

What Second-Best Scenarios Reveal about Ideals of Global Justice

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1 Introduction

In this chapter we explore the options available to egalitarians confronting trade-offs between domestic and global equality, paying special attention to some of their respective benefits and costs. While there need be no conflict in theory between addressing global inequality (inequalities between people worldwide) and addressing domestic inequality (inequalities between people within a political community), there may be instances in which the feasible mechanisms for reducing global inequality risk aggravating domestic inequality. The burgeoning literature on global justice has tended to overlook the latter type of scenario. Consequently, theorists espousing global egalitarianism have not engaged with cases that are important for evaluating and clarifying the content of their theories.

Many who endorse policies to promote global equality are uncomfortable with the idea that such policies might undermine the living standards of disadvantaged people in their own societies. Thus, the trade-off we consider is likely to be a fraught one for them. We note that disregarding the evaluation of difficult trade-offs is not a sin unique to global egalitarians. Most justice theorists who endorse domestic egalitarianism but reject global egalitarianism posit a requirement—a duty of justice or of humanity—to promote the achievement of decent standards

of living worldwide without considering how this requirement relates to their commitment to promote domestic equality.

2 Egalitarian Justice

Egalitarianism, broadly understood, has long been influential in theorizing about domestic justice. With some notable exceptions, justice theorists have repeatedly affirmed that the evaluation of domestic institutions should be sensitive to inequalities in distributive shares that they tend to generate over time.¹

Egalitarians have, to put it mildly, often disagreed over precisely which conception of social justice is desirable. Egalitarian conceptions can be distinguished in terms of the subjects, goods, and distributive standards they consider when assessing distributive shares. The *subjects* of a conception of egalitarian justice indicate the subjects among whom equality is to be sought. Egalitarian conceptions may, for example, take individual persons as subjects, maintaining that there are limits to how steep inequalities in wealth, political influence, or other natural and social resources should be between them.² Alternatively, they may focus on inequalities in the distribution of valued resources amongst social groups (e.g. as defined by gender, race, ethnicity, and so on).

The *goods* of a conception of egalitarian justice constitute the things to be distributed among subjects. Examples of such goods include capabilities and functionings, opportunities, income and wealth, economic power, civil and political rights—the last two putting the “liberal” in liberal egalitarianism.² Finally, egalitarian conceptions may differ in the *distributive standards* they employ. An egalitarian conception might defend strict equality as its preferred distributive criterion, but few do so.³ Egalitarians need not be committed to viewing all inequalities in the

relevant goods as wrong or regrettable. Which inequalities stand in need of redress, and to what extent, depends on the particular justification invoked in support of these standards. For instance, some such justifications might appeal to considerations of responsibility, holding that only inequalities due to circumstances, not to subjects' responsible choices, should be rectified.⁴ Or they may insist on equality with respect to certain goods, but sufficiency or some reasonably high level of other goods.⁵ Alternatively, egalitarians might follow Rawls and conclude that departures from equality are permissible so long as they can be justified to those who fare worst under them, thereby treating equality as a morally privileged benchmark, rather than a desired outcome.⁶ And, of course, one can be an egalitarian while also embracing other values, such as giving some form of priority to concern for the less-advantaged.

We will refer loosely to all theories that express concern with equality in some way among some subjects with respect to some goods as “egalitarian justice.” The literature on global justice has to this point focused largely on the *scope* of egalitarian justice, leaving aside questions pertaining to its content. This “question of scope” concerns whether conceptions of justice that are endorsed for the domestic sphere constitute appropriate standards on the global plane.

Two broad camps have emerged in this debate. Global egalitarians (we will call them “Extenders”) support extending egalitarian justice to the global level.⁷ Opponents of various stripes (we will call them “Restrictors”) reject any such extension of scope.⁸ Restrictors are not a cold-hearted lot. Many are egalitarians of some sort domestically, and nearly all of them advocate policies and institutional schemes that would likely mitigate inequalities worldwide to at least some degree.⁹ Reforms with global-inequality-reducing effects may be adopted, for instance, in pursuit of the humanitarian goal—widely affirmed by Restrictors—of meeting people's basic needs so as to improve the absolute position of the globally disadvantaged. But

Restrictors deny that inequalities per se are a reason for concern globally, even if they are so domestically.¹⁰

Many Restrictors advocate egalitarian justice domestically, so they need to provide good reasons why considerations that ground concern with equality within political communities do not also ground it globally. On the one hand, they must provide a plausible account of the grounds of egalitarian justice. On the other, they must show that these grounds are either not present at all or at least not in the requisite degree and form, on the global plane to justify concern with global equality per se.

The debate between Extenders and Restrictors has followed a fairly standard script. Restrictors assert that there is an empirical disanalogy between the global and the domestic spheres and argue that, in virtue of this disanalogy, restricting the scope of egalitarian principles of justice to the domestic sphere is justified. For Restrictors, everyone has certain “general duties,” owed identically to everyone in the world. Over and above those, though, people also have “special duties” to particular others. Among those are often said to be “associative duties”: people who are members of the same association (paradigmatically, family or country) owe things to one another that they do not owe to people who are not members of the association.¹¹ One of the things that members of some associations owe to each other but not to non-associates, Restrictors claim, is concern for equality.

What are the relevant features that associations must have for concern with equality to become a requirement of justice? Restrictors have focused mainly on two, cooperation and coercion. On the Cooperation Account, concern with distributive equality among some group of people is rooted in the fact that members of the group are cooperating in some joint venture. On the Coercion Account, concern with distributive equality among some group of people is rooted

in the fact that members of the group are all subject to the same coercive authority. One can, of course, draw on *both* accounts in developing a conception of the scope of egalitarian justice, treating the existence of either or both Coercion and Cooperation as necessary or sufficient conditions for its application. Each of these accounts consists of a moral and an empirical claim.¹²

Take the Coercion Account. The moral claim here is that egalitarian justice *only* applies in the presence of some form of coercion.¹³ The empirical claim is that coercion of the requisite sort is absent at the international level.¹⁴ Extenders typically respond by trying to show either that this alleged empirical disanalogy between domestic and global with respect to the exercise of coercion does not obtain—pointing to the many ways in which coercion of the requisite sort is exercised on the global plane¹⁵—or that the empirical disanalogy is not morally relevant in the way that Restrictors suppose it to be, since coercion is not a necessary condition for the demands of egalitarian justice to apply.¹⁶

Two types of Extenders can be distinguished by the form of argument they emphasize in responding to Restrictors. The first group shares with Restrictors the view that the scope of egalitarian justice is limited to those who stand in some particular kind of social relation with one another (e.g. as set out in the Coercion or Cooperation Accounts, or in some other way). These “Associative Duty” Extenders, like Restrictors, treat duties to promote equality within some group as based on special duties that members of that group have to one another. However, they deny that the social relations that trigger these special associative duties are absent on the global plane. The second group of Extenders rejects this associationist picture entirely. These “General Duty” Extenders deny that the social relations emphasized by Restrictors and Associative Duty Extenders really are necessary for egalitarian justice requirements to apply. Extenders of this

latter sort treat concern with equality as based on general duties held to all, rather than special associative duties held only to some.

3 The Importance of Trade-Offs in Second-Best Scenarios

The debates between Extenders and Restrictors regarding the scope of egalitarian justice have been valuable; in particular, they have enriched thinking about the grounds for concern with equality more generally, and have led to deeper exploration of the nature of global institutions. Our aim here, however, is to draw attention to some of the important territory that they have left unexplored.

To provide a glimpse of that unexplored territory: Few Extenders have discussed whether *any* measure a state might adopt to bring about a decrease in global inequality would be justified were it to exacerbate inequality *within* that state.¹⁷ One can surely argue that global inequality is an important normative concern in its own right, yet maintain that states wishing to participate in schemes to reduce global inequality should take special care to avoid measures that aggravate domestic inequality.¹⁸ Such neglect arises in part from the fact that Extenders typically have in view the desirability of a specific kind of trade-off, namely that between the global rich and the global poor. Their advocacy of global egalitarianism typically begins by drawing attention to disturbing disparities in shares of global income among different quintiles or deciles before considering institutional reforms that would increase the life prospects of those in the bottom categories at the cost of decreasing (somewhat) the advantages of those in the top categories.¹⁹ It is easy to see why Extenders take this route. It is very difficult to absorb these sorts of facts and not consider it to be a justice gain were the global rich to have less and the global poor more. Indeed, many Restrictors also view this distributive trade-off as a justice gain.²⁰ However, by

concentrating on these ideal distributive trade-offs, Extenders have neglected ways in which the pursuit of egalitarian justice could lead to trade-offs that seem much more worrisome, morally speaking.

As initial motivation for attending to these trade-offs, notice that these worries are not merely academic; they concern many of the policy instruments that social scientists discuss when they consider such matters. For example, some economists claim that the best way to do something about poverty and inequality is not to engage in redistributive transfers from affluent countries to developing countries—this might be counterproductive (at least if provided in the form of intergovernmental aid²¹) and would probably be politically infeasible in any case—but to liberalize trade and immigration from poorer developing countries to affluent ones. Perhaps they are right. But trade and immigration liberalization are, as policy tools, too blunt to achieve with precision the distributive transfers desired by Extenders, namely from those with extremely high standards of living to those with very low standards of living. Such measures may instead engender aggregate transfers from the disadvantaged in affluent countries to the poor (and not so poor) in developing countries.

One might lodge two sorts of objections to excuse the aforementioned neglect: either that these policy prescriptions are misguided—immigration and trade liberalization might do little to address global inequality—or that the trade-offs we have suggested such policies might engender would not in fact obtain (e.g. liberalization of both sorts might both help address global inequality *and* promote the well-being of the disadvantaged in developed countries).²² Suffice it to say that the empirical questions at issue here are hotly contested.²³ Yet it would be surprising if some of the general kinds of trade-offs we have raised—between protecting the interests of the domestic poor and promoting global equality—would *never* arise in considering the different

policy instruments we might use to address global justice goals.²⁴ Indeed, there are good political economic reasons to think that they will arise.

The well-off in affluent societies typically wield preponderant political power. We can reasonably expect wealthy elites to use their power to resist policy reforms that could advance the interests of both the domestic and global poor at their expense. Even supposing wealthy elites are unable to prevent ostensibly pro-poor policy reforms, it seems reasonable to expect them to use their power to manage these reforms so as to capture a sizable portion of the aggregate gains, often at the expense of their less-advantaged compatriots. This is not to say that policies requiring the very affluent to bear most of the costs of improving the prospects of the global poor are altogether infeasible. We simply note that there are reasons to expect that attempts to close global inequality gaps will lead to trade-offs of the kind we raise here.

Even if one thinks that the risk of such trade-offs arising is slight, Extenders have more principled reasons to consider the kinds of trade-offs that would arise in second-best situations. We will show that how Extenders address such scenarios reveals important aspects of their egalitarian *ideals*. (Extenders are not alone here; Restrictors, too, have overlooked the importance of considering the kinds of trade-offs that arise in second-best scenarios.)

Ideal theories are often said to illuminate the complexion of basic moral and social values (e.g. liberty, equality, community, efficiency, and so on) and the relationships among them, as well as providing guidance in our decidedly nonideal world.²⁵ Yet restricting our analysis to a narrow range of ideal scenarios—in which at best only a very limited set of trade-offs arise—leaves us with an impoverished understanding of basic values. To deeply understand the contours of a commitment to certain basic values, we must explore the implications of such a commitment across a broad range of scenarios, including those in which a host of desirable policy instruments

for jointly realizing basic values will be unavailable. Political ideals remain indeterminate to the extent that we fail to consider the trade-offs that arise in such nonideal situations.

To sum up, both Extenders and Restrictors have typically specified their views in light of their implications for ideal contexts, have largely ignored the implications of their views in nonideal contexts, and have sidestepped what appears to be important test cases by focusing nearly exclusively on the question of scope. This is not just a problem in so far as it concerns the application of these conceptions of justice to the real world. It undermines a core objective of these conceptions, namely to offer a rich articulation of normative criteria for evaluating global distributive schemes.

4 Competing Claims for Equality

In what remains, we explore some of the trade-offs that arise when global equality can be achieved only through measures that diminish the position of less-advantaged people in affluent societies. Our aim is programmatic: to map certain types of trade-offs among moral and social values that might arise in this sort of scenario and the kinds of *ideal* moral considerations these types of trade-offs raise. We identify “choice points” for theorizing about broadly egalitarian approaches to global justice by revealing the normative commitments that are involved in saying one thing rather than another about how to address different types of trade-offs. The result will be a more detailed understanding of the range of views one might hold about global distributive justice that are egalitarian in spirit, not just for the nonideal case, but for the ideal case too. As we introduce these views, we will also note some of the justificatory challenges they face.

Consider a world that includes an affluent developed country (labeled D) and an underdeveloped country (labeled U). D is marked by nontrivial domestic inequality: the average

income of D's elites (labeled Y_E) is notably higher than the average income of D's poorest residents (labeled Y_P). Let $G_D = Y_P/Y_E$ measure the degree of inequality within D (inequality increases as G_D diverges from 1). We assume that the institutional arrangements engendering inequality in D cannot be justified in ways that are congenial to egalitarians—e.g. they do not optimize the position of the least advantaged in society and are not necessary to sustain relatively high standards of living. This world is also marked by unjustifiable global inequality: even Y_P is higher than Y_U , the income of typical residents of U. Let $G_W = Y_U/Y_E$ measure the degree of global inequality.²⁶ Given our assumptions, $G_W < G_D$ (global inequality is greater than domestic inequality).

The status quo institutional scheme in this world, labeled Q, is such that D maintains some significant restrictions on cross-border economic interactions (trade, investment, etc.) with U.²⁷ In contrast, consider an alternative institutional scheme, labeled L, that liberalizes such cross-border interactions with U. We assume that, if implemented, L would greatly increase Y_U (by the familiar textbook mechanisms). We also assume that implementing L does not decrease D's aggregate income (so L is Pareto-efficient at the country level). However, L does increase domestic inequality (i.e., decrease G_D).²⁸ To ensure that shifting from Q to L decreases global inequality (i.e., increases G_W), we assume that Y_U increases at a greater rate than Y_E .

Given this scenario, should the egalitarian ideal imply that L is preferable to Q from the standpoint of justice?

5 Boundless and Bounded Global Egalitarianism

Ideally, from an egalitarian standpoint, D would implement a tax and transfer policy T to offset the losses incurred by D's less-advantaged residents from establishing L. (Remember that L does

not decrease D's aggregate income.) Any broadly egalitarian view affirms that D's less-advantaged residents have a reasonable complaint against those who stand in the way of implementing T if L is established. At a minimum, the package (L,T) would mitigate global inequality without increasing domestic inequality. Egalitarians agree in the ideal case: (L,T) is preferable to (L,not-T) from the standpoint of justice. But suppose (L,T) is not feasible (because, e.g., there is insufficient political will, D's elites use their political power to resist, or the technology required to implement the tax and transfer scheme is absent). According to the egalitarian ideal, is (L,not-T) preferable to $Q = (\text{not-L},\text{not-T})$ from the standpoint of justice?

Global egalitarians encounter two broad options here. One response says that borders are simply irrelevant for settling the requirements of justice. Suppose justice requires us to mitigate inequality among a set of individuals, denoted N. Then, the fact that reducing inequality among the members of N would lead to greater inequality among a proper subset of N is irrelevant: it does not provide a reason against reducing inequality among the members of N. Let us call this view "Boundless Egalitarianism." To provide some contrast, "Bounded Egalitarianism" (more precisely: "Boundary Weighted Egalitarianism") allows that borders may constitute a salient partition on N, such that justice requires us to (in some way) prioritize equality within parts before turning our attention to inequality within the superset N. According to Boundless Egalitarianism, (L,not-T) must be preferable to Q; Bounded Egalitarianism permits one to judge that Q is preferable to (L,not-T).

Boundless Egalitarianism has the advantage of neatly capturing one of the motivating intuitions of global egalitarianism: that all people everywhere are worthy of equal concern and respect and that people's life prospects should not be influenced—at least not unduly—by morally arbitrary factors such as race, gender, and place of birth. It is hard to see how General

Duty Extenders can avoid this position. Boundless Egalitarianism must say that, under the specified circumstances, D's less-advantaged residents have no reasonable grounds to block the transition from Q to (L,not-T).²⁹ This implies that the Boundless Egalitarian ideal is ultimately undiscriminating when it comes to allocating the costs of increasing equality among the members of N. The magnitudes in losses to the disadvantaged in D would not matter, just so long as (L,not-T) yields a net gain toward global equality. This may be welcome news to General Duty Extenders, but it may also chase a fair few from the Boundless Egalitarian camp. No doubt, Boundless Egalitarians can agree that, as far as possible, it is preferable from the standpoint of justice to allocate these costs to those who are best positioned to bear them, namely the more advantaged members of N. But the scenario under consideration reveals an as yet neglected point: Extenders committed to Boundless Egalitarianism are committed to an egalitarian ideal that, in principle, places no limits on the subset of individuals who can be required to bear the costs of pursuing greater equality among the members of N.

Those who retreat from Boundless Egalitarianism at this point are left to consider Bounded Egalitarianism. Given a set of individuals N and a normatively salient partition on N, Bounded Egalitarians say that, all else being equal, inequalities within certain parts of N are more worrisome than inequalities within the superset N. Thus, Bounded Egalitarianism offers the prospect of reconciling a commitment to weighing domestic inequalities more heavily than global inequalities in the scales of justice with the view that (*pace* the Restrictors) global inequalities per se are, nonetheless, important.

This raises the question of how to weigh within-part inequalities relative to inequalities within the superset. Bounded Egalitarians have several options here. At one extreme, they might assert a lexical ordering of these requirements. In a weaker form, this lexical ordering could

demand that policies addressing global inequality be adopted only in so far as they do not *exacerbate* domestic inequality. This would rule out the adoption of (L,not-T) over Q, but might permit global-equality-promoting policies that would leave the extent of domestic inequality unchanged, even if alternative (and incompatible) policies would increase domestic equality without commensurate gains in promoting global equality. In a stronger form, this lexical ordering demands that domestic egalitarian goals always take precedence over global egalitarian goals. This sort of view would not only rule out (L,not-T), but also any other set of policies that would fail to decrease domestic inequality, no matter how large the resultant decrease in global inequality. Alternatively, a Bounded Egalitarian view might eschew any form of lexical priority, yet still give extra weight to preventing or addressing domestic inequality gaps, all else being equal. Whether this sort of Bounded Egalitarian view would condemn or endorse (L,not-T) would depend on the magnitudes of gains and losses to the achievement of domestic and global egalitarian goals, and the weight that it attaches to each.³⁰

Bounded Egalitarianism seems to capture a conviction, shared by many, that there is something objectionable about radically unequal distributive shares globally (in addition to the fact that those with less have so little), while at the same time permitting (or requiring) that agents regard unequal distributive shares within their societies as especially urgent concerns—to combine a kind of universal concern with associative duties. Perhaps more importantly here, in contrast with Boundless Egalitarianism, Bounded Egalitarian views can accommodate limits on the set of people who can be required to bear the costs of pursuing greater global equality, reserving the heaviest burden for the most affluent.

Bounded Egalitarians face two justificatory challenges: they must provide some rationale for treating a partition on N as normatively salient; and they must provide some rationale for treating

within-part inequalities as normatively weightier than inequalities within the superset N. Associative Duty Extenders seem best positioned to address the latter.³¹ It is hard to see what could motivate differential concern with domestic and global inequality, unless the conditions that fix the scope of egalitarian justice admit of degrees. For example, if the conditions of egalitarian justice are those set out in the Coercion or Cooperation Accounts, then Associative Duty Extenders might hold that the domestic sphere features more thoroughgoing coercion or cooperation than the global sphere, and that this provides us with a reason to give greater weight to domestic inequality.³²

At the same time, however, attempts to meet the first challenge might leave Bounded Egalitarianism at risk of instability. Many of the reasons that theorists have invoked to justify concern with global equality may seem to steer us towards Boundless Egalitarianism in particular.³³ If concern with global inequality derives from the conviction that people's life prospects should not be influenced by morally arbitrary factors, then it is hard to see why we should not treat misfortunes due to one type of purportedly arbitrary factor (place of birth) to be of as much concern as other such factors (race, gender, etc.).³⁴ And if the conditions fixing the scope of egalitarian justice (coercion, cooperation, and so on) are thought of as thresholds, rather than a continuum, then this too would drive even Associative Duty Extenders toward Boundless Egalitarianism.

Putting the point differently, Bounded Egalitarians must provide reasons for departing from Boundless Egalitarianism that are consistent with their rationale for extending egalitarian justice from the domestic to the global plane in the first place. As noted, the most promising attempts to justify departures from Boundless Egalitarianism appeal to the kinds of factors that Restrictors have adduced in arguing against scope extension (coercion, cooperation, reciprocity, and so on).

However, whereas Restrictors appeal to these factors to *restrict* the scope of egalitarian justice to the domestic sphere, Bounded Egalitarians must deploy them in a way that renders differential concern for domestic inequalities consistent with *extending* the scope of egalitarian justice to the global sphere. Bounded Egalitarians bear a different argumentative burden than Restrictors. The latter must show that the conditions that fix the scope of egalitarian justice are not present across the full set of individuals N, or not to a sufficient degree. Bounded Egalitarians must demonstrate something more subtle: that the conditions that fix the scope of egalitarian justice are satisfied across N, but that they are satisfied to a greater degree within certain subsets of N and that this differential degree of satisfaction warrants differential concern for the cause of equality. This is why the threat of instability looms for Bounded Egalitarians but not Restrictors. To avoid sliding toward a Restrictor position, the Bounded Egalitarian must prop up a concern for global equality. But the most promising attempts to do so threaten to push the Bounded Egalitarian toward Boundless Egalitarianism.

To conclude this section, we note that our discussion focuses on trade-offs between competing claims to equality “all else being equal.” All else is unlikely to be equal, though—the less-advantaged residents of D might bear a normatively significant relationship to the poverty of U’s residents. Here, we simply sketch two such relationships, only to set them aside. First, the less-advantaged residents of D might have contributed to the vulnerability of disadvantaged foreigners, for example by supporting policies that harm their environment or undermine their prospects for export-led growth.³⁵ Second, without themselves engaging in any wrongdoing, the less-advantaged residents of D might have been unjustly enriched from wrongs that had disadvantaged members of U, for example if D and U stood in a colonial relation of some sort or if D had engaged in unjust war against U in the past.³⁶ In either of these cases (although the

second is perhaps more controversial), the relationship borne by the less-advantaged residents of D to the disadvantages to be addressed by L might serve to diminish the former's claim against implementing (L,not-T). Nonetheless, the issues we raise here remain important for elaborating and clarifying global egalitarian ideals.

6 Equality versus Sufficiency

In the previous section, we considered various ways in which an Extender might handle trade-offs between competing concerns for distributive equality. We aimed not to advocate any particular resolution, but to expose the fact that any assessment of Extenders' egalitarian *ideals* turns on the resolution of these *nonideal* trade-offs, something that has been little noticed among global justice theorists. In this section, we show that our assessment of both Extenders' and Restrictors' ideals is sensitive to the ways in which they might handle nonideal trade-offs between distributive equality and distributive sufficiency.

To expose the relevant type of trade-off, we consider a modification of the base model introduced in section 4. Recall that there is unjustifiable inequality both within D and between D and U. The policy choice continues to be between Q and (L,not-T), with L promising to raise Y_U , the income of the typical residents of U. Let H denote an income sufficiency threshold. We assume that the status quo is such that $Y_P > H$ and $Y_U < H$. The question of interest remains whether (L,not-T) is preferable to Q from the standpoint of justice.

Modification: Suppose that implementing (L,not-T) holds D's aggregate income fixed and transfers income from D's poor to D's rich (again, so L is Pareto-efficient at the aggregate level). Hence, adopting (L,not-T) decreases $G_D = Y_P/Y_E$ (increases

domestic inequality). While adopting (L,not-T) increases Y_U , we assume that Y_E increases at a greater rate than Y_U , so $G_W = Y_U/Y_E$ decreases too (global inequality increases). We assume that the end result is such that (L,not-T) yields an outcome in which everyone achieves at least a sufficient share; hence, $H \leq Y_U \leq Y_P \leq Y_E$.

In other words, this case raises the following trade-off. On the one hand, (L,not-T) raises the global poor above sufficiency. On the other hand, these sufficiency gains come at the expense of both domestic and global equality; indeed, the less-advantaged residents of D bear the burden of bringing the global poor above sufficiency.

This case raises questions for Extenders and Restrictors alike. For Extenders: How important is global distributive equality relative to other values, distributive sufficiency in this case?³⁷

There is a rough consensus among Extenders that claims to sufficiency are more urgent than claims to equality. This judgment is typically meant to convey that a duty to realize global sufficiency is more *stringent* than a duty to realize global equality, where stringency is understood in terms of the costs one can be required to bear to satisfy the duty in question. This judgment is typically made in view of the ideal case, in which the global rich are (often tacitly) assumed to bear most of the costs of bringing the global poor to sufficiency. The implicit proposal, then, is that the global rich can be required, as a matter of justice, to bear quite heavy costs to realize global sufficiency, greater than the marginal costs they can be required to bear to move from global sufficiency to global equality.

Our nonideal case presses Extenders to refine their judgment that global sufficiency is more urgent than global equality, perhaps in ways that are surprisingly difficult to reconcile with their core theoretical commitments. Does the relative urgency of sufficiency imply that (L,not-T) is

preferable to Q from the standpoint of justice? Extenders can go either way. Perhaps the more straightforward reply is to judge that (L,not-T) is preferable to Q—global sufficiency is, after all, more urgent than global equality. Notice that this reply is consistent with driving Y_p down to H; conditions might be such that, to raise Y_u to sufficiency, (L,not-T) yields $Y_u = Y_p = H$. We conjecture that any justification for judging (L,not-T) preferable to Q in view of this possibility is likely to be at odds with the egalitarian commitments at the core of the Extender position.

In *Modification*, (L,not-T) has a deeply inegalitarian implication: it accepts a *highly regressive* distribution of the costs required to realize sufficiency. The issue, then, is whether Extenders can square acceptance of a regressive distribution of costs with the extension of egalitarian justice to the global plane. It is no answer, at this point, to simply reiterate the moral urgency of relieving the global poor from their desperate plight. The question, after all, is whether Extenders' ideal of justice requires acceptance of a highly regressive distribution of costs *in exchange for* a state of affairs in which the global poor achieve distributive sufficiency.

Extenders might go the other way and judge that Q is preferable to (L,not-T) from the standpoint of justice, for at least a couple of reasons. Perhaps the costs borne by the domestic poor are more than justice requires in this case. Alternatively, perhaps there is some income threshold between Y_p and Y_e , labeled Y^* , such that justice does not require individuals with incomes below Y^* to bear costs for the sake of realizing sufficiency. Notice, though, that both of these answers require Extenders to say something more nuanced about the relative urgency of realizing global sufficiency than they have said to this point.

Taking the second rationale first, what is the principle that picks out Y^* from among (infinitely) many options? We are skeptical that any particular Y^* can be given a principled rationale. But, setting that aside, we note that Y^* cannot be justified by appeal to the relative

urgency of ensuring distributive sufficiency for the *domestic* poor—implementing (L,not-T) leaves $H \leq Y_p$ by assumption. Thus, any principle deployed to justify Y^* compels Extenders to identify conditions under which (domestic) equality takes precedence over (global) sufficiency or to introduce some additional consideration (reciprocity, liberty, and so on). Either way risks upsetting the Extender’s rather simplistic normative landscape. (What if the most plausible justifications for imposing Y^* are in tension with extending the scope of egalitarian justice to the global plane?)

Regarding the first rationale, the domestic poor’s income losses in our nonideal case are likely to be far less, in absolute terms, than the income losses Extenders seem prepared to impose on the rich in their ideal case. Given this, Extenders might reconcile a preference for Q over (L,not-T) with the judgment that justice can require the rich to bear quite heavy income losses for the sake of realizing global sufficiency in one of two ways. First, they might conceptualize costs in terms of some quantity that has diminishing marginal value in money—utility or well-being perhaps. Second, they might conceptualize the limit on the costs an individual can be required to bear in a way that is sensitive to her income—for instance, no more than a certain percentage of one’s income. Both routes seem tenable to us, so our point is not to indicate that trouble awaits the Extender who seeks to impose a principled limit on the costs that the domestic poor can be required to bear for the sake of realizing global sufficiency. Rather, our point is that Extenders have yet to address the issues raised by our nonideal case and that neglecting to do so leaves us with an underspecified account of the relationship between basic distributive values.

For Restrictors, *Modification* raises questions, not about the relative importance of global sufficiency versus global equality, but about the relative importance of global sufficiency versus *domestic* equality.³⁸ Recall that Restrictors usually insist that, while we should not be concerned

with distributive equality globally, we have a general duty to ensure that all people throughout the world achieve a decent standard of living. The question is how this goal fits with Restrictors' concern for domestic egalitarian justice. Restrictors have said little on the matter to this point.

Some Restrictors address this trade-off by saying that domestic equality is a requirement of justice, while helping people abroad achieve a decent standard of living is merely a humanitarian requirement.³⁹ For the purpose at hand, though, it is beside the point whether we treat global distributive sufficiency as a requirement of justice or a humanitarian requirement. If it is a requirement of justice, then the question is how these two justice requirements relate to one another. If it is a humanitarian requirement, then the question is how requirements of justice and humanity relate to one another. What matters is the importance attached to these different moral demands, rather than how they are categorized.

One possible way for Restrictors to address this trade-off claims that domestic equality has strict priority over global sufficiency; thus, Q is preferable to (L,not-T) from a moral standpoint. This view seems quite extreme. Imagine the feasible set includes two policy options: p_1 very slightly decreases domestic inequality, while leaving many people far below the sufficiency threshold, while p_2 leaves domestic equality untouched but raises everyone globally above the sufficiency threshold. We submit that the strict priority view bears a heavy burden in justifying a preference for p_1 .

Restrictors might instead attach different weights to the achievement of these two requirements. Plausibly, a justifiable weighting scheme must be sensitive to at least the following two parameters. First, following from the last paragraph, the relative weighting of domestic equality gains versus global sufficiency gains should accommodate normative judgments that are sensitive to the relative size of the two kinds of gains (or losses). Second, our judgments are

plausibly sensitive to the initial degree of domestic inequality and the initial extent of global deprivation. To wit, if G_D is quite close to 1 (so Y_P and Y_E are nearly equal) and the extent of global deprivation is high (many people are far below the sufficiency threshold), this would presumably count in favor of adopting a policy that would prioritize the achievement of global sufficiency gains rather than domestic equality gains. To be clear, our point here is not that Restrictors cannot plausibly address these issues in a way that can be reconciled with their core normative commitments (although doing so may be less straightforward than one might hope). Rather, our point is that Restrictors have yet to address these issues and, further, that they must do so if we are to gain an adequate understanding of their proposed ideals.

7 Conclusion

Philosophers often rely on considered judgments about particular scenarios when exploring the significance of more general normative principles. For example, if a normative theory you are considering implies that bonded or slave labor is permissible when it reduces economic inequality, but you find such a practice to be obviously objectionable, this is typically taken as a reason to reject the theory. Whether this reason is decisive depends on many other factors, including the availability of alternative theories that avoid this particular implication without having other implications that are more worrisome. Intuitive moral judgements of this sort—for example, that a society that permits bonded labor is seriously unjust—are often spontaneous, but they are also objects of reflection and thought. We are inclined to affirm certain general principles of global justice in large measure because, upon reflection, they cohere with these kinds of judgments about particular cases.

Of course, one *could* claim that moral principles do not need to be adjusted to our responses to particular cases. One could maintain that, although our judgments about some particular cases conflict with what would be the right thing to do according to certain principles, the latter are so obviously justified that we have no need to doubt them. But most philosophers working in this area have rejected this picture of justification and endorsed some version of John Rawls's method of reflective equilibrium (though often without the device of the original position). Roughly, a set of general principles is justified when they cohere with the moral judgments we endorse upon reflection.⁴⁰ The aim is to establish a theory but, at the same time, to retain considered judgments as far as possible. If this is the desired manner for developing a normative theory, it is important to consider as many cases as possible, since a theory that is consistent with firm intuitions in some instances may conflict with them in others. Our aim in this chapter has been to introduce a class of second-best scenarios that global justice theorists have neglected to this point and to demonstrate the importance of such scenarios as an aid to constructing and evaluating *ideals* of global justice.

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<CHBM:ENDN>Notes</CHBM:ENDN>

¹ Exceptions include [Nozick \(1974\)](#); [Raz \(1986\)](#); [Frankfurt \(1988\)](#): ch. 11).

² The literature on these topics is vast. Leading early discussions of such goods can be found in the essays in [Nussbaum and Sen \(1993\)](#).

³ For a good overview of some of the options, see [Arneson \(2002\)](#).

⁴ See, for example, [Arneson \(1989\)](#); [Roemer \(1993\)](#); and [Cohen \(2011\)](#). Notable critics include [Anderson \(1999\)](#) and [Hurley \(2003\)](#).

⁵ See, for example, [Nussbaum \(2006\)](#): esp., 292–5).

⁶ [Rawls \(1999\)](#).

⁷ Classic early defenses of the Extender position are [Beitz \(1979/1999\)](#) and [Pogge \(1989\)](#), both of whom adopted a broadly Rawlsian approach. More recent statements are offered by [Moellendorf \(2002\)](#); [Tan \(2004\)](#); and [Caney \(2005\)](#).

⁸ [Armstrong \(2012\)](#) makes a similar contrast between “egalitarian” and “minimalist” approaches.

⁹ [D. Miller \(2005\)](#).

¹⁰ Influential expressions of the Restrictor view are [R. W. Miller \(1998\)](#); [Blake \(2002\)](#); [Nagel \(2005\)](#); and [D. Miller \(2007\)](#).

¹¹ [Dworkin \(1986\)](#): 195–206); [Scheffler \(2001\)](#).

¹² One might appeal to something other than cooperation or coercion too. For example, [D. Miller \(1995\)](#) grounds a concern for distributive equality in shared national identity.

¹³ For example:

We are required to accord equal status to anyone with whom we are joined in a strong and coercively imposed political community ... There is a difference between voluntary association, however strongly motivated, and coercively imposed collective authority ... Political institutions are different, because adherence to them is not voluntary ... An institution that one has no choice about joining must offer terms of membership that meet

a higher standard ... once the state exists, we are in a new moral situation where the value of equality has purchase.

([Nagel 2005](#): 133; 140)<N-close>

¹⁴ See, for example, [Blake \(2002\)](#); [Nagel \(2005\)](#); [Risse \(2006\)](#).

¹⁵ See, for example, [Abizadeh \(2007\)](#); [Barry and Valentini \(2009\)](#): 495–7); and [Ypi, Goodin, and Barry \(2009\)](#). Although his interest is not in justifying global egalitarianism, [Pogge \(2008\)](#): esp. ch. 4) has argued that the global economic order is coercively imposed by the world's wealthy and privileged on the world's poor.

¹⁶ See, for example, [Arneson \(2005\)](#): esp. 136–42), and [Julius \(2006\)](#): 179–80).

¹⁷ Two scenarios are worth considering. In the first, domestic inequality is increased *mechanically*, since the society has more poor people in it. A policy of immigration liberalization (IL) might mechanically increase the number of poorer people in some developed country (D). This could be consistent with it being the case that those who were less advantaged in D prior to the adoption of IL are not made worse off by the policy (or may even be made better off by it.) In this case, global inequality could be reduced and everyone made better off than they were prior to the adoption of IL. In the second, the increase in domestic inequality is not merely mechanical, but achieved by an increase in the wealth of the more advantaged or a decrease in wealth of the less advantaged in D. (The first type of case exposes some interesting fault lines in views on global justice, but we will set aside discussion of such cases here and return to it in our discussion of trade-offs faced by Restrictors in section 6.).

¹⁸ This position is hard, if not impossible, to sustain if one is a General Duty Extender.

¹⁹ [Pogge \(2008\)](#); [Brock \(2009\)](#); [Hassoun \(2012\)](#).

²⁰ [R. W. Miller \(1998\)](#); [D. Miller \(2005\)](#).

²¹ As argued, for example, in [Easterly \(2006\)](#).

²² See, for example, [Pritchett \(2006\)](#).

²³ See for example, [Borjas \(1995\)](#), [\(2003\)](#), [\(2006\)](#); [Card \(2001\)](#); and [González and Ortega \(2011\)](#).

²⁴ Many studies which argue that the effects of immigration liberalization on domestic wages are slight focus, reasonably enough, on immigration at historically observed levels. We note that when considering the potential effects of *very* large-scale immigration liberalization from affluent to developing countries at present, such studies do not necessarily provide a very trustworthy guide, and thus do not obviously support open-borders policies in the way that some of their advocates seem to suppose.

²⁵ [Robeyns \(2008\)](#); [Stemplowska \(2008\)](#); [Swift \(2008\)](#); [Simmons \(2010\)](#); [Gilbert \(2012\)](#); [Hamlin and Stemplowska \(2012\)](#).

²⁶ We will discuss the case in terms of income, but one could replace income by any favored metric (wealth, opportunities, capabilities, human rights, and so on).

²⁷ We bracket cross-border migration so as to avoid the complications brought by dynamic population shifts. We also note that our specification of the status quo is consistent with the existence of a network of cross-border interactions that is sufficiently dense to trigger normative concern for the global inequality in our model among Associative Duty Extenders. L does not represent a shift from no cross-border interaction to some interaction, but simply a shift to more intense or to different kinds of interaction than are present in the status quo. Hence, Associative Duty Extenders should assume that the relevant social or institutional features obtain. We wish to explore issues that are in some ways distinct from those that divide Associative and General Duty Extenders.

²⁸ For now, we leave open which possibility consistent with this assumption obtains. As two examples, it could be that D's aggregate income is held fixed but some portion of it is transferred from the poor to elites; or it could be that the average income of D's less advantaged residents is held fixed and elites capture all the aggregate gains.

²⁹ [Moellendorf \(2002\)](#): 63), an Associative Duty Extender, also seems to take this position. He argues (among other things) that if market competition for jobs is justified among compatriots, then “it is hard to find a reason” why it would not be justified between compatriots and non-compatriots, even if it is true that immigration negatively impacts domestic workers (though he expresses doubts about the veracity of the latter empirical claim).

³⁰ The relative weight one gives to domestic equality might depend on the absolute levels of income of both the poorest domestic persons and the global poor. For example, one might treat income sufficiency as a more urgent concern than equality; hence, if (L,not-T) raises the global poor above sufficiency, that is a reason to favor (L,not-T) over Q, despite the fact that the former increases domestic inequality. We treat equality–sufficiency trade-offs in more detail in section 6.

³¹ Although we note that Bounded Egalitarianism neither entails nor is entailed by the views of Associative Duty Extenders.

³² Cf. [Valentini \(2012\)](#).

³³ Cf. [Caney \(2005\)](#): ch. 5).

³⁴ [Gilabert \(2011\)](#).

³⁵ The notion of “contribution” is a relatively elastic one, extending from clear-cut cases of doing harm to more complex cases of enabling harm, and these different kinds of contributions might be relevant to such discounting to different extents. See, for example, the discussion in [Barry and Overland \(2012\)](#).

³⁶ See, for example, [Thomson \(1973\)](#); [Butt \(2007\)](#); [Goodin \(2013\)](#); and [Barry and Wiens \(2016\)](#).

³⁷ For now, we set aside the complication—raised by our introduction of Bounded Egalitarianism—in which concerns for global and domestic equality are weighted differently. This possibility permits concerns for equality in different spheres to be traded off against global sufficiency in different ways. We take up trade-offs between domestic equality and global sufficiency in more detail below.

³⁸ Notice that this question arises even if we relax our assumption that G_w , the degree of global equality, decreases. We continue to assume that G_d , the degree of domestic equality, decreases.

³⁹ For example, Nagel (2005).

⁴⁰ See Rawls (1971).

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