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Luck Egalitarianism and Non-Overlapping Generations

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Citation of this paper:

Finneron-Burns, Elizabeth, "Luck Egalitarianism and Non-Overlapping Generations" (2023). *Political Science Publications*. 192.

<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/politicalsciencepub/192>

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

WILEY

Luck egalitarianism and non-overlapping generations

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Funding information

Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, Grant/Award Number: M17-0372:1; Vetenskapsrådet

Abstract

This paper argues that there are good reasons to limit the scope of luck egalitarianism to co-existing people. First, I outline reasons to be sceptical about how “luck” works intergenerationally and therefore the very grounding of luck egalitarianism between non-overlapping generations. Second, I argue that what Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen calls the “core luck egalitarian claim” allows significant intergenerational inequality which is a problem for those who object to such inequality. Third, luck egalitarianism cannot accommodate the intuition that it might be required to leave future generations better off than we are, even if it would come at no cost to ourselves. Finally, I argue that following another, broader, version of luck egalitarianism would require us to level down future generations and possibly even ourselves, which is a problem for those persuaded by the levelling-down objection.

KEYWORDS

future generations, inequality, intergenerational justice, luck egalitarianism, non-overlapping generations

1 | INTRODUCTION

Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen (2016) and Axel Gosseries (2019) have, separately, argued that the scope of luck egalitarian justice extends across all generations. However, in this paper I argue that there are good reasons to limit the scope of luck egalitarianism to overlapping generations, that is to co-existing people. First, I outline

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reasons to be sceptical about how “luck” works intergenerationally and therefore the very grounding of luck egalitarianism between non-overlapping generations. Second, I argue that what Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen calls the “core luck egalitarian claim” allows significant intergenerational inequality which is a problem for those who object to such inequality. Third, luck egalitarianism cannot accommodate the intuition that it might be required to leave future generations *better* off than we are, even if it would come at no cost to ourselves. Finally, I argue that following another, broader, version of luck egalitarianism would require us to level down future generations and possibly even ourselves, which is a problem for those persuaded by the levelling-down objection.

Certain assumptions underpin the arguments in what follows. First, when I talk about what the current generation owes to future generations, I will refer to “us” and “them” as if they were individual agents, when of course, in reality, they are actually collectives of very many agents on different levels including supra-national organisations, states, and individuals. However, I will ignore this complexity and treat generations as individual entities.¹ Relatedly, since the focus is on *intergenerational* distribution, I will also set aside the fact that within any given generation there will likely be at least some *intragenerational* inequality. As I argue elsewhere (Finneron-Burns, 2021), the question of how to balance the needs of the poorest members of one generation against the wealthier members of another is extremely important and interesting, but unfortunately beyond the scope of this paper.

2 | THE “CORE LUCK EGALITARIAN CLAIM”

What Lippert-Rasmussen calls the “core luck egalitarian claim” is the thought that it is unjust if a person is worse off than another due to their bad luck (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2016, pp. 3–4). On this version of luck egalitarianism, injustice only arises when the reason for inequality is *bad* luck. On his view, it is not unjust for someone to be better off than another merely due to the former’s *good* luck. He gives the following example to demonstrate his point:

Suppose we both have \$100. For the price of \$100 I am offered a very attractive gamble that gives me a 50 per cent chance of \$500 and 50 per cent chance of \$50. I accept the lottery and win. You are offered \$400 for nothing, decline the offer, and donate \$50 to a charity devoted to the preservation of endangered species of flowers, ending up with \$50. You are now worse off than me, but, arguably, you are not worse off than me as a result of your bad luck ... However, in part through my good luck, I am better off than you are, since there was a significant risk that my gamble would result in my ending up with \$50 only. (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2016, pp. 4–5)

I agree that in the kind of rather complex case Lippert-Rasmussen describes, the resulting inequality is due only to good luck, and luck egalitarianism need not condemn it. However, it is often difficult to separate one person’s good luck from another person’s bad luck. Imagine Alice and Ben are farmers, and a weather system moves through, vastly improving Alice’s crop yields, but bypassing Ben’s land. It is a matter of good luck for Alice that the weather system moved over her farm, but equally a matter of bad luck for Ben that it did not move over his too/instead.

¹ I thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out two other potential challenges to this assumption. First, to what extent can/does luck egalitarianism’s concern with individual responsibility extend to collectives like generations? Can generations be seen as moral agents who are the beneficiaries/victims of luck? Relatedly, since generations are actually collectives of individuals making their own decisions, to what extent do these individual decisions amount to a *generation* being thought to have control over its or another generation’s well-being? These are very interesting questions that deserve a full response. However, in much of the intergenerational ethics literature, generations are treated as agents capable of being held morally responsible (as a collective) for their choices. Of course, the fact that they *are* treated this way does not mean that they *should* be, but this is a big question and a proper analysis of it is beyond the scope of this paper and will need to be taken on in further, dedicated work.

Lippert-Rasmussen's motivation in allowing inequality due to good luck seems to be a desire to ensure that an inequality arising out of someone's free choice to distribute something to someone else is not considered unjust, even if it creates an inequality between them. For example, if A and B are equally well off, and A voluntarily gives B some money, then B is better off than A due to his good luck, and the inequality between them is not unjust. However, what this overlooks is that A giving to B may also create an inequality between B and a third party C whose bad luck it was not to have been picked by A to receive the gift. So when following the "core luck egalitarian claim", we need to have a full picture of whether the inequalities in question really are due purely to good luck.

Given that past generations are generally worse off than current generations, it seems that if being part of a past generation with a worse quality of life than ours is a matter of their bad luck, then the inequality between the generations is unjust. It also means that if current generations, who are (we assume) worse off than future generations will be, are also victims of bad luck, then the inequality between us and the future is also unjust. However, there are a lot of "ifs" here, and we need to start by asking whether generational membership is a matter of 'luck' at all.

On its face, luck could be thought to play at least two roles with respect to generational membership. First, it might be a matter of luck of which specific generation you are a part—i.e., when in history you in particular exist. Second, it could be a matter of luck how well off the generation of which you happen to be are a part is. Although very closely related, the two are not quite the same and it is, arguably, the latter that matters more to people since it is what actually affects one's life prospects because it would not matter much if you were born in 1823 if the level of well-being at that time were the same as that enjoyed in 2023.

There are also a variety of different conceptions of what constitutes luck. On the "choice" view something is a matter of luck if it is not the result of a choice that the agent made, and on the "control" view, something is a matter of luck if it is not something over which the agent had any control (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2016, p. 5). It is obvious that we have neither choice about nor control over when we are born (i.e., of which generation we are a part). We also do not choose how well off the generation we happen to be born is, although we do exercise a small degree of control over its quality of life insofar as we participate in its failures and successes. Some individuals will have more control than others over their generation's well-being (think of the inventors of the washing machine, personal computer, and Internet), but the vast majority of us have little to no influence over our generation's overall quality of life. Indeed, since most of what impacts how well off our generation is will have happened long before we were even a twinkle in our mothers' eyes, individual people play only a small role and cannot be said to choose or control the quality of life of their generation.

So far so good, but one thing that is not explicitly mentioned, but lurks underneath both conceptions of luck is *comparison*. They are comparative views of the person's state of well-being with or without the (un)lucky occurrence. One might rightfully think that for a person to be the victim/beneficiary of bad/good luck, there must be some alternative under which they were or could have been better/worse off.

How does this comparison work with generations? Imagine G1 leaves G2 worse off than G1 was. Initially we might think that this is bad luck for G2 since they neither chose nor controlled it. But what is the alternative for G2? We cannot be referring to a baseline alternative since G2 did not exist before whatever G1 did to leave them worse off happened. The counterfactual also cannot explain how G2 can be the victims of bad luck due to G1 leaving them worse off. As Derek Parfit (1984) famously showed, if any person were conceived at a slightly different time than they actually were, they would not exist. He also pointed out how seemingly unrelated policies can unexpectedly affect who in particular is conceived and brought into existence. It is reasonable to suppose that G1's decision to leave G2 worse off would affect the very existence of the members of G2 since the policies that G1 followed to leave G2 worse off differ from the ones they would have followed if they were to leave G2 equally well off (or better off). As we know, public policies lead to different behaviours (using more/fewer resources, having more/fewer children, etc.) and this would have led to different members of G2 being born. In other words, the members of G2 could not have existed unless G1 had decided to leave the next generation worse off, and there is no alternative outcome for G2, not only in which they are better off than they in fact are, but in which they exist at all. This suggests that, at least according to a

comparative outcomes assumption about luck, later generations cannot be victims of bad luck due to previous generations' decisions at all, even if their qualities of life are worse than the previous generations'. If this is correct, then we have our first reason to be sceptical about luck egalitarianism between non-overlapping generations—that 'luck' does not play the role it needs to for luck egalitarianism to work in that context.

But maybe we should think of the bad luck in this case not as the fact that *you* could have had a different, better outcome, but as "some disadvantage for which you are not responsible" (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2016, p. 158), regardless of whether or not it is possible that you could have *not* had that disadvantage. In our case, the bad luck would consist simply in virtue of being part of a generation that is disadvantaged by a previous generation's failure to save.

Even with this formulation, however, it is unclear what the disadvantage in question is. Lippert-Rasmussen gives us some examples of disadvantage, namely a "low level of technological, industrial and scientific prowess at the time of their conception" to illustrate his point (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2016, p. 158).² However, following his core luck egalitarian claim, and remembering that it is meant to be an *egalitarian* one, it seems that the disadvantage should have something to do with a comparison with another generation. Yet, Lippert-Rasmussen's examples seem to be absolute disadvantages, rather than relative ones. If we are concerned with intergenerational egalitarianism, we should be more worried about G2 having lower levels of technological, industrial, and scientific prowess compared to G1, than about the fact that they are *low per se*. Indeed, they may not even be particularly low *at all*. If G2's lives are of a very high quality, albeit slightly lower than G1's, Lippert-Rasmussen's conception of bad luck being mere disadvantage seems not to capture why G2 being worse off than G1 would matter at all.

To sum up the discussion thus far, if bad luck requires intrapersonal comparison (how well off you were/would be before/if the unlucky thing had not happened), then G2 is not a victim of bad luck since there is no alternative in which the bad luck does not occur, and they exist. On the other hand, if bad luck is, as Lippert-Rasmussen suggests, simply disadvantage for which you are not responsible, then there needs to be some reason why it matters, why we care about interpersonal inequality. This is not a problem unique to non-overlapping generations, and, as I will discuss in the next section, (some) luck egalitarians have an answer to it. The problem is that their answer is not satisfactory in the non-overlapping generations context.

3 | GROUNDING LUCK EGALITARIANISM BETWEEN GENERATIONS

Shlomi Segall argues that the reason inequality matters is that arbitrary disadvantage is unfair and *per se* bad, irreducible to other values (Segall, 2015, p. 361). I am not so sure. It seems to me that unfairness is something to be avoided because it can negatively affect how people feel about themselves and how they relate to others around them. That a person is worse off than others for reasons outside of their control might have negative impacts on how they are viewed by others and how they can interact with their society. There are a number of these "relational" reasons to value equality, including avoiding oppression and domination, and promoting democracy and the fairness of political institutions (Anderson, 1999; Scanlon, 2018; Young, 1990). What these views have in common is their shared claim that it is critically important that people in a society are able to relate to each other as the moral equals that they are. When material inequality is significant, it interferes in that aim in that it gives certain people an unacceptable amount of power over others which is bad in itself, but also in its effects on personal respect and social cohesion.

However, although these interpersonal concerns are good reasons to value equality, it is not clear how any of them would matter intergenerationally. For one thing, because they come earlier in time, earlier generations already have a significant amount of power to affect the well-being of later generations. Whether or not G2 is *in fact*

²Lippert-Rasmussen's discussion is concerned with the bad luck of past generations.

worse off, better off, or equally well-off than/as G1 does not change the fact that G1 had that power over them. Unlike between contemporaries, it is not the material inequality between G1 and G2 that gives G1 their power over G2, but simply their existence earlier in time. Furthermore, it is unclear how a generation could be benefited by greater equality between it and the people who existed before or after them. We do not stand in communal relations with members of past generations. So, insofar as we care about communal relations having a certain egalitarian character, there seems to be reason to care about equality and fairness between contemporaries, but not necessarily those who lived in the past or will live in the future.

There may also be non-relational grounds for the luck egalitarian to care about equality, such as intrapersonal comparison. It is bad that I am worse off due to no fault of my own, than I otherwise could have been, when the bad luck also makes me worse off than others (Segall, 2015, p. 364). The problem here is that the members of the disadvantaged generation could not otherwise have been better off than they are.³

4 | WHEN ARE INTERGENERATIONAL INEQUALITIES UNFAIR?

Notwithstanding my earlier scepticism, let us assume that that generations can be victims/beneficiaries of luck and that luck egalitarian can be grounded, even between non-overlapping generations. What does it tell us about just intergenerational distributions?

4.1 | The “core luck egalitarian claim”

Recall that the “core luck egalitarian claim” is that inequalities due to bad brute luck are unjust, but inequalities due to good brute luck are not. The current generation has considerable power to make future generations worse off, equally well off, or better off than we (the current generation) are. This can be achieved through decisions about resource conservation or depletion, investments or disinvestments in technological innovations, actions to mitigate or perpetuate climate change, and so on that affect how high a quality of life a future generation will enjoy. For ease of reference, let us call these options intergenerational dissavings and savings (Gosseries, 2019).

Intergenerational dissavings: When the current generation G1 does not pass on enough resources such that the future generation G2 is as well off as G1 (i.e., G2 is worse off than G1).

Intergenerational savings: When the current generation G1 passes on enough resources that the future generation G2 is as well off as or better off than G1.

Whether G1 chooses *Intergenerational Savings* or *Intergenerational Dissavings* is a matter of luck for G2, but not for G1 since they (G1) get to decide which option they will choose. Let us look more closely at the implications of each choice.

In *Intergenerational Dissavings* G1 leaves G2 worse off than they (G1) are. In order to determine whether or not this is unjust, we need to know whether the inequality between them is due solely to luck, and if so, what kind. It seems clear in this scenario that G2 are not responsible for G1's decision not to save, so any disadvantage or inequality that

³Other luck egalitarians ground their presumption of equality as the baseline on the need to neutralise the effects of luck on distribution. However, as Cynthia Stark (2018, pp. 10–14) has forcefully argued, luck egalitarians have not defended this presumption and face serious obstacles in doing so. Namely, because luck can produce equal distributions (and therefore the effects of luck on distributions have not been neutralised), redistributing all goods acquired through luck would not produce equality.

they suffer as a result of *Intergenerational Dissavings* is the consequence of bad luck. What about G1? G1's *absolute* level of well-being is due in part to luck (whatever the generation before them (say, G0) chose to do (save or dissave)), but also partly due to their own choice—presumably if they saved for the future, they themselves would have less than if they dissaved. However, it is not G1's absolute level that matters to the luck egalitarian, but their relative (to G2) one. While G1's level of well-being is partly due to luck, their being better off than G2 is not. Of course, it was good luck (for G1) that they were born earlier in time than G2 and had the opportunity to choose whether to be better, equal, or worse off than G2, but the unequal outcome was fully within their control so cannot be said to be a matter of luck. That G2 are worse off than G1 due to their bad luck means, all other things being equal, that *Intergenerational Dissavings* are unjust.

If G1 chooses *Intergenerational Savings*, G2 could be better off than G1. G2's advantage relative to G1 is a matter of good luck for G2 since it is an advantage for which they are not responsible. The question is whether this is an example of advantage due purely to good luck (when inequality due to good luck is permissible), or one where one person's good luck is another's bad luck.

The straightforward case, as it is described here, seems to be the former. G1 freely chooses to save and leave G2 advantaged. The inequality was due to G1's choice which means that the resulting inequality is not due to their bad luck (because they could just as easily have chosen *Intergenerational Dissavings*). This means that G2 being better off than G1 due to G1's choice to save is not unjust since being better off due to good luck is not unjust according to Lippert-Rasmussen's core claim of luck egalitarianism.

So far, according to Lippert-Rasmussen's luck egalitarianism, it is unjust for a generation to engage in *Intergenerational Dissavings*, but not to engage in *Intergenerational Savings*, even when both have created inequality between generations.⁴ In other words, when it is within the current generation's control, it is unjust for future generations to be worse off than the current generation, but not vice versa. The same is true when we consider inequalities between past and current generations, for the current generation is the 'future generation' of the past. Therefore, for the same reasons, it is not unjust that the current generation is better off than past generations due to the good luck of previous generations having saved. So far this seems consistent with what may be many people's intuitions: it is unjust if future generations are worse off than we are due to no fault of their own, but not unjust if they are better off than we are due to our own choices. The core luck egalitarian claim has given us a reason to care only about inequalities in which future generations are worse off. Many people might find this to be non-problematic, but for those, like Richard Arneson, who think that we should care about all inequalities between even non-overlapping generations, it will be an undesirable result: "[i]f we care about equality, we should care about equality among people everywhere at all times" (Arneson, 2012).

Furthermore, the core luck egalitarian claim gives us no obligation to leave future generations *better* off than we are, even if it comes at no cost to ourselves. Imagine that the world does nothing to stem global warming and scientists' predictions about the negative effects of a significantly warmed world come to fruition. Assume that the generation who lives at the time have pretty poor qualities of life—poor health, food insecurity, shorter lifespans, etc. Now imagine that scientists at the time discover some technology that is able to completely reverse the effects of climate change and ensure that future generations are able to live very good lives at no cost to the existing generation. On the core luck egalitarian claim, there would be no obligation to use that technology to improve the next generations' qualities of life. I suspect that most people would want to resist this conclusion, holding instead that justice does require us to use the technology to ensure future generations have a decent quality of life, even if it means inequality between us and them.

⁴For the purposes of this paper, I will set aside the fact that savings may be unjust *intragenerationally* insofar as saving for future generations may potentially make the worst-off members of that generation even worse off. This is because my aim here is to determine whether the inequality between generations is in *itself* unjust—i.e., is it unjust *because* one generation has more than another—rather than whether the inequality might be unjust for any reason at all. See Gosseries (2019) for an analysis of this distinction.

4.2 | Natural inequalities

In their examinations of intergenerational inequalities, both Lippert-Rasmussen (2016) and Gosseries (2019) set aside natural (non-anthropogenic) inequalities. This is understandable since their focus is specifically on intergenerational savings and dissavings. However, to get a full picture of luck egalitarianism's implications on intergenerational (in)equality, we need also to include inequalities that might arise outside of decisions to save or not. This is consistent with luck egalitarians including natural causes of bad brute luck like natural disasters or unlucky results of the "natural lottery" of human attributes and talents.

In the earlier discussion of *Intergenerational Savings*, we saw that G2 being better off than G1 as a result of G1's choice was a matter purely of G2's good luck, without any corresponding bad luck for G1. However, it is possible for G2 to be better off than G1 as a result of G2's good luck, but *also* G1's bad luck. Imagine a climate phenomenon that affects only one generation and significantly increases crop yields with no effort at all, freeing up the members of the lucky generation to work on other things that improve their quality of life significantly. If it happens during G2's tenure on Earth, then they will be very lucky indeed, and advantaged relative to G1 due to their (G2's) good luck. But would not this also be a matter of bad luck for G1? After all, if we know the climate phenomenon will happen sometime, it's bad luck for G1 that it did not happen during *their* time. This scenario is analogous to the earlier intragenerational example of Alice and Ben. Alice's good luck in the weather system passing over her land was also Ben's bad luck that it did not pass over his.⁵

The upshot is that it is possible for a later generation to be better off than a previous generation not just because of the later generation's good luck, but also because of the earlier generation's bad luck. On both articulations of luck egalitarianism, this would be unjust. What this means is that it is sometimes unjust for later generations to be better off than earlier ones.

Between contemporaries, this kind of non-anthropogenic injustice can be remedied by redistributing from the lucky to the unlucky. We could compensate Ben for his disadvantage, for example, or require Alice to redistribute some of her bounty to him. Between non-overlapping generations, however, remedy is more complicated and likely more controversial. For one thing, the disadvantaged party no longer exists, meaning that it's impossible to compensate them so the only way to reinstate equality, as it were, would be for the unjustly advantaged party to give up their advantage. This is controversial because the better off later generation giving up their advantage would benefit no one and is akin to levelling down. If it is current people who are unjustly better off than past people, then current people lowering their standard of living for the sake of the already dead seems pointless. If it is future people who will be unjustly better off than current people, then taking actions to ensure that they are not (for example by depleting resources) seems wrong, since the equality being sought between these pairs of non-overlapping generations would be to no one's benefit.

Segall (2015) suggests that the apparent counter-intuitiveness of the levelling down objection in this case actually springs from conflating two separate issues: (a) we cannot materially benefit the less well-off party (in this case the dead) and second, (b) it does not make sense to make ourselves worse off merely for the sake of equality with those from the past who will be in no way impacted by our actions. There are two separate questions here: (1) "is the inequality unjust?" and if so, (2) "should we do anything about it?" Segall argues that we can answer "yes"

⁵A less fanciful example is global and historical upwards trends. It is obvious that we are much better off than people in the past, and there is every likelihood that people in the future will be better off than we are. In the only sixty years between 1950 and 2010, United States real Gross Domestic Product increased by more than 563% and Americans' standard of living is expected to double between 2007 and 2100 (Gordon, 2012). This means that people are better off economically than in the past, but quality of life goes beyond the amount of disposable income people have. It includes improvements like indoor plumbing, access to motor vehicles, air conditioning, and so on. These innovations not only improve economic performance, but also have a significant effect on other components of well-being like increased leisure time, health, and even life expectancy. For instance, between 1928 and 2005, female life expectancy in Canada rose from just 60.6 years to 82.7 and is projected to reach 86 by 2031 (Statistics Canada, 2010). It is easy to be pessimistic about these trends continuing given the potentially catastrophic predictions that permeate the media. However, Nicholas Stern (2010) estimates that, even with climate change, world GDP is likely to be three times higher by the middle of the 21st century.

to (1) and 'no' to (2). I think Segall is right when considering the current people-past people inequality pair since we cannot do anything to affect past people's material well-being. But with respect to the current people-future people pair, I am not so sure. After all, we *can* affect future people's condition in order to rectify that inequality so (a) is not satisfied. It seems like a luck egalitarian concerned with eliminating inequalities that are the result of bad luck should want to rectify that inequality, even if it means levelling down.

Lippert-Rasmussen would likely reply that there is nothing to be gained from greater equality between the deceased and living; we should not level down because we do not stand in the same communal relations to deceased members of past generations, if we stand in any relations to them at all (Lippert-Rasmussen, 2016, pp. 160–161). In other words, the interpersonal reasons why equality is the baseline for luck egalitarianism do not exist in this case. But this just returns us to the earlier doubts about the very justification of luck egalitarianism itself between non-overlapping generations. Furthermore, if it is true that we do not need to worry about injustice between the living and the dead because of a lack of communal relations, why do we need to worry about injustice between the living and not-yet-living with whom we also do not stand in communal relations?

4.3 | Unjust equality

The focus so far, as with most work in the luck egalitarian tradition, is on inequality that is a result of luck. However, it is just as possible that good or bad brute luck could result in *equality*. Imagine that Christopher has worked hard and earned \$1000. Diana is less hard-working and only has \$500. Now imagine that Christopher, due to no fault of his own (maybe he is in an accident, or the victim of a crime) loses \$500. As a result of Christopher's bad luck, he and Diana are now equally well off. If inequality is unjust when it is the result of bad luck, why should not equality as a result of bad luck also be unjust? Although some claim that luck egalitarians should be agnostic about equality that is a result of bad luck (Segall, 2012), others like G. A. Cohen do think that the situation I have described would be unjust. He just thinks that the injustice of unlucky equality is less bad than the injustice of unlucky inequality (Cohen, 2006, p. 444).

If Cohen is right though, we have a situation where luck egalitarianism could reject intergenerational equality completely. To see why, imagine that G1 works hard, takes care of the planet, conserves resources, and so on so that G2 is able to enjoy a higher quality of life than G1 did (just inequality on the core luck egalitarian claim). Now imagine that some natural disaster befalls G2, wiping out all of the advantages they had as a result of G1's generosity. G1 and G2 are now equally well off as a result of G2's bad brute luck. At least on Cohen's version of luck egalitarianism, this equality is unjust (although not as bad as if the disaster had left G2 worse off than G1). This is not a special consequence of the intergenerational context and is part of the reason some doubt that luck egalitarianism is really about equality at all (Hurley, 2005).

5 | CONCLUSION

I began by suggesting some reasons why we should be sceptical about the grounding of luck egalitarianism between non-overlapping generations. If we assume that luck requires intrapersonal comparison, then generational membership is *not* a matter of luck and inequalities between generations are not unjust. On a non-comparative view of luck as arbitrary disadvantage, intergenerational inequalities are unjust, but we need a reason to adopt *equality* as the baseline before considerations of luck, leaving luck egalitarians with a problem because relational reasons for equality as a baseline do not apply between non-overlapping generations, but non-relational reasons are invalidated by the non-identity problem. Next, I argued that assuming that we can put those issues aside, the "core luck egalitarian claim" permits a significant amount of anthropogenic intergenerational inequality, which is a reason to reject luck egalitarianism for those who object to such inequality Third, I argued that luck egalitarianism

cannot accommodate the intuition that justice might require leaving future people *better* off than we are, even if it comes at no cost to ourselves. And finally, some forms of luck egalitarianism could require levelling-down, which is a problem for those who are persuaded that levelling-down only for the sake of equality is undesirable.

My conclusion is that although intuitively it makes sense that people should not be worse off simply because of when they exist in time, there are strong reasons to be take pause before applying luck egalitarianism between non-overlapping generations. It either cannot be grounded at all between non-overlapping generations, or it can but yields counterintuitive and undesirable results (significant inequality and/or levelling-down).

FUNDING INFORMATION

Research for this article was supported by the Climate Ethics project funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (grant no. M17-0372:1) and the Swedish Research Council.

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How to cite this article: Finneron-Burns, E. (2023). Luck egalitarianism and non-overlapping generations. *Ratio*, 36, 215–223. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rati.12377>