclusion of young adults is in tension with the goal of synchronic relational equality. Of course, other age groups may be marginalized and invisible in parliaments. If it turned out that there were no elderly in parliaments, this would be a problem for the goal of a community of equals too. If Phelps (2004) is right that the disengagement in voting turnout could be sign of a cohortal disengagement from formal politics, then it is possible that what we may need, on symbolic grounds, is both age and cohort quotas.

6.4 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have considered the introduction of youth quotas in parliament as a radical policy reform to address the low political participation of young people. I have highlighted two sets of arguments for the descriptive representation of the young in parliament: some relating to the substantive representation of their interests and some to do with its symbolic value. I argued that jointly these two sets of arguments provided a good basic for a politics of youth presence. I then pointed to an original distinction between cohort quotas and age quotas and examined which kinds of quotas specifically had been under discussion as youth quotas. I suggested that cohort quotas could be implemented through age quotas, and that

the distinction could vanish in practice, but showed why the justifications behind the implementation of youth quotas are both age-based and cohortal.

This final chapter has been concerned with highlighting some important potential benefits of quotas for the young in parliaments from the point of view of intergenerational equality, and has suggested that the introduction of youth quotas in legislatures should be seriously considered. The philosophical discussions have drawn on empirical evidence and the arguments have been concerned with informing practice. However, the question of how youth quotas can be enforced effectively remains largely beyond the scope of this enquiry. I have focused on directly elected bodies of representation and their non-descriptive representativeness. For this reason, I only focused on lower chambers. However, it is important to note that, in practice, it would be much easier to introduce youth quotas in the House of Lords than in the House of Commons since members of the upper house are appointed. The House of Lords is fundamentally problematic from the point of view of legitimacy, but if we are concerned with outcomes and symbols, as we were in this chapter, then we could also consider the nomination of young people in upper chambers where only 4% of members are under 50 years old and only 17% under 60. The House of Lords is a strong symbol of the veneration of the elders in the UK. For this reason, symbolically, the appointment of 50 people under the age of 35 years old, for instance, could have some symbolic power. The same could be said of the French Senate, which also has only 4% of members under the age of 50 years old.

As far as lower chambers are concerned, youth quotas would be easier to introduce in proportional elections than in first-past-the post systems. In proportional systems with party lists, it is relatively easy for parties to meet quota regulations in general, because there is a larger pool of candidates to pick from. In fact, the Moroccan parliament, which has both women and youth quotas (30 reserved seats for under 40 years old) in place, operates with a list system, which facilitates the operation of these quotas. In non-proportional systems, parties would need to put forward young people in safe seats and it would be more difficult to meet their targets. It would thus be easier to introduce youth quotas for the European parliamentary elections than for the UK or French general elections. There is very little data on the few experiments with youth quotas in Africa. A more in depth engagement with the practicalities of its implementations could help in seeing which implementation strategies work best and in establishing a feasible strategy for first-past-the-post electoral systems too.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored the normative significance of time and age for egalitarian justice and provided an egalitarian account of justice between overlapping generations. When we apply egalitarian comparison to people born at different times, I asked whether we should do so synchronically (at this specific point in time) or diachronically (over the course of their lives). My answer to this question was ‘both’. Contrary to what the default distributive view claims, complete lives are not the only relevant time unit of egalitarian concern. I have claimed that, to be justified, inequalities between overlapping generations must meet the three following principles: (1) approximate cohort equality; (2) prudent planning (lifespan sufficiency and efficiency); and (3) synchronic relational equality between age groups. Based on this principled theory of intergenerational equality, I proposed an account of what treating young people as equals means, in theory and practice. This general conclusion summarizes the thesis’ main arguments, highlights directions for future research and emphasizes the thesis’ core contributions.

Summary of the Thesis

Part I was structured in four chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the concepts of intergenerational justice (including the distinction between age groups and birth cohorts) and the dominant answer to the equality through time debate – complete lives egalitarianism. I explained why CLE became established as the default view: it corresponds to the (itself dominant) metaphysical view of persons as unified selves from birth to death; it is the other side of the coin of the anti-utilitarian separateness of persons argument, which views interpersonal inequalities as fundamentally distinct from intrapersonal inequalities; and it naturally follows from the (luck) egalitarian ideals of responsibility and compensation, which fits well the diachronic approach. While CLE finds inequalities between birth cohorts to be *prima facie* objectionable, I showed, it does not register inequalities between age groups as objects of egalitarian concern.

I accepted the first cohortal implications of CLE by showing that there is some moral significance to younger and future cohorts having access to an at least equal set of opportunities as they ‘begin the world’; and I put forward *approximate*

cohort equality as an important intergenerational egalitarian principle. However, I ended Chapter 1 by taking issue with the implications of CLE for age-group justice. Pure CLE does not offer any resources on its own to oppose some inequalities between age groups, beyond their derivative impact on inequalities between birth cohorts. As a result, both the question of what institutions must do for different age groups and of which limits should be set to age-based discrimination are left unexplored. Although the idea that age is ‘special’ compared to gender or race has some intuitive strength, it does not follow that all inequalities between age groups should be considered acceptable. For this purpose, Chapters 2 and 3 offered two important complements to CLE: the first says that inequalities between age groups are fair only when they are *prudent and* the second adds that age-based inequalities in treatment must not create *relationships of domination*.

In Chapter 2, I introduced Norman Daniels’s diachronic prudential theory of age-group justice. I provided a principled interpretation of the outcomes of the prudential lifespan account around the *lifespan sufficiency* and *lifespan efficiency* principles. The first prudential principle demands that institutions ensure that people have enough at any point to be above an absolute threshold defined by appeal to basic human needs, and a relative threshold set at the level of an age-relative normal opportunity range. After rejecting a series of objections to the prudential account coming from within the diachronic paradigm, I concluded that the account stands on firm ground as an adequate diachronic complement to CLE.

However, I introduced the important concern with intrapersonal prudence that it inherited from previous theories an understanding of age-group issues as residual, thus conceptualizing age-group issues in isolation from other questions of social justice, including social class. I showed that: at best, Daniels misses out on the potential of institutions that meet age groups’ needs to reduce many other inequalities; at worst, the PLA risks working against the goal of the Rawlsian egalitarian theory that frames Daniels’s account. I thus argued for the critical need to reconnect the requirements of age-group justice to broader discussions of social justice.

In Chapter 3, drawing on McKerlie’s simultaneous segments approach, I offered an account of the moral significance of synchronic inequalities in general, and in particular between age groups. I contended that synchronic inequalities have normative value beyond their derivative impact on both complete lives equality and lifespan prudence. However, I argued that McKerlie’s synchronic alternative, while

it expresses important intuitions about the limitations of CLE and the prudential lifespan account, is inadequate. The main problem with simultaneous segments egalitarianism is that the least arbitrary segment to apply the value of distributive equality is the whole life segment. CLE would thus be, I claimed, the *par excellence* segment of distributive justice.

I then argued that there was an alternative way to explain our reluctance to accept instances of synchronic inequalities, such as the Unequal City and Swapping Castes examples. I appealed to the relational egalitarian conception of equality to account for the moral significance of synchronic inequalities that occur at any one time. I put forward the *synchronic relational egalitarian* principle as a supplementary egalitarian way to think about what can be wrong about inequalities between age groups: phases of domination do not cancel out diachronically and are problematic even if they create positive overall lifespan utility. When assessing forms of synchronic inequalities, we need to examine the imbalances in status, respect, power and voice that they contain or generate.

In Chapter 4, I argued that the three principles offered the outline of a comprehensive theory of justice between overlapping generations. I claimed that the principles were individually insufficient, but jointly complementary. I also argued that we should aim to accommodate all dimensions through institutional planning, and that no principle takes lexical priority over others. From the theoretical framework, I then derived four implications for what counts as treating the young as equals, in a way that displayed significant sensitivity to other social inequalities. Young people are treated as equals when their communities acknowledge them as relational equals and when they are able to stand free from domination (synchronic relational equality); when institutions ensure their access to sufficient resources to enjoy a normal opportunities range (lifespan sufficiency); when institutions pre-distribute resources so as to promote a life of good quality, prevent the diachronic clustering of disadvantage and minimize the formation of unequal life courses (lifespan efficiency); and when institutions mitigate the scarring effects that undermine their long-term prospects as a cohort (approximate cohort equality).

In Part II, I made explicit the implications of this account of intergenerational justice for concrete public policies. Chapter 5 discussed the important debate about unconditional cash between basic income and basic capital proponents. I argued that, even though at first sight basic capital seems to be a better diachronic

candidate, closer scrutiny shows that basic income is preferable. I then argued that the synchronic relational egalitarian principle provides another strong reason to prefer basic income to basic capital. I concluded that basic income should be the baseline for egalitarian universal cash policies. In light of the important diachronic power of basic capital and its potential in fostering social mobility, I nonetheless considered the possibility to complement the basic income baseline with an early lump sum (Baby Bond proposal), but without undermining what makes basic income normatively superior from the point of view of equality through time – the fact that it ensures a lifelong of basic economic security and promotes synchronic relational equality.

In Chapter 6, I looked at the problem of the underrepresentation of young people in parliaments and put forward arguments for the introduction of youth quotas. I highlighted two sets of arguments for the descriptive representation of the young in parliament: some relating to the substantive representation of young people's interests and some to do with the symbolic value of quotas in fostering the goal of a community of equals. I argued that jointly these two sets of arguments provide a good basis for a *politics of youth presence* in parliaments. I then discussed an original distinction between cohort quotas and age quotas. I suggested that cohort quotas could be implemented through age quotas, and that the distinction could vanish in practice, but I showed that the justifications behind the implementation of youth quotas are both age-based and cohortal. From the point of view of young people's diachronic and synchronic interests, and for the goal of a community of relationally equal citizens, I concluded, the introduction of youth quotas should be seriously considered.

Avenues for Future Research

There are at least three related topics that deserve to be researched in the future. First, the theme of personal responsibility has largely been left in the background of this thesis. I have only discussed individual responsibility in Chapter 1, when I explained the intuitive pull of the diachronic view for responsibility-sensitive egalitarians, in Chapter 2, to show that Daniels's account leaves some space for ambition-sensitivity, and in Chapters 3 and 5, when mentioning the harshness of luck egalitarianism for those who do not succeed. I did not focus on individual responsibility more than this because there was a great deal of work to be done investigating intergenerational equality *per se* before turning to personal

responsibility. Moreover, I wanted to go against the trend of anti-youth rhetoric and policies that overwhelmingly focus on the young's behaviour. However, in the future, it would be worthwhile to look at how the discussed principles of intergenerational equality might be articulated more closely to individual responsibility. My suspicion, however, is that the synchronic relational equality principle, which state that people must be free from wrongful relational inequalities, will stand in the way of most attempts to justify too significant synchronic inequalities, even if they are the result of individual choices made in the past. Rather than personal responsibility, a more promising angle to approach this question would perhaps be to discuss the space that egalitarian ideals of solidarity, contribution and reciprocity should take in a theory of intergenerational equality.

Investigating what treating *the elderly* as equals requires could be a second avenue worth exploring. I have already mentioned some of the implications of my framework for what we owe the elderly, especially in Chapter 3, when I put forward the synchronic relational principle as an objection to the Unequal City example. However, this thesis has primarily focused on young people, as it had set out to do. It would be worth thinking more about the implications of my views for pension policies - although my argument for a basic income from birth to death has already pointed to the importance of unconditional cash for all age groups. I also expect that the synchronic relational equality principle would be a relevant perspective from which to examine the treatment of disadvantaged elderly in care-homes, for instance. Moreover, as mentioned in Chapter 4, I think that although the principles I have put forward do not importantly conflict in the case of young people, they may be in greater conflict when focusing on what we owe the elderly. Lifespan efficiency, for instance, which encourages pre-distributive policies, may conflict with lifespan sufficiency, which encourages compensatory policies whenever needed, to bring people up to a certain level.

Last, I have focused on basic income and the challenge posed by the basic capital grant. But it would also be important to address the *labourist* challenge to basic income. Indeed, policy proposals aimed a youth unemployment are often labourist in that they propose solutions that are conditional on the young working. Conditional benefits, workfare programmes or youth guarantee proposals are varied, but they have in common that they foresee work-based solutions as preferable to unconditional benefits, and they see the obligation to work as going hand-in-hand with the right to an income. My framework would serve an interesting purpose if it could help in differentiating and assessing the various

proposals' relative diachronic and synchronic advantages; and ultimately rank them accordingly.

It is interesting that the European commission's proposal (2012) for a *youth job guarantee* draws on the scarring effects of youth unemployment and on the fact that early experiences of employment improve one's chances of having a job in the future. An argument for a youth job guarantee as promoting lifespan efficiency better than does BI (and for a smaller cost to the taxpayer) could be made. There is a sense that giving unconditional cash to the young settles for less in this way. If young people want jobs and are unemployed in large numbers and we give them cash instead, it may feel like we are merely compensating them for an important opportunity that they should have access to (Harvey 2013, Tcherneva 2013).

In the future, I could respond to this challenge to basic income and argue that, far from settling for less, BI settles for more, for some of the reasons highlighted in Chapter 5 and beyond. It seems to me that the synchronic relational egalitarian principle is likely to give us strong reasons to oppose programmes that coerce young individuals into jobs they do not want. Moreover, although unemployment scars people's lives as a whole, bad jobs do too. In defence of BI, one argument could be made, along the lines of Guy Standing (2013), that an unconditional basic income is required for a meaningful right to work. Or at least, my framework would help in isolating job-based solutions that are satisfactory diachronically and synchronically from those that are not. This discussion also intersects with some of the research questions on contribution and reciprocity that I have already mentioned.

Research contributions

This thesis has addressed a series of important questions that have been insufficiently explored by contemporary egalitarian thinkers. By taking time and age seriously, I offered a number of original theoretical and practical arguments at the intersection of the political philosophy of egalitarianism, intergenerational justice and public policy. Three significant aspects of my contribution are worth emphasizing.

Intergenerational equality

I have contributed to the theory of intergenerational justice through highlighting the generational implications of the abstract ‘equality through time’ debate. I have shown that questions of justice between overlapping generations raise important normative questions, thus challenging the view that intergenerational justice primarily concerns relations between non-contemporaries. My focus on overlapping generations has been both on age groups and birth cohorts. I clarified what was at stake behind this demographic distinction and particularly contributed to the under researched field of age-group justice through: (1) identifying three principles of age-group justice – lifespan sufficiency, lifespan efficiency and synchronic relational equality; (2) showing how these principles could guide the design of just institutions in a *non-residual* manner; (3) looking at concrete examples of policies that further these goals.

Moreover, I have shown that questions of age-group justice are in fact of primary importance when discussing what we owe to the young and the elderly, and that the overlooking of age-group issues in the literature is not justified. It is one thing to know that institutions ought to be sustainable and that we ought to correct and compensate for important inequalities between cohorts when they arise - as the approximate equality between cohorts principle enjoins. It is another to know how institutions should be designed to meet people’s needs throughout their lives. I did not go as far as kicking away the cohortal ladder with which this thesis’ investigation began – that is, I did not abandon the cohortal principle or consider it insignificant. However, I did suggest that the prudential and synchronic relational requirements of age-group justice are more informative than the cohortal principle, when it comes to overlapping generations.

Egalitarianism

I have aimed to contribute to egalitarian thinking by showing that questions of time and age cannot be considered as residual when theorizing equality. I have explained why these questions have been overlooked by egalitarian theories, and I showed how Daniels’s account of age-group justice inherits the conceptualization of these matters as residual. I advocated an intersectional approach to equality that integrates questions of age and time at its core. One suggestion was to focus on the diachronic clustering of disadvantage model to elucidate the lifespan efficiency requirement in a way that articulates prudential lifespan concerns, on the one hand,

with the development of inequalities in advantage over the life course and the intergenerational transmission of poverty, on the other hand.

In addition to this, I have argued that the purely distributive approach to equality, which I have shown explains the focus on complete lives well, is insufficient and must be complemented by a relational egalitarian approach to explain adequately our strong intuitive reluctance to accept some synchronic inequalities as unproblematic. Therefore, I have contributed to an important current egalitarian debate (between distributive and relational conceptions) and hope to have made a strong case for why, even if we care about distributive inequalities, we must endorse the relational conception of inequality to make proper sense of some important inequalities between age groups.

Philosophy of Public Policy

I believe that this thesis is an illustration of what political philosophy, including in its ideal forms, can do for politics. The diachronic/synchronic and distributive/relational distinctions I have discussed help unpack the normative disagreements underpinning public policies as different as the basic income proposal and the introduction of youth quotas in parliament. For instance, I challenged the view that the underrepresentation of young people in parliament is largely unproblematic, because the young will get an equal representation over their complete lives. Similarly, the intergenerational framework I put forward revealed some important conflicts in value between basic income and basic capital and showed that if we embrace a time-sensitive comprehensive egalitarian approach, we should prefer basic income as a baseline. Moreover, I have offered an account of what we owe to young people, both as an age group and as a birth cohort, which can inform youth policies. For instance, the original distinction between age and cohort quotas for the young revealed the different reasons we may have for supporting the policy. The normative conclusions that I have reached in this thesis can be used to shed some lights on other policy debates. And the thesis can serve as an example of what political philosophy can do for public policy.

List of Abbreviations

PPP	Philosophy of Public Policy
IG Justice	Intergenerational Justice
CLE	Complete Lives Egalitarianism
SSE	Simultaneous Segments Egalitarianism
PLA	Prudential Lifespan Account
JSA	Jobseeker Allowance
BI	Basic Income
YBI	Youth Basic Income
BC	Basic Capital
YQs	Youth Quotas

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