

AN ARGUMENT FOR ALL-LUCK EGALITARIANISM

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Luck egalitarianism is the view that equality requires the effects of luck on distributive outcomes to be neutralized.¹ Heavily influenced by Ronald Dworkin's work on equality of resources, luck egalitarianism was first systematized by Richard Arneson and G. A. Cohen.² Over the last three decades it has come to be arguably the most influential theory of equality in Anglophone political philosophy.

Standardly, luck egalitarianism is understood as placing decisive weight on Dworkin's distinction between option luck (the upshot of declinable risks) and brute luck (the upshot of non-declinable risks).³ This 'brute-luck egalitarianism' reduces or eliminates the influence of brute luck on distributions, while allowing the influence of option luck to stand.

Though theorists often write as though choice were synonymous with option luck, this is not strictly correct. Option luck contrasts with 'direct choice', that is choice unmediated by risk.⁴ Pure cases of direct choice are few and far between, as there is always some small possibility that a freak event – a natural disaster, say – will intervene between a choice and its outcome. Pure option luck and pure direct choice should thus be seen as opposite ends of a spectrum, with the vast majority of choices containing some mitigated level of option luck. For instance, a stock market investment is primarily a matter of option luck, while covering one's house in flammable liquid and setting fire to it is primarily a matter of direct choice. In the first case, the outcome is decisively influenced by chance events, but in the latter case, the outcome is highly predictable and chance is hardly involved at all.

Brute-luck egalitarianism treats option luck and direct choice as equivalent – as equally valid bases for inequality. I believe that this is a mistaken interpretation of the ideal of equality, and even of luck egalitarianism itself. One way of arguing for this is through a direct appeal to intuition. Consider the following case:

Stephanie and Fiona. Stephanie buys a bundle of blue chip stock, but the next day the market undergoes an unprecedented collapse, eroding her expected dividend income and leaving her investment near-worthless. This leaves her unable to meet mortgage payments and she consequently loses her home. We assume that there was a 1% chance, in terms of both objective and subjective probabilities, that Stephanie's stock investment decision would leave her homeless. By contrast, there is a 99% chance that Fiona's decision to cover her house in flammable liquid and set fire to it will leave her homeless.

¹ An alternative name for the view is 'responsibility-sensitive luck egalitarianism', reflecting an understanding of responsibility as the inverse of luck; see S. L. Hurley, *Justice, Luck, and Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 107-108.

² Ronald Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part Two: Equality of Resources', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 10, 283-345; Richard J. Arneson, 'Equality and Equal Opportunity for Welfare', *Philosophical Studies*, 56 (1989), 77-93; G. A. Cohen, 'On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice', *Ethics*, 99 (1989), 906-944.

³ Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part Two', p. 293.

⁴ Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen, 'Egalitarianism, Option-Luck, and Responsibility', *Ethics*, 111 (2001), 548-579, pp. 571-572.

Intuitively, the different characters of Stephanie's choice and Fiona's – the fact that Stephanie's choice was a good one (that turned out exceptionally badly), while Fiona's was a bad one (that turned out as you would expect) – has a bearing on the assistance they can claim in the name of equality. I believe egalitarians have more reason to assist Stephanie than they do Fiona. Thus, this case supports the 'all-luck egalitarian' view that option luck as well as brute luck calls for neutralization.⁵ On this view, only the results of direct choice are allowed to stand, while unusually good or bad outcomes of choice are to be undone. In other words, individuals are due the expected results of their choices.⁶ As Stephanie's expected outcome is far better than Fiona's, Stephanie will receive far more compensation than Fiona on an all-luck egalitarian scheme, as intuitively she should.

Stephanie and Fiona is, by contrast, a difficult case for brute-luck egalitarians as they are committed to treating Stephanie and Fiona symmetrically, which seems counterintuitive. Both are treated as having bad option luck, and as such there are no brute-luck egalitarian grounds for compensating either of them, even though Stephanie has fallen on hard times as a result of astonishingly bad luck.⁷ The brute-luck egalitarian can, however, bite the bullet here. This is because the intuition that Stephanie and Fiona are due differential treatment seems to rely on reasoning, concerning the particular unfairness of Stephanie bearing severe costs as a result of very bad luck, that is subtly distinct from brute-luck egalitarian reasoning. Brute-luck egalitarian reasoning objects only to the influence of brute (non-declinable) luck on distributive outcomes, and in this case, all the luck appears to be unambiguously declinable. Stephanie could have declined to make the stock market investment, just as Fiona could have declined to set about burning her house down. Thus, the brute-luck egalitarian may feel that this is a case where the theoretical pull of a generally appealing principle (brute-luck egalitarianism) is sufficient to withstand the countervailing intuitive pull in this specific case. They may consequently keep their judgments in reflective equilibrium with brute-luck egalitarianism.

This article presents an argument that poses a greater challenge for brute-luck egalitarianism, and (even) stronger support for all-luck egalitarianism. The argument, unlike the purely intuitive appeal in *Stephanie and Fiona*, turns brute-luck egalitarianism's own theoretical resources against it. This general argument unfolds in three steps, corresponding to the three parts of the article. The first shows that brute-luck egalitarianism's reasons for neutralizing brute luck's distributive effects should lead it to also neutralize a subset of option luck. The second demonstrates that various revisions of brute-luck egalitarianism such that it neutralizes this

⁵ The name is from Shlomi Segall, *Health, Luck, and Justice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), ch. 3.

⁶ Larry Temkin, 'Justice, Equality, Fairness, Desert, Rights, Free Will, Responsibility, and Luck' in Carl Knight and Zofia Stemplowska (eds), *Responsibility and Distributive Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 65; Carl Knight, 'Egalitarian Justice and Expected Value', *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 16 (2013), 1061-1073.

⁷ An exception would be Shlomi Segall's view, which does not object to outcome equality, and may thus assist Fiona and Stephanie in order to bring them back to the same level of advantage as the rest of society; see *Health, Luck, and Justice*, chs 1 and 4. But though this view mandates assistance, it does so in a way that is symmetrical regarding Fiona and Stephanie, which remains problematic. Surely the fact that Fiona acted in a way that predictably destroyed her house diminishes her claim to assistance so that if, for instance, replacement houses are limited in supply we may choose to allocate one to Stephanie before we allocate one to Fiona.

subset (and related ones) are ultimately unsuccessful. The third defends the remaining option of neutralizing option luck generally, as all-luck egalitarianism proposes.

I. BRUTE-LUCK EGALITARIANISM

I start by arguing that there is a class of cases – ‘dominant gambles’ – in which it is not plausible for the brute-luck egalitarian to ground inequalities on option luck (section I.A). I then consider two lines of argument in support of the brute-luck egalitarian refusal to neutralize option luck in these cases. The first holds that option luck neutralization is unfair to risk takers as a whole (I.B), while the second holds that option luck neutralization is unfair to successful risk takers (I.C).

A. Dominant gambles. Brute-luck egalitarianism struggles in cases where reason requires that a gamble be accepted.⁸ Here I mean gamble in the broadest sense, as any choice for which the outcome is mediated by luck. Thus, if I have the choice between taking a permanent position as a political philosopher, a role which matches my training and interests perfectly and has good job security, or taking a job working in sales, which does not match my training or interests and has low job security, it would seem that reason requires that I ‘gamble’ on the political philosophy post. This decision is a gamble because the outcome of the decision is not clear – I could prove to be a total success as a political philosopher, a total failure, or anything in-between. But notwithstanding the role of option luck here, it seems nevertheless clear that reason requires that I take the gamble – it is what I will call a ‘non-reasonably avoidable gamble’.

Non-reasonably avoidable gambles come in many varieties. For our purposes the central kind of non-reasonably avoidable gambles are *dominant gambles* – those which are, compared to non-gambling alternatives, better in at least one respect and worse in none. For instance, Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen mentions a case in which a gamble offers a 5% chance of 100 units of advantage, and a 95% chance of 200, while a non-gambling alternative offers the certainty of 100 ($0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*100$).⁹ Dominant gambles like this are literally ‘safe bets’ – the ‘gambler’ gives herself the chance of gain without any danger of loss.

How are dominant gambles problematic for brute-luck egalitarianism? Consider the following case:

Lucky and Unlucky. Lucky and Unlucky both gamble in ($0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*100$). Lucky wins, ending up with 200, and Unlucky loses, ending up with 100.

The difference in outcome for Lucky and Unlucky seems to be clearly a matter of option luck. Dworkin says that ‘[o]ption luck is a matter of how deliberate and calculated gambles turn out - whether someone gains or loses through accepting an isolated risk he or she should have

⁸ In the cases I discuss I assume that prudential and moral considerations go hand-in-hand, favouring one choice as the ‘reasonable’ one. This is obviously not intended as an empirical hypothesis, but is rather to allow the argument to proceed without settling the complex issue of the proper basis for assessing individual decision-making. Those who believe that egalitarian justice should be responsive to the prudential value of individuals’ choices are free to interpret the numbers in later cases as reflecting self-interest alone. Likewise, those who believe that egalitarian justice should be responsive to the moral value of individuals’ choices are free to interpret these numbers as reflecting their favoured moral desiderata.

⁹ Lippert-Rasmussen, ‘Egalitarianism, Option Luck, and Responsibility’, 572-573.

anticipated and might have declined'.¹⁰ Lucky and Unlucky have made deliberate and calculated gambles, and the inequality between them results from them accepting an isolated risk they anticipated and might have declined. So the difference in the outcomes they receive is a matter of option luck on Dworkin's definition, which is accepted by Arneson, Cohen, and most other brute-luck egalitarians.¹¹

Brute-luck egalitarianism is defined largely by its refusal to neutralize option luck inequality. But the option luck inequality between Lucky and Unlucky is intuitively unacceptable. Lucky and Unlucky were rationally (but not physically) compelled to accept the gamble, so accepting the gamble does not seem to be fair grounds for advantaging one and disadvantaging the other. In *Stephanie and Fiona*, the brute-luck egalitarian could insist that, though Stephanie was very unlucky that her choice turned out as it did, she nevertheless chose to expose herself to a risk that was declinable. In *Lucky and Unlucky*, the gamble is physically declinable, and hence qualifies as option luck. But the retort that Unlucky 'chose to expose herself to a risk that was declinable' rings hollow as accepting the risk was rationally required of Unlucky. Thus, it is hard to see any morally acceptable grounds for making Unlucky end up worse off than Lucky.

This inequality is, furthermore, condemned by the deepest rationale of brute-luck egalitarianism itself – that is, its justification for neutralizing brute luck.¹² Dworkin explains his treatment of 'the case of brute bad luck' as follows:

If two people lead roughly the same lives, but one goes suddenly blind, then we cannot explain the resulting differences in their incomes either by saying that one took risks that the other chose not to take, or that we could not redistribute without denying both the lives they prefer. For the accident has (we assume) nothing to do with choices in the pertinent sense. It is not necessary to the life either has chosen that he run the risk of going blind without redistribution of funds from the other.¹³

The argument for brute-luck neutralization emphasizes two features that Dworkin believes are present in option luck but absent in brute luck. While what he says is certainly true of most cases of option luck, dominant gamble option luck is quite different. Crucially, both the features that are absent in brute luck, which apparently justify its neutralization, are also absent in dominant gamble option luck.

First, Dworkin says that option luck inequality is sometimes a matter of individuals taking risks and winning, and others declining the risks.¹⁴ Brute luck inequality, on the other hand, 'has (we assume) nothing to do with choices in the pertinent sense', i.e. the sense of one individual taking 'risks that the other chose not to take'. This is clearly true also of dominant

¹⁰ Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part Two', p. 293.

¹¹ See, for instance, Cohen, 'On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice', p. 908; Richard J. Arneson, 'Equality of Opportunity for Welfare Defended and Recanted', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 7 (1999), 488-497, pp. 492-493.

¹² Cohen says that 'the grounding idea of Dworkin's egalitarianism is that no one should suffer because of bad brute luck', and that 'my cut is more faithful to Dworkin's grounding idea than the one he ostensibly favors is' ('On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice', p. 922). I similarly argue that all-luck egalitarianism is more faithful to this 'grounding idea' of Dworkin – and Cohen – than their own views are.

¹³ Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part Two', p. 296.

¹⁴ Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part Two', pp. 293-294.

gamble inequality. Lucky and Unlucky made the same choice, so the difference between them cannot be due to one accepting and one declining a risk.

Second, option luck inequality is at other times a matter of several individuals making the same choice to gamble, with differential results. It is assumed that *all* participants are gambling precisely because they favour risk: 'If winners were made to share their winnings with losers, then no one would gamble, as individuals, and the kind of life preferred by both those who in the end win and those who lose would be unavailable'.¹⁵ By contrast, in the case of brute luck inequality 'it is not necessary to the life either has chosen that he run the risk'. This is again also true of dominant gamble inequality. There is no reason to suppose that dominant gamblers are seeking risk per se. Anyone, even a very risk averse person, is rationally required to accept a dominant gamble.

It seems, therefore, that the conditions that Dworkin takes as sufficient for brute luck inequality to be neutralized also hold for option luck inequality in dominant gambles. In *Stephanie and Fiona*, I said the brute-luck egalitarian may feel that the theoretical pull of a generally appealing principle (brute-luck egalitarianism) is sufficient to withstand the countervailing intuitive pull, and keep her judgments in reflective equilibrium with brute-luck egalitarianism. But in *Lucky and Unlucky*, the theoretical pull is itself undermined, for there are reasons internal to brute-luck egalitarianism for neutralizing dominant gamble option luck. Intuition and theory seem to be united against such luck.

B. Is neutralization of option luck unfair to risk takers generally? I now consider the brute-luck egalitarian's first line of defence. It claims that redistribution of option luck inequality is *unfair to gamblers*. The best known statement is from Dworkin's account of equality of resources:

the effect of redistribution from winners to losers in gambles would be to deprive both of lives they prefer, which indicates, not simply that this would produce an unwanted curtailment of available forms of life, but that it would deprive them of an equal voice in the construction of lots to be auctioned, like the man who hated both plovers' eggs and claret but was confronted only with bundles of both. They both want gambles to be in the mix, either originally or as represented by resources with which they can take risks later, and the chance of losing is the correct price, measured on the metric we have been using, of a life that includes gambles with a chance of gain.¹⁶

Although Dworkin here refers specifically to his auction mechanism, which is not of importance for the present discussion, his general message is clear enough. Neutralizing option luck is unfair to gamblers because it makes them worse off than non-gamblers. Specifically, it denies gamblers (but not non-gamblers) of the kinds of lives they want to lead. We have seen that this specific assumption is not true of dominant gamblers as a whole, but it is nevertheless worth considering

¹⁵ Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part Two', p. 294. This might suggest the thought that Dworkin only considers option luck to be present, or at least that it should only be allowed to stand, where individuals antecedently favour risk. If this reading is correct, Dworkin would essentially hold a version of the view discussed in II.C below.

¹⁶ Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part Two', p. 295. See also Daniel Markovits, 'Luck Egalitarianism and Political Solidarity', *Theoretical Inquiries in Law*, 9 (2008), 271-308, p. 287 n. 51.

whether the subset of dominant gamblers that *are* risk-seekers would be treated unfairly by a policy of option luck neutralization. I think they would not, for at least three reasons.

First, and as I already said, dominant gambles will be taken even by those who are averse to risk. This is relevant even when it comes to considering the fairness effects of option luck neutralization on risk seekers. Dworkin assumes that risk seekers will be disadvantaged by luck neutralization, but by the same token, the risk averse will presumably be disadvantaged by non-luck neutralization (i.e. allowing gamblers to keep their winnings). As dominant gambles will be accepted by the entire (minimally rational) population, there is no reason to assume that risk seekers would be more numerous than the risk averse, or vice versa. Hence, as far as I can tell, this situation is perfectly symmetrical – our reasons for allowing dominant gambles to stand in order to ensure that risk seekers are not disadvantaged in their choice of lifestyles are matched by our reasons for redistributing the results of dominant gambles in order to ensure that the risk averse are not disadvantaged in *their* choice of lifestyles. The concern with fairness in availability of ‘forms of life’ does not tell in favour of allowing gamblers to keep their winnings.

Second, it is in any case dubious whether *equality* requires that individuals may create option luck *inequality*. In essence, Dworkin’s argument is that there will be (1) an inequality between (risk-seeking) gamblers and non-gamblers if (2) gamblers are not allowed to create their own inter-gambler inequalities. If we are concerned by inequality between gamblers and non-gamblers, why would we not be concerned by – indeed, actually demand – inequality between gamblers? The answer, presumably, is that inequality between gamblers is a matter of option luck – it could have been declined. But as we have seen, the inequality between *dominant* gamblers is not declinable in any sense that carries great moral weight. Thus, in dominant gambles, our reasons for objecting to gambler-non-gambler inequality will apply also to gambler-gambler inequality. We will have no reason to favour – and will in fact have reasons to oppose – dominant gamble option luck.

Finally, insofar as gamblers do suffer from having option luck neutralized, and therefore are *initially* worse off than non-gamblers, there is no reason to assume that they will end up worse off than non-gamblers. This is for the simple reason that we can provide ex post compensation to gamblers for any disadvantage that neutralizing option luck imposes on them. A policy of neutralizing the option luck between Lucky and Unlucky, then compensating one or both of them should this neutralization disadvantage them by denying them access to a risk-taking lifestyle, has clear advantages over the brute-luck egalitarian (and Dworkinian) policy of leaving the gambles to stand. It has the same effects regarding fairness towards those with gamble-seeking preferences, but also achieves fairness between Lucky and Unlucky by ensuring that there is no inequality between them deriving from a non-reasonably avoidable choice.

C. Is neutralization of option luck unfair to successful risk takers? The first main defence of option luck inequality focused on fairness between risk takers and non-risk takers. The second main defence, to which I now turn, focuses on fairness *among* risk takers. Specifically, it claims that redistributing the effects of gambles is *unfair to winners gamblers*. As Daniel Markovits puts it, ‘redistribution from winning to losing gamblers ... subordinate[s] winning to losing gamblers, by allowing the losers some of the benefits of the winners’ bets’.¹⁷

¹⁷ Markovits, ‘Luck Egalitarianism and Political Solidarity’, p. 287 n. 51.

This view may have some plausibility for regular gambles. But for dominant gambles, where involvement in the gamble cannot be reasonably avoided, it is hard to see how the winners are subordinated to the losers by redistribution. '[T]he benefits of the winners' bets' are (nominally) the winners' for no better reason than that (1) the winner and loser did something that any rational person would do in the circumstances and (2) the winner had good luck and the loser had bad luck. The (minimal) role of choice in (1) technically makes this a case of option luck, but it is hard to see how doing something that you are rationally compelled to do could justify making you worse off than another identical person simply because they had better luck. In dominant gambles, there is a strong case for saying that losers would be subordinated to winners if there was no redistribution, as they would be made worse off on grounds that are evidently morally arbitrary.

Markovits also has a slightly different argument, which sees the gamble as a kind of agreement between gamblers:

Although the differences in advantage that arise in such [gambling] cases are not related to *differences* in the gamblers' choices, they are *expressions* of the choices. That is because the prospect of different outcomes is accepted, and indeed intended, as part of the initial choice to gamble. Allowing such different outcomes to stand therefore does not place winning gamblers out of community with losers but is instead an expression of solidarity among gamblers – an affirmation of the terms on which gamblers choose to relate to one another.¹⁸

But I think it clear that the choice of a typical dominant gambler is not accurately expressed in 'differences in advantage'. As we have seen, dominant gamblers do not on the whole seek risk, and it would also be gratuitous to suppose that they want to generate inequality. All their choice to gamble tells us is that they have made the only rational choice open to them – we can infer very little about their preferences beyond this. Even if the winner would, ex post, prefer to keep her winnings, this has not at any stage been authorized, implicitly or explicitly, by the loser. The option luck inequality can therefore be neutralized without violating any 'terms' of the gamble.

II. REVISED BRUTE-LUCK EGALITARIANISM

Having found the usual defences of option luck inequality ineffective in dominant gambles, I conclude that standard brute-luck egalitarianism is highly unattractive in these cases. It has not been shown, however, that the brute-luck egalitarian should reject their view wholesale in favour of all-luck egalitarianism or some other view. It could yet be that brute-luck egalitarianism can be modified to deal effectively with dominant gambles while retaining its distinctive treatment of option luck in other cases. I now consider three such modifications of brute-luck egalitarianism. Each of these positions accepts that some option luck calls for neutralization, but denies that all option luck calls for neutralization, as all-luck egalitarianism claims. The first position simply neutralizes option luck in dominant gambles but not other gambles (II.A). The second position can be seen as an extended version of the first, and neutralizes option luck among risk takers in all non-reasonably avoidable gambles, including dominant gambles (II.B). The final position

¹⁸ Markovits, 'Luck Egalitarianism and Political Solidarity', p. 287 n. 51.

neutralizes option luck in quasi-gambles - those where the gambler would accept the expected value of the gamble in preference to facing the gamble itself (II.C).

A. The dominant gamble view. Problems for brute-luck egalitarianism arise in dominant gamble situations that do not seem to arise when applying the view to option luck in other cases. This is due to features of dominant gambles that are absent from most other gambles. In particular, even those desperate to avoid risk are rationally compelled to take dominant gambles, which as we saw in I.B and I.C makes it difficult to argue that dominant gamblers are treated unfairly when they are prevented from facing risks, or that by gambling they have expressed a willingness to risk becoming much worse off than others. An obvious revision of brute-luck egalitarianism to accommodate the special features of dominant gambles presents itself: neutralize option luck in dominant gambles while allowing it to stand elsewhere. This view – the ‘dominant gamble view’, as I will call it – is still distinctively brute-luck egalitarian, since option luck inequality will still be allowed to stand in any of the many gambles that are not dominant.

In considering the dominant gamble view, it is important to distinguish the reason given for neutralizing option luck in dominant gambles. One position would be that dominant gambling is unchosen – the fact that one is rationally compelled to engage in a dominant gamble where available means that one has not really made a choice. An alternative position would be that dominant gambling is chosen, but that the rationally-compelled character of that choice removes its distributive relevance.

Neither version of the dominant gamble view is plausible. Consider first the position that dominant gambling is unchosen. I believe that this is a hard position to maintain, given that dominant gambles can actually be declined. A normally functioning individual facing a dominant gamble has not just guidance control over the outcome (she makes a certain decision) but also regulative control (she could have made a different decision).¹⁹ This is illustrated by introducing a third person to the *Lucky and Unlucky* case who is identical to Lucky and Unlucky, except that she chooses not to take the dominant gamble. Surely we cannot maintain that Lucky and Unlucky had no choice in the matter when an identical person in exactly the same antecedent position chose differently to them.

What then of the second version of the dominant gamble view, which says that there is choice in a dominant gamble, but that it is distributively irrelevant? That this position is not credible is suggested by the following case:

Inventor and Procrastinator. Inventor gambles in $(0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*100)$. Her dominant gamble is to set about creating an invention. As it turns out, she ‘wins’ (gets 200) when her invention proves to be economically viable. Inventor has an identical twin, Procrastinator, who could have created a similar invention but instead settled for the non-gambling option (100).²⁰

It is, I submit, clearly contrary to luck egalitarian principles to treat Inventor’s choice as not distributively relevant, and enforce outcome equality between her and Procrastinator.

¹⁹ John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza, *Responsibility and Control* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), ch. 2.

²⁰ I assume that Procrastinator is putting in as much effort as Inventor, but is misdirecting it (for instance, on intense procrastination, or on an ‘invention’ that has no foreseeable applications).

The dominant gamble view can be revised at this point. Instead of saying that choices to accept dominant gambles are distributively irrelevant simpliciter, it instead says that choices to accept dominant gambles are distributively irrelevant *with respect to the relative advantage levels of different dominant gamblers*. This delivers the intuitively appealing results that Lucky and Unlucky should be made equally well off (because dominant gambles are distributively irrelevant with respect to the relative advantage levels of different dominant gamblers), and that Inventor should be advantaged relative to Procrastinator (because dominant gambles are distributively relevant with respect to the relative advantage levels of dominant gamblers and those that reject dominant gambles).

While I think this further revision is more appealing than the unrevised dominant gamble view, it seems somewhat ad hoc. There does not seem to be any theory-driven reason for treating the choices of dominant gamblers as distributively irrelevant with respect to their position vis-à-vis other dominant gamblers, but as distributively relevant with respect to their position vis-à-vis those that reject dominant gambles. ‘Distributive relevance’ seems to be turned on and off on a whim, purely as a way of accommodating the intuitive phenomena.

Moreover, another case suggests that this view’s intuitive appeal is itself limited:

Inventor, Procrastinator, and Lucky Inventor. Inventor invents and Procrastinator procrastinates, as before. But this time, there is a third person, Lucky Inventor, who invents just as Inventor does, except that she gets an additional 200 (400 total) due to a wholly unforeseeable craze for her invention (hence the antecedent payoffs facing each person are, say, $0.05 \cdot 100$, $0.90 \cdot 200$, $0.05 \cdot 400$; $1 \cdot 100$).

In this case, the view says both that (1) there should be no outcome inequality between Inventor and Lucky Inventor (because dominant gambles are distributively irrelevant with respect to the relative advantage levels of different dominant gamblers) and that (2) Lucky Inventor should be even better off relative to Procrastinator than Inventor should be (because dominant gambles are distributively relevant with respect to the relative advantage levels of dominant gamblers and those that reject dominant gambles). The problem is that these two demands are in conflict – if Lucky Inventor is as well off as Inventor, as per (1), then she can’t be even better off relative to Procrastinator than Inventor is, as per (2). This arises because the revised dominant gamble view we are considering contains two sometimes conflicting norms, one relating to *fairness among dominant gamblers*, the other relating to *fairness between dominant gamblers and non-dominant gamblers* (i.e. those that decline dominant gambles). Even if this conflict is addressed through some kind of trade-off between the two norms, the outcome will not satisfy egalitarian justice. If the norm about fairness between dominant gamblers and non-dominant gamblers is to be reflected at all, Lucky Inventor must be made at least a little better off than Inventor. But as we have established, a choice to engage in a dominant gamble cannot ground inequality between dominant gamblers, such as that between Lucky Inventor and Inventor.

There is a final objection that tells against both the dominant gamble view and its revision. These views implausibly allow inequalities between gamblers in sub-dominant but still non-reasonably avoidable gambles. Consider the following case:

Lucky and Unlucky*.* Lucky* and Unlucky* both gamble in $(0.05 \cdot 100, 0.95 \cdot 200; 1 \cdot 100.01)$. Lucky* wins, ending up with 200, and Unlucky* loses, ending up with 100.01.

This gamble is within a hair's breadth (0.01 units of advantage) of being a dominant gamble. If it is unfair to allow an inequality between Lucky and Unlucky, it would surely be unfair to allow an inequality between Lucky*, who wins the gamble, and Unlucky*, who loses it. But if we are only neutralizing option luck in dominant gambles, we will allow this inequality to stand, as it will be classed as a 'normal' case of option luck. As I take this to be clearly implausible, the defender of brute-luck egalitarianism must consider a different kind of revision.

B. The reasonable avoidability view. A second kind of revision of brute-luck egalitarianism follows naturally from the above discussion. This view neutralizes option luck not just in dominant gambles, but in all non-reasonably avoidable gambles.²¹ It equalizes Lucky and Unlucky in their dominant gamble, and Lucky* and Unlucky* in the non-reasonably avoidable sub-dominant gamble (0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*100.01). But it does not equalize between dominant gamblers and non-gamblers (or non-dominant gamblers). Thus, quite plausibly, it does not equalize between Inventor and Procrastinator. Nor does it equalize between Inventor* and Procrastinator* in the sub-dominant but nevertheless non-reasonably avoidable gamble they face (0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*100.01).

By broadening the number of cases in which option luck is neutralized, the reasonable avoidability view avoids a major pitfall faced by other versions of brute-luck egalitarianism. Nonetheless, two major problems with the view can be identified:

First, we encounter difficulties when we start unpacking the idea of reasonable avoidability. We might initially be tempted to use a *subjective* sense of reasonable avoidability, according to which it is up to the individual to decide what is and is not reasonable avoidable. But in that case, society will find itself having to compensate individuals for choices that they considered to be reasonably unavoidable on quite idiosyncratic grounds. Consider, for instance, Dworkin's famous character Louis, who opts to develop expensive tastes for such things as plovers' eggs and pre-phylloxera claret. Dworkin is clear that Louis does not develop his taste carelessly, but rather does so because he thinks 'his life would be a more successful life overall - would provide less reason for regret - if he had the expensive taste or ambition'.²² Louis could well suppose that deliberately developing expensive tastes was not reasonably avoidable in his case, because it is unreasonable to expect someone to act in a way that will cause him regret. But that is surely no reason for society to subsidize Louis's expensive tastes.

These considerations may lead us to an *objective* sense of reasonable avoidability. This certainly overcomes the difficulty posed by idiosyncratic individual judgments of reasonable avoidability, but it faces new problems. In order to neutralize option luck in gambles that are taken as objectively non-reasonably avoidable, a society would require an 'official' account of what is and what is not reasonably avoidable for its citizens. Even before we consider any policy applications of this official account, it already looks like it involves objectionably perfectionist judgments. The official account will, furthermore, be used as the basis for granting or denying compensation to individuals for the bad results of their choices. Even if the official account is correct, such practices will add insult to injury for those who have made choices with bad

²¹ Segall, *Health, Luck, and Justice*, ch. 1; Gideon Elford, 'Equality, Choice, and Alternatives', *Ethical Perspectives*, 19 (2012), 445-468.

²² Ronald Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part One: Equality of Welfare', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 10, 185-246, p. 231.

consequences for themselves, by telling them that they fell short of what could be reasonably expected of them. This is an unwelcome departure from most luck egalitarian views, which make no judgments of reasonableness regarding individual conduct.²³ This is exacerbated by the fact that society may very well be wrong about what is actually reasonably avoidable.

The second major problem with the reasonable avoidability view is that, however the line between reasonably avoidable and non-reasonably avoidable gambles is drawn, there will be cases in which a gamble is *only just* reasonably avoidable. For instance, suppose that n is the greatest value for which the gamble in $(0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*n)$ is non-reasonably avoidable. As the gamble in this case is non-reasonably avoidable, any option luck inequality between gamblers must be fully neutralized according to the reasonable avoidability view. But if we replace n with an infinitesimally greater value, the gamble does, ex hypothesi, turn into a reasonably avoidable gamble, and the full inequality between gamblers is allowed to stand. It seems highly inappropriate to offer zero compensation to the losing gambler in this gamble, but full compensation in the other gamble, given that the difference between the two is so minute it is unlikely ever to affect anybody's decision to gamble. The reasonable avoidability view assumes that the presence of reasonable avoidability makes a decisive moral difference. But it cannot possibly make such a difference given the tiny scalar differences in payoffs to which any account of reasonable avoidability must respond.

C. The quasi-gamble view. A third and final revision of brute-luck egalitarianism focuses on a feature of some dominant gamblers that I earlier picked out as being of special importance – their neutrality or even aversion to risk. Lippert-Rasmussen suggests that we distinguish ‘gambles proper’, where a ‘gambler prefers facing the gamble to having its expected value’, from ‘quasi-gambles’, where the gambler ‘prefers the expected value of the gamble to facing the gamble’.²⁴ The final revision, then, identifies the problem with brute-luck egalitarianism as its forcing of risk onto quasi-gamblers, who do not want risk per se, and participate in dominant gambles only because they provide the best expected outcome. It responds by protecting quasi-gamblers from risk by neutralizing quasi-gamble option luck while allowing gamble proper option luck to stand.²⁵

The quasi-gamble view does, like the dominant gamble view and the reasonable avoidability view, handle vanilla dominant gambles like *Lucky and Unlucky* much more effectively than the standard brute-luck egalitarianism. But like those views, it faces difficulties in other cases.

First, note that whether an individual is a gambler proper may be due to brute luck. So if we are only to compensate unlucky quasi-gamblers, it seems that we will arbitrarily disadvantage some gamblers proper. A natural revision of the quasi-gamble view given such cases is to say that we *compensate quasi-gamblers and brute-luck gamblers proper*. My feeling is that, in practical terms, this would prove to be a radical departure from both brute-luck egalitarianism and the regular quasi-gamble view. While brute luck factors such as genetics and upbringing obviously influence individuals' choices, it is quite plausible to suppose that some degree of justice-relevant choice remains in most cases (for instance, individuals are still typically ‘reasons responsive’). But I find

²³ Cohen, ‘On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice’, p. 923; Richard J. Arneson, ‘Liberalism, Distributive Subjectivism, and Equal Opportunity for Welfare’, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 19 (1990), 159–94., p. 176.

²⁴ Lippert-Rasmussen, ‘Egalitarianism, Option Luck, and Responsibility’, p. 555.

²⁵ See Marc Fleurbaey, ‘Egalitarian Opportunities’, *Law and Philosophy*, 20 (2001), 499–530; Nicholas Barry, ‘Reassessing Luck Egalitarianism’, *Journal of Politics*, 70 (2008), 136–150.

it quite implausible that the attitudes towards risk that an individual holds, such as favouring a gamble to receiving its expected value, are typically things that that individual has chosen, either directly or as a matter of option luck. So I expect that the revised quasi-gamble view, which compensates everyone who is not a gambler proper by choice, will mandate more redistribution than any of the other views we have been discussing, perhaps to the point that it is practically indistinguishable from outcome egalitarianism. This is not strictly speaking an objection to the view – indeed, I take it as nevertheless more plausible than the regular quasi-gamble view, which mandates much less redistribution – but it is a surprising consequence of this line of thought that may be unsettling to some brute-luck egalitarians otherwise attracted to it.

Second, the quasi-gamble view (including, hereafter, the revised version) appears to be incoherent in cases where losers are quasi-gamblers and winners are gamblers proper. It seems to require that we compensate losing quasi-gamblers, but it also says that winning gamblers proper are entitled to their winnings. As with the revised dominant gamble view discussed in II.A, there are two conflicting norms contained within the view, which make conflicting claims on the available resources. As in that case, we can make a trade-off between the two norms. For instance, we could say that where Quasi-Gambler loses and Gambler Proper wins in $(0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*100)$, we balance the norm saying that Gambler Proper should keep her entire winnings (200) against the norm saying that the option luck impacting Quasi-Gambler should be neutralized (both individuals get 150), with the consequence that Gambler Proper gets 175 and Quasi-Gambler gets 125. But as in the earlier case, the attempt at a trade-off fails to satisfy egalitarian justice, for the familiar reason that a choice to engage in a dominant gamble is rationally compelled, and as such cannot justify inequality between dominant gamblers, such as that between Gambler Proper and Quasi-Gambler.

The final difficulty with the quasi-gamble view is again of a familiar type. The difference between quasi-gambles and gamblers proper may be minute. Suppose, for instance, that I am a quasi-gambler in $(0.05*100, 0.95*199.9; 1*100)$, but only marginally so – I have a very weak preference for receiving the expected value of the gamble rather than facing the risk. If we increase the size of the ‘win’ by a tiny amount, so I now face $(0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*100)$, I may be induced to change my preference so it is now a very weak preference for taking the risk. This could be for any number of reasons – it could be that 200 (but not 199.9) would mean I am above some utility or capability threshold that I take to be important, or it could simply be that 200 feels like it’s significantly more than 199.9 because the former is a ‘round number’. Whatever my reasons, in the event that I lose, the quasi-gambler view is committed to giving me full compensation in $(0.05*100, 0.95*199.9; 1*100)$, because I am there a quasi-gambler, but zero compensation in $(0.05*100, 0.95*200; 1*100)$, because I am there a gambler proper. But this drastic difference in treatment does not seem to be warranted by such small differences in my preferences. As we saw with the reasonable avoidability view, small changes in scalar properties (such as my preferences or the payoffs) cannot possibly have such ‘all-or-nothing’ distributive weight.

III. ALL-LUCK EGALITARIANISM

With the failure of this last brute-luck egalitarian variant, I conclude that there is no plausible way of reconciling brute-luck egalitarianism with neutralization of option luck in dominant gambles. This offers an indirect argument for all-luck egalitarianism, by way of undermining its main rival. I will now argue more directly in favour of that view. I begin by setting out all-luck

egalitarianism's appeal as a response to dominant gambles (III.A). I then examine the epistemic mechanisms of all-luck egalitarianism and brute-luck egalitarianism, finding the former to be clearly preferable (III.B). Finally, I respond to the objection that all-luck egalitarianism is implausible in 'classic' cases of option luck (III.C).

A. Dominant gambles revisited. Brute-luck egalitarianism is, I have argued, an unstable view: its rationale for endorsing brute luck neutralization undermines its insistence on allowing option luck to stand in dominant gambles. This instability could be resolved in any of three ways. First, brute-luck neutralization could be rejected as an objective. This amounts to rejecting luck egalitarianism altogether in favour of some entirely different theory, such as utilitarianism, (right) libertarianism, or democratic equality.²⁶ Whatever the merits of such views, they cannot claim to be true interpretations of what luck egalitarianism requires. Second, some rationale for brute-luck neutralization that is quite different from Dworkin's, and which does not imply that option luck inequality is fair in dominant gambles, could be devised.²⁷ I am not sure why anyone would want to go this route, given that option luck inequality in dominant gambles is surely unappealing quite independently of Dworkin's rationale. An alternative rationale for brute-luck neutralization is undoubtedly possible, but I do not hold out much hope for its appeal. Finally, we could drop the brute-luck egalitarian insistence on allowing option luck to stand. On this view option luck is neutralized, just as brute luck is neutralized. Only direct choice is allowed to stand, insofar as it is present. This approach, which I believe is most promising, is the all-luck egalitarian approach.

As I interpret all-luck egalitarianism, its main goal is to give individuals the expected value of their choices.²⁸ We can see right away that this view handles dominant gambles such as *Lucky and Unlucky* with ease. Lucky and Unlucky have made identical choices in identical circumstances, so the expected value of their choices is identical. All-luck egalitarianism therefore suggests that their situation should be equalized, as the intuitive phenomena and the Dworkinian rationale mentioned above both suggest.

All-luck egalitarianism deals with the other cases we have been discussing similarly well. The sub-dominant gamble *Lucky* and Unlucky** is, from an all-luck egalitarian perspective, almost identical to *Lucky and Unlucky*: Lucky* and Unlucky* made identical choices in identical circumstances so they receive identical outcomes. In *Inventor and Procrastinator*, Inventor's expectations are almost double those of Procrastinator, so he is entitled to almost twice as much benefit, as seems reasonable. In the variant of this case that adds Lucky Inventor, Inventor and Lucky Inventor have identical expectations, so are due identical outcomes, while Procrastinator

²⁶ See, for instance, J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*; Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974); Elizabeth Anderson, 'What is the Point of Equality?', *Ethics* 109 (1999), 287–337.

²⁷ Cohen may be interpreted as taking a version of this strategy in later work, where he suggests that option luck inequality may be unfair but legitimate; see G. A. Cohen, 'Fairness and Legitimacy in Justice, And: Does Option Luck Ever Preserve Justice?' in Stephen De Wijze, Matthew H. Kramer and Ian Carter (eds), *Hillel Steiner and the Anatomy of Justice* (London: Routledge, 2009). While this view has the advantage that it says that option luck inequality in dominant gambles is unfair, it does not overall seem a viable account of dominant gambles. The inequality between Lucky and Unlucky seems no more legitimate than it is fair. How could such inequality be legitimated merely by arising from individuals' choices, where these are choices that no rational person would decline?

²⁸ Where individuals are unable to receive their full expectations due to a societal shortfall each individual's entitlement is reduced by the same percentage as the overall shortfall. See Knight, 'Egalitarian Justice and Expected Value', p. 1069. Where there is a societal surplus, as in *Inventor and Procrastinator*, each individual's entitlement is likewise increased.

is due much less. This is a much more plausible position than that of the revised dominant gamble view, which resulted in an arbitrary inequality between Lucky Inventor and Inventor. Finally, we found cases where the reasonable avoidability view and the quasi-gamble view both attached all-or-nothing moral weight to infinitesimal changes in scalar properties. All-luck egalitarianism lacks this absolutism. It responds to scalar properties, such as (most distinctively) individual expectations, with a scalar allocation of benefits: a small change in one results in a small change in the other. In short, all-luck egalitarianism seems to overcome the problems faced by each version of brute-luck egalitarianism.

B. Foreseeability vs. Expectations. What explains the differing fortunes of brute-luck egalitarianism and all-luck egalitarianism in dominant gambles? I believe the key issue is a corresponding difference in the *epistemic criteria* of the two theories. Consideration of this difference offers further support for all-luck egalitarianism.

Arneson writes that '[t]he argument for equal opportunity [i.e. luck egalitarianism] rather than straight equality is simply that it is morally fitting to hold individuals responsible for the foreseeable consequences of their voluntary choices'.²⁹ Though this view is not expressed in terms of option luck, it is clear that Arneson endorses the brute-luck egalitarian position that the key distributive question issue is, as Dworkin's definition of option luck has it, 'whether someone gains or loses through accepting an isolated risk he or she should have anticipated and might have declined'. For the brute-luck egalitarian, the epistemic criterion is a *binary* one. An individual becomes liable for the consequences of her choices that are foreseeable (Arneson) or anticipatable (Dworkin), and these concepts are interpreted such that they do not admit of matters of degree. One either could have foreseen or anticipated some outcome, or one could not have foreseen or anticipated it. With respect to a specific consequence, there is no such thing as 'partially foreseeing it' or 'anticipating it to an extent'. This explains the brute-luck egalitarian's stance that there is no case for redistribution between dominant gamblers such as Lucky and Unlucky. They both foresaw the consequences of their choices, so they can have no complaint with the outcome.

The all-luck egalitarian's epistemic criterion is, by contrast, thoroughly scalar. An individual receives the consequences of her choices that she was warranted to expect, where expectations is understood as scalar. This is why Lucky and Unlucky receive identical outcomes on this view.

The expectations approach seems clearly preferable to the foreseeability approach, and not just because of their contrasting success in dominant gambles. The reasoning here is parallel to that given in earlier cases involving scalar properties, and is illustrated in this example:

Meteorite. Suppose that being hit by a meteorite when standing outside is foreseeable iff there is a $>x$ probability of being hit by one.³⁰ Megan is hit by a meteorite where the probability of being hit by one was x . Melissa is hit by a meteorite where the probability of being hit by one was $>x$. Both suffer identical disadvantages.

²⁹ 'Equality and Equal Opportunity for Welfare', p. 88.

³⁰ I have formulated this in a deliberately broad way as brute-luck egalitarians are not very specific about what they mean by foreseeability. The reader is free to fill out 'probability' however they prefer (subjective, objective, the official government estimate, etc). The example assumes, of course, that standing outside is a matter of choice.

According to brute-luck egalitarianism, Megan is entitled to full compensation, as being hit by a meteorite was not foreseeable for her and is therefore a matter of brute luck. But Melissa is not entitled to any compensation, as being hit by a meteorite was foreseeable for her and is therefore a matter of option luck. It seems impossible to justify this extreme difference in response on the basis of a potentially tiny difference in expectations (for instance, the difference between a 0.0005 probability and a 0.00049 probability). This suggests that a binary condition of foreseeability is not a viable basis for assessing claims for egalitarian assistance.³¹ It is much more plausible to make egalitarian assistance fully responsive to expectations, as all-luck egalitarianism proposes. In that case an individual who suffered an injury that had a 0.0005 probability of eventuating will have almost identical entitlements to an individual who suffered an injury that had a 0.00049 probability of eventuating.

It might be supposed that brute-luck egalitarianism cannot really use a binary criterion that would have the absurd consequences described in *Meteorite*. Indeed, after presenting the examples of a stock purchase and ‘a falling meteorite whose course could not have been predicted’, Dworkin comments that ‘the difference between these two forms of luck [option and brute] can be represented as a matter of degree, and we may be uncertain how to describe a particular piece of bad luck’.³² This seems to suggest that option luck and brute luck, and the foreseeability criterion underlying them, may admit of degrees after all. But this is not in fact the case. These are Dworkin’s next sentences in this passage:

If someone develops cancer in the course of a normal life, and there is no particular decision to which we can point as a gamble risking the disease, then we will say that he has suffered brute bad luck. But if he smoked cigarettes heavily then we may prefer to say that he took an unsuccessful gamble.³³

The juxtaposition here suggests that Dworkin is simply applying a binary criterion, according to which one has option luck *or* brute luck. He believes that the difference between them can be ‘represented’ as a matter of degree, because whether some consequence is anticipatable is obviously a matter of whether it could be expected, and whether it could be expected is obviously a matter of degree – of probabilities. But for distributive purposes the scalar property of expectation is relevant only in the respect that it results in the binary condition of foreseeability being met or not being met.

The binary foreseeability criterion is, moreover, no mere idiosyncrasy of Dworkin’s view of option luck. It is quite central to brute-luck egalitarianism. A view which asked *how far* some outcome was foreseeable, with compensation for bad outcomes insofar as they did not coincide

³¹ The binary condition might seem more plausible where x is set as 0, and any conceivable disadvantaging event, no matter how unlikely, is treated as foreseeable. But on this account, there would be effectively no brute luck, and many seemingly compelling claims for assistance (such as that attending a meteor strike with <0.0000001 antecedent probability) would be denied.

³² Dworkin, ‘What is Equality? Part Two’, p. 293.

³³ Dworkin, ‘What is Equality? Part Two’, p. 293.

with expectations, would no longer be brute-luck egalitarian. It would be an all-luck egalitarian view.³⁴

C. *Classic gambles*. Whatever strengths all-luck egalitarianism may have in cases like *Lucky and Unlucky* and *Meteorite*, its brute-luck egalitarian critics contend that the view should be rejected because of its implausible implications in classic cases of option luck, where the gamble is rationally declinable and its possible consequences unproblematically foreseeable. Arneson gives this example:

Individuals who otherwise would have identical expected welfare may voluntarily engage in a game of pure chance with each other with a lot of money riding on the outcome. One wins, the other loses, and thereafter their welfare expectations are very different. The winner prudently invests her winnings and the loser never recoups his losses. But surely this inequality in expected welfare does not create any *prima facie* case for society to correct the inequality by transfer of resources.³⁵

While I agree that, on the face of it, there is not much intuitive pull for the all-luck egalitarian position that we should equalize welfare in this case, I believe that we should, on reflection, accept this position. The main point here is that there are good reasons for supposing that any pro-option luck intuitions we have are not *egalitarian* intuitions. I already gestured towards this in I.B, but the point is strengthened by considering the kinds of principles that *do* approve of option luck. Utilitarianism is very likely to approve of it, because well-being is likely to be directly promoted where individuals are allowed to pursue their own interests, including interests in gambling and risk taking generally. Additionally, many kinds of option luck would less directly but no less importantly promote individual well-being by facilitating entrepreneurial activity and other calculated risks that are simply impossible where option luck inequalities are undone by the state. Similar points can be made about other principles that give weight to absolute levels of well-being, such as prioritarianism.³⁶

This matters because any plausible form of egalitarianism will be pluralistic, and will give some weight to utilitarianism, prioritarianism, or other considerations of absolute well-being.

³⁴ At one point Cohen suggests that ‘The amount of genuineness that there is in a choice is a matter of degree, and egalitarian redress is indicated to the extent that a disadvantage does not reflect genuine choice’. He illustrates this as follows: ‘[o]ne of the things that affects how genuine a choice was is the amount of relevant information that the chooser had. But we do not have to ask, Exactly what sort and amount of information must a person have to count as having genuinely chosen his fate? All that we need say, from the point of view of egalitarian justice, is: the more relevant information he had, the less cause for complaint he now has’ (Cohen, ‘On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice’, 934). This stance regarding information does not by itself address the problem in *Meteorite*, as the problem there was not one regarding quality of relevant information. The problem was rather that implausibly differential treatment accompanied slight differences in expectations, and that implausibility would remain even if we specify that all parties have full information. It is possible that Cohen might have additionally intended that a choice would become more genuine, the more the outcome corresponded to expectations, in which case the problem in *Meteorite* would not arise. But in that case he would be an all-luck egalitarian.

³⁵ Arneson, ‘Liberalism, Distributive Subjectivism, and Equal Opportunity for Welfare’, pp. 175-6; see also ‘Equality and Equal Opportunity for Welfare’, pp. 83-4.

³⁶ Derek Parfit, ‘Equality or Priority?’, in Matthew Clayton and Andrew Williams (eds), *The Ideal of Equality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000).

Thus, any egalitarian worth their salt would have some (non-egalitarian) intuitions endorsing option luck inequality even if egalitarianism were indifferent or hostile to option luck inequality. I believe that this is exactly the situation we are in: the typical egalitarian feels the non-egalitarian intuitive pull of option luck inequality. But they usually call it an egalitarian intuition, perhaps because there is a theory of equality (brute-luck egalitarianism) that approves of option luck inequality. This is a misidentification and over-theorization of the intuition. A competent layperson would not call an intuition favouring option luck inequality an egalitarian intuition, nor does it seem to be an egalitarian intuition in any theoretical sense other than its agreement with brute-luck egalitarianism. It is much more plausible to suppose that this intuition ultimately takes its support from utilitarianism, prioritarianism, or some other non-egalitarian intuition.

This, then, is my assessment of the situation: (1) the balance of intuitions between brute-luck egalitarianism and all-luck egalitarianism is inconclusive, with brute-luck egalitarianism more intuitively appealing in classic gambles, and all-luck egalitarianism more appealing in other cases (e.g. *Stephanie and Fiona, Lucky and Unlucky, Meteorite*); but (2) those of our intuitions that support brute-luck egalitarianism can be plausibly explained as non-egalitarian. (1) means that, if we are to reach reflective equilibrium with either of these theories, we must set aside our considered judgments in certain cases. (2) suggests that we have more reason to set aside the judgments supportive of brute-luck egalitarianism, because there are good reasons for supposing that these intuitions are not egalitarian. In this way we can reach reflective equilibrium with all-luck egalitarianism. Obviously the case would be tidier if all the intuitions pointed in one direction. But I don't think that will ever be the case when considering theories of equality, because many commonplace intuitions, including some of those held by egalitarians, are not actually egalitarian.

IV. CONCLUSION

Lippert-Rasmussen opens his recent book on luck egalitarianism by saying that 'to be luck egalitarian one has to affirm' the 'core luck egalitarian claim' that 'it is unjust if some people are worse off than others through their bad luck'.³⁷ On a literal reading of this definition only all-luck egalitarians would qualify as (authentic) luck egalitarians; brute-luck egalitarians fall short because they do not affirm that it is unjust if some people are worse off than others through their bad option luck. While most luck egalitarians take this departure from the core luck egalitarian claim as having little or no downside, I have argued that it is fatal for brute-luck egalitarianism, as it commits it to an endorsement of option luck inequality in dominant gambles that is both strongly counterintuitive and incoherent. Revisions of brute-luck egalitarianism can overcome this difficulty but only at the cost of insuperable difficulties in other cases of option luck. All-luck egalitarianism is indeed the most authentically luck egalitarian view, precisely because it is the only view that is consistent in its opposition to people being worse off through mere bad luck.

³⁷ Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen, *Luck Egalitarianism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), pp. 1-2.