Persistence Egalitarianism

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Abstract: Modal Plenitude—the view that, for every empirically adequate modal profile, there is an object whose modal profile it is—is held to be consistent with each of endurantist and perdurantist (three- and four-dimensionalist) views of persistence. Here I show that, because "endurer" and "perdurer" are two substantially different kinds of entity, compossible with each other and consistent with empirical data, Modal Plenitude actually entails a third view about persistence that I call "Persistence Egalitarianism." In every non-empty spacetime region there are two persisting objects: one that endures through the temporal dimension of that region, and another that perdures through the region. Additionally, if the argument from anthropocentrism makes a strong case for Modal Plenitude, then an equally strong and parallel case supports Persistence Egalitarianism. I close with the meta-semantic consequences of persistence egalitarianism for ordinary object talk.

Introduction

Endurantists hold that there are objects which persist through time by being wholly present and that no objects persist by having temporal parts. Perdurantists hold that there are objects which persist by having temporal parts and that no objects persist by being wholly present. Persistence Egalitarianism (PE) is an ontology that combines the positive theses of endurantists and perdurantists with a rejection of their negative theses. I need to state it in theory-neutral terms. "Persistence" is the theory-neutral term for both (or all) ways for objects to be in time for a duration of time. In terms of it, I will define "exact persistence":

> An object *o* ***exactly persists*** through an interval *I* iff every time in *I* is a time through which *o* persists, and all the times through which *o* persists are included in *I*.[1]

[1] Not to be confused with the non-theory-neutral terms "exact occupation" or "exact location," which have been used in analyses of "wholly present"—please see footnote 3.

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Somewhat similar to "exact persistence," there is a notion of "exact location at a time" that I will need to appeal to.

> An object *o* is ***exactly located*** at a place *p* at *t* iff (1) no part of *p* at *t* is free from *o* at *t*, and (2) *o* is nowhere outside of *p* at *t*.[2]

In terms of exact persistence and exact location, we can define the following relation between a spacetime region and an object:

> An object *o* is ***exactly situated*** at a spacetime region *R* iff (1) it exactly persists through the temporal axis of *R* and, (2) at each instant *o* exists, *o*'s exact location then is the sum of all the spatial locations that is a part of that region at that time.[3]

Now we are ready to state PE:

> (PE) In every non-empty spacetime region there are two objects that are exactly situated there: one object endures through the temporal axis of that region, and another object perdures through it.[4]

I will argue for PE by appeal to modal characterizations of "endurer" and "perdurer." I will explain how, as characterized modally, these are two substantially different kinds of entity, compossible with each other, and consistent with empirical data. There are two arguments for PE, both having to do with Modal Plenitude (MP), the doctrine that for every consistent and empirically adequate modal profile, there is an object with that modal profile.[5] One is based on this conditional: if the "argument from anthropocentrism" makes a strong case for MP, then there is an equally strong and parallel case supporting PE. I think the argument from anthropocentrism does make a strong case for MP, and I will present it in a favorable light. However, those who aren't persuaded by that argument can still be convinced of the conditional, which is one of the theses of this paper. The other argument for PE is that given the modal characterization of endurers and perdurers, PE follows from MP by universal instantiation. So, anyone who accepts MP *for any reason* should also accept PE.

Here is the plan for this paper.

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[2] This is a temporally relativized version of the terminology Josh Parsons presents (2007, 203).

[3] Unlike the notions "exact occupation" or "exact location" used in the literature, for example, by Donnelly (2011) or Gilmore (2006), "exact situatedness" thus defined is theory-neutral between endurantism and perdurantism. (Donnelly [2011, 30, footnote 11] offers a helpful summary of different uses of "exact location" in the literature.) Also, this definition can be appropriately complicated in terms of intervals to allow for the possibility that instants are not real.

[4] In light of special relativity, references to the "temporal axis" of a spacetime region should be indexed to reference frames. I omit this for the sake of simplicity.

[5] Below I will expound MP fully. This is the view Sosa (1999) calls "explosion of reality" and Karen Bennett (2004) ascribes to a "bazillion-thinger."

In Section 1, I explain what Modal Plenitude is.

In Section 2, I present the Hawthorne/Sider argument from anthropocentrism for Plenitude (*sans* the specification 'modal').

In Section 3, I explain that Plenitude can be paired with reductive *de re* modality or primitive *de re* modality. The latter combination yields Modal Plenitude. I argue that MP is more strongly supported by the argument from anthropocentrism than the conjunction of Plenitude and reductive modality.

In Section 4, I give a modal characterization of endurance and perdurance, and argue that "endurer" and "perdurer" are kinds of objects different camps of philosophers embrace. This paves the way to argue for PE on the model of the argument from anthropocentrism.

In Section 5, I present an epistemological reason to expect PE to be defensible on the model of the argument from anthropocentrism.

In Section 6, I present the argument for PE modeled on the argument from anthropocentrism. I consider objections and reply to them.

In Section 7, I explain PE in detail.

In Section 8, I show that PE follows from MP by universal instantiation.

In Section 9, I explore what ordinary continuants are, given PE, before I conclude with a promissory note about other egalitarian possibilities in Section 10.

1 Modal Plenitude

Modal Plenitude is the thesis that in every filled spacetime region R, for every modal profile M that is satisfied by the matter in R, there is a distinct object that is exactly situated in R and has M as its modal profile, provided that M is a modal profile it is logically possible for a thing to have. A modal profile specifies, for a filled spacetime region, for every determinable, every non-modal property instantiated in the region; and for every property,

whether it is had essentially or accidentally.[6] I am using "property" very broadly, so as to include extrinsic properties (e.g., being shaded), relational properties (moving faster than sound), complex properties (being shaded while moving faster than sound), and negative properties (not being surrounded by marble). The matter *m* in a spatiotemporal region satisfies some modal profile *P* if and only if (i) the (non-modal) properties of *m* are properties that are, according to *P*, either essential or accidental properties, and (ii) no (non-modal) property not had by *m* is, according to P, an essential property. For example, some matter in this office has the properties of being made of a certain lump of clay, and being shaped like the letter Φ. It satisfies modal profiles [essentially made of that lump of clay, accidentally Φ-shaped. . .],[7] [essentially made of that lump of clay, essentially Φ-shaped . . .], [essentially Φ-shaped, essentially inside this office . . .]. It does not satisfy the modal profile [essentially made of that lump of clay, essentially shaped like David].[8]

The idea behind MP is familiar from critical work in ontology in the last few decades, featuring items such as incars and outcars, c-persons, trout-turkeys, gollyswoggles, and snowdiscalls. An incar is non-modally just like the portion of a car that is entirely inside a garage, but it is essentially inside a garage. An outcar is non-modally just like the portion of a car that is entirely outside a garage, but it is essentially outside a garage. When a car leaves a garage an incar shrinks in size and goes out of existence as an outcar gradually grows (Hirsch 1982, 32–33). Contacti is a language in which people speak as if, while two people embrace, they're swapped with each other. From our perspective, here's what they're doing. If A and B embrace each other, A-before-embrace, B-during-embrace, and A-after-embrace are spoken of as the stages of one c-person. Similarly, B-before-embrace, A-during-embrace, and B-after-embrace is conceived of as one c-person (Hirsch 1982, 288–289). A gollyswoggle is an entity that has, as an essential property, a very specific, complicated, but not meaningful shape (van Inwagen 1990, 128). A trout-turkey is a scattered object which is composed of the upper half of a turkey and the lower half of a trout (Lewis 1991, 80–81), though its modal properties are left

[6] MP is the same as the view Bennett (2004) ascribes to the "plenitudinous bazillion-thinger," the view that all consistent complete modal profiles instantiated in a region belong to a distinct object there. Bennett doesn't endorse the view but argues—convincingly—that the only realist way for coincidence theorists to block the grounding problem (the problem of how things qualitatively identical with respect to their non-modal properties can have different modal properties) is by being plenitudinist bazillion-thingers. Despite what the playful title might suggest, Bennett clearly considers this a viable view.

[7] I present these modal profiles partially, omitting many determinables.

[8] Specifying the exact extent of properties Modal Plenitude will range over is a difficult and live research question. See Fairchild 2019. My arguments do not depend on how exactly this specification is made, hence the catch-all clause "provided that *M* is modal profile it is logically possible for a thing to have," which rules out impossibilities such as "essentially round and accidentally extended" (provided roundness logically implies being extended).

obscure. A snowdiscall is something made of snow, and has the form (in the Aristotelian sense of "form") "any shape between being round and being disc-shaped" (Sosa 1999, 132). I call the body of work including these examples "critical," because they target a standard, broadly Aristotelian ontology which features an elect inventory of objects, including artifacts and natural kinds, but no arbitrary compositions or partitions of them.

According to several philosophers, the availability of examples of the putative objects listed in the previous paragraph supports mind-dependence, language-dependence, or shallowness about ontology.[9] Since rational people who are disposed to think in terms of these putative objects are conceivable, we should admit that (1) there is something accidental about which objects are actually individuated and traced through space and time as one thing. (1) is at odds with the realist intuition that (2) existence, persistence, and kind-membership are independent of accidents of human biological and social history, and in principle expressible in a privileged language. Specifically, the tension is this: it seems incredible that the objects that exist and persist independently of conceptual and mental lives should be more or less the same ones that happen to be individuated and traced through space and time. If we give up (2), and accept some sort of anti-realism, language-dependence, or shallowness about metaphysics, then there is nothing incredible about a two-way match between our individuation practices and a realm of objects whose being is avowedly dependent on those very practices.

Those who seek a metaphysically *realist* resolution of this tension have three options: (a) Grant that there is an incredible-looking two-way match between the world's joints and our practices of object tracking, but explain why it is not incredible. An evolutionary explanation would fit this category, as would a theistic one. Investigating these options is outside the scope of this paper. (b) Reject that there is a two-way match by claiming that only a select class of what we identify and individuate actually exists. The most notable example of this sort of program is Peter van Inwagen's, according to which there are no composite objects except living things.[10] The problem

[9] See Putnam 1982, Hirsch 1982 and 2002, Sidelle 1989, Jubien 1993, and Thomasson 2007. Sosa's (1999) "existential relativity" (which he does not accept) is an example. There are subtle and important differences between these approaches. Here I consider them as a big tent of views which oppose the following realist claim. Existence, persistence, kind membership, *and the modal facts that underlie these*, both for putative fundamental entities and for putative derivative ones, are mind-independent and in principle stateable in a privileged, joint-cutting language.

[10] Such a view could also maintain that only a select class of what exists is taken by us to be a thing, and Peter van Inwagen's view seems to do this. A system of trees could be a single living organism, in which case, it would exist without being recognized by us as a thing. Also, simples exist, although they are not in the typical commonsense inventory of things. Nevertheless, the main reason it would be untoward to invoke a charge of anthropocentrism toward this ontology is that its criterion of being excludes the great majority of what we normally take to exist.

with this category of realist options is that, by their very design, they at least seem to strike a blow against our intuitive beliefs.[11] Since this is not absolutely a deal-breaker, theories in this category must be considered serious contenders and examined fully, but this lies outside the goals of this paper. (c) Reject that there is a two-way match by maintaining a liberal and egalitarian ontology according to which the objects we typically countenance are but a tiny subset of what there is, as are the exotic objects listed earlier.[12] This type of realism too, fails to match our intuitions, but it is arguable that this blow is much less harmful than the one we receive in option (b), since our belief in the existence of chairs or statues is a lot more entrenched than our disbelief (if any) in gollyswoggles. At any rate, this is the option that I am concerned with. A familiar argument to this effect is the "the argument from anthropocentrism" (Sider 2007 and Hawthorne 2008) which supports the thesis:

> (Plenitude) Every non-empty spacetime region contains at least one entity which is exactly situated in that region.[13]

2 The Argument from Anthropocentrism

We would like to say that we are not mistaken as we identify and trace through space and time trouts, statues, human persons, and their noses. At the same time, by simple acts of imagination, we can conceive societies that do their thinking in terms of the exotic incars, trout-turkeys, and gollyswoggles rather than the kinds we find familiar. These societies may differ from us in their biological or cultural conditions, and these conditions can help to explain their exotic individuation practice. If we had been, as a matter of contingent fact, under the effect of different biological or cultural factors, then we could have been tracking different kinds of objects than we actually do. Or if, instead of beings like us, another type of thinking being roamed the earth, they could have been tracking different kinds of objects than we do.

Unless we should think that we have a power that enables us to intuit the real kinds, a power that our imaginary peers lack, then we should not

[11] Notwithstanding the paraphrase apparatus van Inwagen employs to compartmentalize ordinary discourse from philosophical claims.

[12] Eklund (2007) defends that conciliatory views in meta-ontology are committed to a maximally inflationary ontology, which provides the backdrop for the charitable readings of the reconciled views. While I agree with his judgment, I advance the less ambitious claim that the only conciliatory view *available to realists* is a maximally liberal ontology—that is, unless they hold a deflationary view of modal facts like Thomasson (2007) does.

[13] It may be helpful if I note that I use "Plenitude" not to refer to the abundance of coinciding temporal parts as Hawthorne (2008) does but to designate the combination of plenitude in his sense and universal composition. In Section 3, I clarify the difference between Plenitude and *Modal* Plenitude, and I defend the latter.

suppose that the exotic kinds are unreal.[14] To include the exotic kinds in a principled way, the argument concludes, it must be accepted that every non-empty spacetime region is occupied by at least one entity that is exactly situated in that region. Here is how John Hawthorne presents the argument:

> Isn't it anthropocentric to suppose that the ontology of the world matches (more or less) exactly what human speakers have words for? Barring a kind of anti-realism that none of us should tolerate, wouldn't it be remarkable if the lines of reality matched the lines that we were interested in having words for? The simplest exercises of sociological imagination ought to convince us that the assumption of such harmony is altogether untoward, since such exercises convince us that it is something of a biological and/or cultural accident that we draw the lines that we do. If we are to be charitable towards ourselves without being unduly chauvinistic, it seems that we should posit ever so many more objects than we habitually talk about, in order not to credit ourselves with too much luck or sophistication in successfully hitting ontological targets most of the time. But once we are on this track, is there any reasonable stopping point short of positing a plenitude of temporal parts in combination with universal composition? (Hawthorne 2008, 109)

Here is the argument more formally:

1. We can easily imagine societies that individuate objects (trace them across time and possible worlds) very differently than we do.

2. If we can easily imagine societies that individuate objects very differently than we do, then it is a biological and/or cultural accident that we individuate objects the way we do.

3. It is a biological and/or cultural accident that we individuate objects the way we do. (From 1 and 2)

4. The way we individuate objects is mostly correct—that is, most of the kinds of things we trace across time and possible worlds really

[14] It could be thought that trusting in our individuative practices at the exclusion of other, relevantly similar individuative practices is bad in a way that is more general than the argument from anthropocentrism recognizes: it's bad because it is *arbitrary*. Indeed, the literature on this has widened the scope of the problem as an "arbitrariness" problem (Korman 2014, 2015; Fairchild and Hawthorne 2018). See Section 6.1 on how application to persistence survives the couching of the problem in terms of arbitrariness rather than anthropocentrism.

exist. (Principle of Charity Toward Ourselves)[15]

5. If it is a biological and/or cultural accident that we individuate the way we do, and if the way we individuate is mostly correct, then . . .

5a. A kind of anti-realism is true so that what kinds of things exist either depends on our individuative practices or at any rate cannot be expressed as truths in a privileged ontological language.

OR

5b. It is because of either extreme luck or extreme sophistication on our part that the way we individuate objects is mostly correct.[16]

OR

5c. There are many more sorts of object than what we individuate; not only our ways of individuation are correct, but so are all the other ways we or other societies could possibly have individuated objects.[17]

6. 5a and 5b are false. (Presupposed premise)

So,

7. 5c is true. (From 3, 4, 5, and 6)

8. The only principled ontology that is consistent with 5c is Plenitude.

9. The correct ontology is principled.

So,

10. The correct ontology is Plenitude. (From 7, 8, and 9)[18]

[15] This premise also rules out option (b) (i.e., a van Inwagen-style restricted ontology).

[16] This disjunct includes option (c) mentioned earlier, for example, there being an evolutionary explanation of our sophistication.

[17] When I describe an individuation practice as correct, what I mean is that its positive judgments are true, not that its negative claims, if any (e.g., "there is no such thing as a trout-turkey"), are true. This is plausible, since ordinary folk hardly ever make judgments about the kinds that are exotic for them, and even if they do, they don't vehemently oppose their existence. The argument from anthropocentrism is not adaptable to debates in which alternative judgment schemes *require* opposing each other. For example, there cannot be a successful argument in ethics from cultural variation to a plenitude of values because value systems do not merely state that some action type (acting from one's duty) is valuable but also judge that certain actions types (not acting from one's duty) are not valuable. I say more about clashing claims from alternate schemes in Section 7.

[18] This form of the argument is due to Hawthorne (2008). It's also offered by Sider (2007).

3 The Argument from Anthropocentrism, Plenitude and *De Re* Modality

Modal Plenitude entails but is not entailed by Plenitude. Plenitude is consistent both with a reductive account of *de re* modality such as counterpart theory, and with a primitivist account of modality. MP is what we get if we hold Plenitude together with a modal primitivism where objects do not have context-dependent, counterpart-theoretically grounded modal properties, but context-independent essences. Combining Plenitude with a reductive account such as counterpart theory is appealing because this prevents coincidence of the myriad objects postulated.[19] If a car is made inside a garage and is destroyed without ever leaving the garage, there is a car and an in-car coinciding, exactly situated in the same spatiotemporal region. The advantage of adopting counterpart theory is not having to say that these are two coincident beings with nothing but modal properties to distinguish them. Rather, one object would have car-counterpart relations to certain possible cars, and incar-counterpart-relations to certain possible incars. However, this economy undercuts the motivation for accepting Plenitude based on the argument from anthropocentrism. We have different intuitions from our incar-embracing peers. As we saw, the argument for Plenitude is supported by the two goals that (1) we not stop trusting our own intuitions about which objects there are, but that (2) we also maintain anti-chauvinism. Plenitude conjoined with counterpart theory is sufficient for achieving the second goal: There is no comparative superiority between us, the car-intuiters, and them, the incar-intuiters, since some object *is* car-counterpart-related to certain possible objects, and *is* incar-counterpart-related to certain other possible objects. However, while it achieves anti-chauvinism, counterpart-theoretical Plenitude does not go the distance in respect of the first goal. It supports the trust we maintain for our own intuitions only in this dubious sense. There is, indeed, an object with the modal properties of a car; however, it is the same as the object with the modal properties of an incar. By contrast, the Modal Plenitudinist countenances an object with the modal properties of a car, and another object with the modal properties of an incar. According to MP, the car-intuiters' intuitions and the incar-intuiters' intuitions are about distinct objects, and each is reliable about its object.[20] While the counterpart-theoretical version of Plenitude is equally deflationary about our and incarists' modal intuitions, Modal Plenitude equally upholds them by postulating that they have matching objects about which they are respectively right, which makes MP better supported than counterpart-theoretic Plenitude, given the self-charity principle invoked in premise 4. Being charitable to someone is to

[19] For the remainder of this section, I use "counterpart theory" as a representative of any theory of *de re* modality where one thing can have each of many incompatible modal properties depending on context.

[20] This is an adaptation of L.A. Paul's argument defending essentialism in Paul 2004.

interpret them as being reasonable, rational, and as using reliable methods for forming beliefs. If Modal Plenitude is true (but not if Plenitude with counterpart theory of modality is true) we can maintain that our and our exotic peers' recognition and individuation of objects constitute "noetic success"[21]—that is, each is the way it is because of objects they are about and not because there happens to necessarily be an object matching each intuition.[22]

It might be objected that object intuitions don't seem responsive to the identity conditions of particular objects that they pick out, since it's common practice among ontologists to come up with gerrymandered object examples on the fly: buildings-on-leap-years-only, potatoes-minus-their-skin, the sum of any cat and any couch. . . . It seems to take nothing to grasp an exotic object intellectually.

However, the ease with which ontologists can imagine exotic object concepts isn't indicative of it being easy to *possess* those concepts and *recognize* their applications in the world as part of one's daily life. The amount of responsiveness an intellect displays toward an object's identity conditions depends on the particular intellect in a particular instance, not on the kind, *intellect*, nor on the sort of object picked out. An artist who studies live models grasps the human shape more finely than a tailor, and a tailor more finely than a clothing store clerk. A medical doctor has to grasp human identity conditions in another regard, almost incommensurable with the artist's. The exotic counterparts of these professionals also grasp their objects (e.g., c-persons). Each professional understands *their object* better and better as they advance in their practice. Unless we doubt ontological realism, this shows that there are objectives, target objects, and intellects can grasp them better and better. More generally, each one of us has *some idea* which object we're going for as we intuit an object, and we can get clearer about it over time. I won't speculate as to the mechanism of this clarification, whether it be a change from indeterminacy to determinacy, or a change from having various scattered ideas to focusing on a single idea. Either way, grasping the individuation and persistence conditions of objects is work, and one does it with a target object in mind, starting imperfectly. When I come up with kinds of objects on the fly, unlike the communities who might already possess the respective concepts, I only have a preliminary idea, not a firm grasp, of these objects. I don't know, for example, if a potato-minus-its-skin would survive being cut in two, or if a couch-cat can change its couch parts. The examples we give leave so many

[21] After coining this phrase, I searched it on a popular search engine, and found two uses, only one of which had any affinity with how I'm using the phrase. A literary critique of art, Michael Angelo Tata, has used it to refer to an intellectual appreciation of the sublime in Kant in Tata 2001.

[22] *Pace* Korman 2014; 2015, 105–110, denying ourselves extreme sophistication (as the argument from anthropocentrism does) is consistent with claiming that our true beliefs are caused non-deviantly, and that we achieve noetic success.

questions open that they are mere gestures at robust object concepts that our possible exotic peers grasp with noetic success.

The artist is different. Duchamp saw *The Fountain*, which coincides with an ordinary urinal. Alongside the object all of us can discern is another only they can, at first. Only after they present it to us in a setting where the thing they individuated comes to the fore for us might we also discern it.[23] Such artists are noetic pioneers, going ahead of the rest of us to discover and bring out for us things that have existed all along.[24]

In this section I presented the argument from anthropocentrism for Plenitude and showed that the argument more strongly supports Modal Plenitude than it does Plenitude conjoined with a reductive theory of *de re* modality where modal properties of objects are context-dependent.

4 Endurance and Perdurance

I am using "endure," "perdure," "three-dimensionalism," and "four-dimensionalism" in one of the standard ways they have been used. Endurance and perdurance are rival accounts of objects' persistence through time. An object persists by enduring iff it is "wholly present" at each moment it's located.[25] Over time, it ends up being wholly present at multiple temporal locations; thus, it is multiply located.[26] An object persists by perduring iff its manner of being located at different times is exactly similar to extension in space. The most natural, and the classical, way to think of this "manner" is in terms of parts: a two-meter-long carpet takes up a two-meter-long space by having a one-meter stretch here and a one-meter stretch there. A perduring carpet continues to exist for two days in the same way; it has a one-day-long temporal part today and a one-day-long temporal part tomorrow (Lewis 1986, 204). Just as the two one-meter stretches of the carpet are not identical to each other, the two one-day-long temporal parts of the perduring carpet are not identical to each other. Just as you can sit on the same carpet as me even as you sit on a distinct spatial part of it than I do, you can also own the same carpet I donated to the thrift store by carrying home a distinct temporal part of it than I brought in. Classically, "temporal parts" are presented as a necessary, even constitutive,

[23] I defend this further in "The Value of Objects in the Plenitude" (*ms*).

[24] In saying that Duchamp didn't create but discovered The Fountain, something distinct from the urinal, I have no intention to suggest that this wasn't a *creative* act. Creativity sometimes leads to playful discoveries rather than creatings.

[25] See Sider 1997, 208–213; and 2001, 63–65 for a critique of the notion of "wholly present," and Crisp and Smith 2005, Chalmers et al. 2009, and Donnelly 2016 for analyses of "wholly present." I assume that the notion is coherent without endorsing a definition.

[26] See Gilmore 2018, Section 6.3.2.

element of the theory that objects persist by perduring.[27] My characterization does not shun this usage, but in addition to these mereological and locational ways of distinguishing between endurance and perdurance, I am pointing out a new way to draw the distinction, one that begins not from what persisting objects as such *do*, but from a *de re* modal difference in the sorts of persisting-objects-as-such there are.[28]

Endurers and perdurers have different *de re* modal properties, so we can construe *endurer* and *perdurer* as sorts or kinds of object. Philosophers of persistence are accustomed to considering a continuant such as a car and asking whether *it* is an endurer or a perdurer. I will show that we should construe this question as akin to the question whether "the thing" we have in the garage is a car or an incar. I will show that just as we can have both an incar and a car in the garage, we can also have both an endurer car and a perdurer car in the garage, provided that PE is true.[29] (There is more on common sense reference in Section 9.) To do this, I will rely on a characterization of these rival views of persistence considered (and subsequently rejected) by Sider. According to this characterization, "the difference between enduring and perduring objects is *de re* modal: while perduring objects are composed of essentially instantaneous parts, every enduring object is at least *capable* of being strongly wholly present over time" (67).

For something to be "strongly wholly present" during a time is for it to have the same proper parts at every instant or interval of that time (Sider 2001, 64). Being *capable of* being strongly wholly present is to be

[27] It has been suggested that objects could be extended in space without having proper parts. In a similar vein, an object could be extended across time the same way perdurers are, but without having any temporal proper parts. These have been called "spanners" (McDaniel 2003; Kleinschmidt 2017). To keep my presentation manageable, I am not going to count spanning as a way of perduring. If my arguments for PE are successful, then the programme of egalitarian persistence can be extended to allow for further kinds of persisting objects, including spanners. There is also the case of "entending" objects as defined by Parsons (2000)—roughly put, objects which are simultaneously wholly present in multiple spacelike regions. Whether there is a case to be made for egalitarianism about identity across space, is outside the scope of this discussion. (I thank an anonymous referee for inviting me to reflect on entending.)

[28] One approach I don't find helpful is thinking of the difference between endurance and perdurence in terms of the notion of ground as exemplified, for example, by Fine (2012, 42), because I think it's false that "even the three-dimensionalist might be willing to admit that material things have temporal parts. For given any persisting object, he might suppose that 'in thought,' so to speak, we could mark out its temporal segments or parts. But his difference from the four-dimensionalist will then be over a question of ground." Persisting things can have temporal segments alright, but only if they are perduring and not enduring things. An endurer and a shorter-lived endurer that temporarily coincides with it are not related by the atemporal parthood relation. If it is so "in thought," that would be a false thought. I lay out my approach to how endurantists and perdurantists can grasp each others' conceptions of persistence in Section 5.

[29] There are many dissimilarities between the incar-car controversy and the endurer-perdurer controversy. I address them in Section 6.

something whose metaphysical nature makes it possible for it to keep all of its parts from one instant to the next, and that is what it is to be an endurer, I propose.

Sider rejects this characterization of enduring for two reasons. First, because it is only about a potentiality: "Three-dimensionalists have a vivid picture . . . of what objects actually do, not what they are capable of doing" (Sider 2001, 67). My response is that there are two questions: *What is it to persist by enduring? What is it to be an endurer?* I answered the former question in the usual way, in terms of the notions of being "wholly present," "multiply located," etc. The modal characterization is meant to answer the latter question, and the dispositional qualities of a kind of thing are entirely apt for being mentioned when answering this type of question. *To be an endurer is to be something whose metaphysical nature makes it possible for it to keep all of its parts from one instant to the next.*[30] When something with this metaphysical nature exists at more than one time, even if it suffers a complete change of parts, what it does is to endure.

Sider's bigger objection against the modal characterization is this: "some three-dimensionalists might think that some continuants are essentially in mereological flux" (Sider 2001, 67). I walk right into this problem, since given Modal Plenitude, there *are* objects which have the following property essentially: "it changes all of its parts at every moment of its existence." Can such a thing in some sense be *capable* of being strongly present over time? Perhaps the thing is necessarily changing all of its parts at every instant, but not *just* because of its *de re* modal properties. Perhaps it has an identity condition which, when conjoined with a certain metaphysically necessary truth M, entails that it is metaphysically necessary for it to keep changing all of its parts. We have a *model* for such a situation due to Yuri Balashov: a laser beam is reflected across a cloud with a swift left to right motion of the hand. Let *shiny* be the kind of object essentially characterized as having to be constituted by the series of cloud particles that are successively lit by such a beam (Balashov 2003, 8). Because of the physical necessity (let's call it P) that no particle can travel that far from one second to the next, it is physically necessary that shinies are made up of different particles at every moment of their existence. However, if it weren't for P (i.e., if the laws of physics allowed it), the concept of a shiny itself wouldn't rule out the possibility of a part-keeping shiny. Similarly, if the metaphysically necessary mereological incontinence of something stems not purely from its own identity conditions but from other, more general metaphysical laws, then in a sense, that thing *is* capable of being strongly

[30] It could be objected that this doesn't distinguish an endurer from a "spanner" (defined in footnote 27), but this would be a mistake. Take the case of a spatially simple spanner that extends over a period that includes the instants t_1 and t_2. It doesn't have any part (proper or improper) at t_1 and doesn't have any part at t_2, either. But a spatially simple strongly wholly present thing has a part (albeit an improper part) at t_1, and a part at t_2, and the part it has at t_1 is identical to the part it has at t_2.

wholly present—*as far as its own metaphysical nature goes*, that is. But if essentially changing all of its parts at every moment of its existence is the *de re* modal nature of the thing, then being this type of thing entails being a perdurer. Since no perdurer is also an endurer, this would not be a counterexample to the modal characterization of endurers.

Sider's objection to characterizing perdurers modally, as objects "composed of essentially instantaneous parts" is that this characterization isn't acceptable by every perdurantist. He defends perdurantism featuring instantaneous temporal parts, but points out that it would be possible to defend a version that is committed only to extended temporal parts. The latter is what perdurantism would come to if time is not made up of instants. More recently, Shieva Kleinschmidt has discussed various forms of four-dimensionalism, all with various characterizations of "which parts four-dimensional objects must have" (2017, 4630). In what follows, I focus only on the "instantaneous temporal parts" version of perdurance, so I will show that perdurers of that type are compossible with endurers in the sense I defined them. If perdurers of other types are also compossible with these two sorts of things—as I envisage they are—then then the program of persistence egalitarianism would continue to amend PE, to accommodate those. The challenge I take on here is convincing "only-endurers" and "only-perdurers" folk to accept that they should expand their ontology to add the entities of the other. If I can do this using one of the reasonable senses of "endurer" and one of the reasonable senses of "perdurer," presumably the strategy can be repeated for most, if not all other senses of persistence, too.[31]

5 Argument from Epistemic Similarity

According to premise 1 of the argument from anthropocentrism, it is conceivable that there are societies of people who think in terms of gollyswoggles and incars or people who speak Contacti. I submit that endurantist philosophers and perdurantist philosophers are epistemically like possible societies in the relevant sense. The way that we are epistemically related to people who think in terms of incars is similar, in the following respects, to the way endurantists and perdurantists are epistemically related to each other. Endurantists and perdurantists individuate objects persisting across time differently than each other. Where an endurantist holds that the same entity is wholly present at each of multiple times, the perdurantist (typically) holds that a distinct temporal part is located at each of those times, and that the only way for an object to be wholly present during some time is if that time is the sum of all the times it is located at. Where a

[31] It might seem that endurantists cannot tolerate the existence of all the objects entailed by such a permissive ontology as Plenitude or Modal Plenitude. On the compatibility of endurantism with universal composition, as well as the costs of combining these views, see Koslicki 2003, Miller 2005a, Kurtsal 2010, and Varzi 2007.

perdurantist holds that nothing can wholly be at each of two or more times, an endurantist sees this happen everywhere, because where the perdurantist takes there to be a perduring worm, the endurantist finds the same thing occupying each of multiple times. Both admit that there is no immediate logical inconsistency in the alternative conception of persistence, which is a first step to apprehending each other's entities. Both also go beyond that first step. At will, both perdurantists and endurantists can grasp the other's concept of a persisting object and reason in terms of it.[32] This is similar to our epistemic situation in relation to Contacti-speakers, incar enthusiasts, etc. Since the argument from anthropocentrism is partly based on the epistemic situation of peoples who individuate objects in variant ways, persistence theorists are relevantly similar to the societies mentioned in the argument from anthropocentrism.

6 The Argument for PE, Objections, and Replies

6.1 The Argument from Noetic Variation for Persistence Egalitarianism

Now that I have made a preliminary case for the parallelism, I state my argument formally.

1* There are philosophers who individuate objects (trace them across time and possible worlds) very differently than I do.

2* If there are philosophers who individuate objects very differently than I do, then (I should conclude) it is a socio-educational accident that I individuate objects the way I do.

3* It is a socio-educational accident that I individuate objects the way I do. (From 1* and 2*)

4* The way I individuate objects is mostly correct—that is, most of the ontological kinds of things I trace across time and possible worlds really exist. (Principle of Charity Toward Ourselves)

5* If it is a socio-educational accident that I individuate the way I do, and if the way I individuate is mostly correct, then. . .

[32] Note that this is different from the (alleged) intertranslatability between two conceptual schemes that Putnam (1982), Hirsch (1982), or Miller (2005b) wrote about. I am talking about each side's ability to directly apprehend the other side's way of understanding the issue, even as they see it as distinct from and incompatible with their own. What each side takes to be incompatible conceptions of the same entity, I take to be compatible conceptions of distinct and compossible entities.

5a* A kind of anti-realism is true so that whether persisting things endure or perdure depends on philosophers' individuative practices, or at any rate cannot be expressed as truths in a privileged ontological language

OR

5b* It is because of either extreme luck or extreme sophistication on my part that the way I individuate persisting objects is correct,

OR

5c* There are many more sorts of persisting objects than what I individuate; not only my ways of individuation are correct, but so are all the other ways philosophers individuate persisting objects.

6* 5a* and 5b* are false.

So,

7* 5c* is true. (From 3*, 4*, 5* and 6*)

8* The only principled ontology that is consistent with 5c* is one in which there are both endurers and perdurers.

9* The correct ontology is principled.

So,

10* The correct ontology is one in which there are both endurers and perdurers. (From 7*, 8*, and 9*) Let us call this ontology Persistence Egalitarianism.[33]

[33] A word for those who are more impressed by arguments for Plenitude based on a disdain for arbitrariness. Let's think generically of a 'persister,' which is short of 'persisting thing.' We can get to PE by way of a worry about arbitrariness thus. First, show that there are subcategories of persisters including perdurers and endurers (and may be sub-sub categories of them) (Section 4). Second, show that the domain of persisters is homogenous, in the following sense: for any kinds of persister, *m* and *n*, there is no relevant difference between *m* and *n*. I don't have the space to conclusively argue for this claim. However, I have the next best thing: arguments put forth for metaphysical equivalence (Lowe 2008, Miller 2005b), and deflationism or other deflationist-adjacent views (Hirsch 2005, 2009) in some ontological domain serve by proxy as arguments supporting the homogeneity of that domain. At the very least, the availability of these arguments is a (defeasible) indicator of homogeneity. At any

Next, I examine some objections based on some significant dissimilarities between this argument for PE and the argument from anthropocentrism on which it is modeled.

6.2 Objections and Replies

6.2.1 "We don't accept ontological views by mere accident."

2* is less plausible than 2. Non-philosophers can grow up speaking Contacti and get assimilated to individuate c-persons, as opposed to persons. But philosophers don't end up as endurantists or perdurantists just because they are assimilated into a culture. They rationally consider both theories and they're drawn to accepting one rather than the other. So, it is possible that there is nothing accidental about a philosopher's individuating persisting things as perdurers, or her individuating them as endurers.

However, it is also possible that despite all hard work and careful thought, there is something accidental about what side of such a debate one ends up in. I cannot honestly insist that my acceptance of enduring objects owes nothing at all to the fact that my earliest mentor was a staunch endurantist, nor to the fact that defending endurantism against the tide of perdurantist arguments launched against it was the more interesting challenge when I was a doctoral student. People who have grasped the same arguments equally well are many times not equally persuaded by them. This is sometimes because they started with different views on other subjects (e.g., on causation or the nature of time), but non-rational reasons can also play a factor. When the reasons are philosophical, there is still an element of chance, to the extent that chance has played a role in one's adoption of those other positions. So, although 2* doesn't seem right, it can be weakened enough to be accurate and to allow the argument to go through:

> 2** If I know that there are philosophers who individuate objects very differently than I do despite our grasping the same arguments equally well, then it is somewhat of an accident that I individuate objects the way I do.

This requires a matching amendment in 5*:

> 5** If it is somewhat of an accident that I individuate the way I do, and if the way I individuate is mostly correct, then. . . (5a* OR 5b* OR 5c*)

It is obvious that the parallel argument for PE is based not on an anxiety about "anthropocentrism," but about chauvinism. Note that the so-called argument from anthropocentrism is not aptly named, either. Trout-turkeys, gollyswoggles, and all the rest were thought up by human beings, and there

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rate, we can see how one can extend the argument from arbitrariness to the case of persistence. I thank an anonymous referee for opening this line of inquiry.

is no reason to think that human biology cannot sustain the continued tracking of many of these exotic kinds of things.

6.2.2 *"Philosophers ought to be more self-critical about their views than lay people ought to be."*

There is an apparent difference between 4 and 4* given the difference in the contexts in which they are employed. Charity toward ourselves may be reasonable when applied to unchallenged folk intuitions about what kinds of objects there are, but doesn't it resemble dogmatism if applied by a philosopher in the face of criticism? Endurantists and perdurantists do not merely differ in how they analyze persistence; they also criticize the rival conception of persistence, finding it inadequate on various grounds.[34] On the other hand, endurantists have charged that the perdurantist's conception of change as variegation among distinct parts of a thing seems to violate a preanalytically dynamic sense of change (McTaggart 1927, 14–15; Oderberg 2004, 707). If endurantists or perdurantists are charitable toward themselves, wouldn't they be failing to respond adequately to opposition and criticism?[35]

They wouldn't! Charity toward one's conception of a persisting object is consistent with seeking an appropriate response to objections from one's opponents. Placing credence into our intuitions in the face of controversy and pressure from opponents is something we regularly do, and without failing to be good philosophers. Furthermore, the phenomenology of "getting" what a gerrymandered object is supposed to be and the phenomenology of "getting" our opponent's vision of a persisting thing are extremely similar. Since, even though I am an endurantist, I "get" what my opponents have in mind when they speak in terms of perduring objects, I suppose that similarly, perdurantists share with me an understanding of what enduring objects are supposed to be. It is on that basis that I not only feel entitled to keep holding on to my conception, but can claim that I am justified in the charity I show myself.

6.2.3 *"One philosopher can be a better philosopher than another."*

Another place of dissimilarity is my reliance on the falsity of 5b*. Part of the reason 5b is false is because it is wholly implausible that a culture be especially skilled in understanding the world's true natural and artifactual kinds if those kinds are restricted. It is not wholly implausible to suppose that a philosopher be more skilled than another philosopher in grasping whether things endure or perdure if they do only one. Does this mean

[34] For example, Sider has argued that the endurantist's idea of an object being "wholly present" at more than one time seems impossible to be analyzed coherently and informatively (Sider 2001, 63–68).

[35] I'm grateful to Catherine Sutton for the objection I'm considering in this section.

that 5b* isn't eliminated, and that the possibility of extreme sophistication on the part of a philosopher could be used to block this argument? No, because it is highly unlikely that some perdurantist is more skilled than every endurantist, and it is highly unlikely that some endurantist is more skilled than every perdurantist. So it is implausible to suppose that 5b* is true.

Perhaps if it is only somewhat of an accident that I individuate persisting objects the way I do, then the fifth premise would be more plausible if it were stated not in terms of 5b* but in terms of

> 5b** It is because of either *significant* luck or *significant* sophistication on my part that the way I individuate persisting objects is correct. [36]

As 5b** seems false for the same reasons as 5b*, 5c* would still follow.

7 Details of Persistence Egalitarianism

7.1 Compossibility Constraints

It might be thought that even if the inclusive spirit of the argument from anthropocentrism would work for accommodating various kinds of exotic objects, it cannot appease conflicting demands on what it is for an object to persist, making PE impossible. Now, it is true that an ontology which includes both perduring cars and enduring cars will require certain concessions from the traditional proponents of these views. But there is no asymmetry in this respect between the original argument from anthropocentrism and this application of it to persistence, because even the original argument's egalitarianism had to be somewhat bridled to ensure the compossibility of all objects. Specifically, premise 5c, and likewise 5c*, must be constrained by metaphysical possibility. For example, let a *loner* be just like a basketball except that it has to be surrounded by some matter, but it has to not be contiguous with any other *composite* object. There is no room for loners in Plenitude, because of the myriad objects that overlap the matter surrounding a would-be loner. Allowing loners would mean disallowing a whole host of objects that are incompossible with loners. But the existence of those objects is demanded by the individuation principles of some society or other. Clearly, then, individuation demands of different exotic tribes can be in conflict, and instead of meeting *all* of them, Plenitude meets as many of them as far as it is metaphysically possible to do so. So, 5c and 5c* must have implicitly included the clause "to the extent that this is metaphysically possible."[37] Next, we will see that endurers and perdurers can be included in PE without any metaphysical impossibility.

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[36] Thanks to Noel Swanson for this point.

[37] This is merely an intuitive gloss, and I don't know of a quantitative metric using which I can compare any two ways of meeting individuation demands.

7.2 In Search of the Most Inclusive Egalitarian Persistence Metaphysically Possible

One type of entity that is a matter of contention between endurantists and perdurantists is something that exists for more than an instant and undergoes absolutely no change of *spatial* parts during the whole time it exists. This could be a familiar object that, due to some unlikely happenstance, loses or gains no parts throughout its career; it could be an object that has certain parts essentially, but can tolerate being scattered, so that it goes wherever they go; or it could be an object that has exactly the same story as the previously mentioned object, but non-essentially continues to have the same parts. All these objects are Actually Mereologically Permanent Objects (AMPOs). According to perdurantism there are no AMPOs. Instead, there are things which, while they undergo a complete change of parts every instant, are such that their t_n parts and their t_{n+1} parts are related by qualitative identity and causal connection, but not numerical identity. I will call these the Mereologically Repetitive Objects (MEREOs).

It might be thought that a perdurantist can affirm "objects can undergo no change of parts" and, as a truthmaker, point to how any object's spatial parts, understood as four-dimensional objects, are always the same. There would be two problems with this reaction, however. First, in this (attenuated) sense, not just some, but *every* object always has the same parts. Second, perdurantists tend to analyze change in terms of variation between distinct temporal parts of a four-dimensional object. Consistent with this ideology, "no change of parts" in a perduring object has to mean "no variation of parts between distinct temporal parts of a thing" (a logical impossibility for a perduring object) rather than "no variation of parts between a four-dimensional worm and that worm itself" (a tautological condition for every perduring object). The sensible perdurantist admits that on their traditional view, there can be no such thing as no change of parts, and offers MEREOs whenever they are needed.

AMPOs and MEREOs are clearly two different kinds of entity from rival individuation schemes. The question for the Persistence Egalitarian is to see if both of them, and specifically AMPOs can exist in the Plenitude. Traditional perdurantist ideology disallows AMPOs, but AMPOs aren't logically impossible beings, and they are metaphysically compossible with both (instantaneous or long-lived) stages and perduring objects.

Let's suppose that endurers, perdurers, and specifically AMPOs and MEREOs all coexist. The mereological relation between perduring objects and their temporal parts is the atemporal proper parthood relation. (The t_1 stage of a perdurer is a proper part of it not at t_1, nor at all times of the perdurer's existence, but *simpliciter*—that is, atemporally.) Even though this relation is in PE's ontological inventory, it cannot obtain between the endurers and the shorter-lived entities that completely coincide with them for a period of time, because if an endurer had such a shorter-lived object

as a proper part, then it would be impossible to maintain that the endurer isn't atemporally composed of such short-lived objects, and this would lead to the paradoxical result that an endurer is perduring (cf. Donnelly 2011, 34–36). The mere availability of the atemporal parthood relation does not pose a threat of paradox, but we might demand an explanation for *why the short-lived entities aren't atemporally proper parts of the endurers they temporarily coincide with*.

Neither that question nor "Why can't even an inch of an incar leave a garage?" have answers beyond "that sort of thing just cannot do that," because such modal facts are primitive truths. I concur with Bennett (2004) that one advantage of Modal Plenitude is that these primitive modal truths do not need to be grounded on the non-modal:

> If only some of the possible modal profiles are instantiated in a region, we can always ask why those are so special—which, given the view about objects just described, is just to ask why the things that exist there have the modal properties they do. An answer of 'they just do' sounds decidedly mysterious and obfuscatory. But if all of the possible modal profiles are instantiated, the question simply does not arise. Thus the fullness of each spatio-temporal region explains—or at least explains away the primitiveness of the *de re* modal facts. (Bennett 2004, 355)

8 MP entails PE

Assume that MP is true. Consider an arbitrary region of spacetime, R_1, comprising the instants t_1 and t_2 and the non-overlapping spatial locations s_1 and s_2 at each of these instants, thus yielding four spacetime locations: s_1 at t_1, s_1 at t_2, s_2 at t_1, and s_2 at t_2.[38] Let us suppose that there is matter in all four of them, and let us refer to the matter in these regions as a, b, c, and d, respectively (Figure 1). In our model let us not make any suppositions as to whether either of a and c is identical with either of b and d. This enables us not to beg any question against endurantists or perdurantists.

[38] For the sake of simplicity, I suppose that s_1 and s_2 are absolutely simultaneous, but this model can be generalized in light of special relativity; if objects persist relative to frames of reference, the conclusion of this section would be that PE is true in every frame of reference where MP is true.

Region R_1

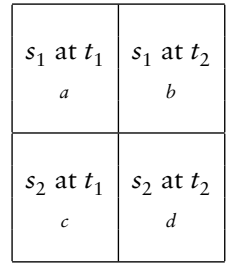


Figure 1.

Given MP, for any modal profile satisfied by the matter in R_1, there is a distinct object with that modal profile. There would be many other properties instantiated in R_1, but our focus will be on parthood and on location. Since our modal profile listings will be partial, we can only give indefinite descriptions of objects. Here are some things that have to exist in R_1, given MP:

- An object that is composed of *a* and *c* at t_1, and essentially exists instantaneously. Let's consider one of these, called Moe.
- An object that is composed of *b* and *d* at t_2, and essentially exists instantaneously. Let's consider one of these, Schmoe.
- An object that is composed of *Moe* at t_1, and which is essentially such that, if it is exactly situated at R_1, at t_2 it has to be composed of Schmoe at t_2. Let's call one of these Larry.
- An object which is composed of *a* and *c* at t_1 and of *b* and *d* at t_2, is either made up of the same parts at t_2 as it is at t_1, or is accidentally made up of distinct parts at t_2 than it is at t_1 (if *a* and *c* do/were to exist at t_2, this object could have been made up of *a* and *c* at t_2). Let's consider one of these, and call it Curly.

According to the modal characterizations of "endurer" and "perdurer" I gave in Section 4, what it is to be an endurer is to possibly keep all the same parts from any instant to the next. Curly, therefore, is an endurer. What it is to be a perdurer is to be composed of essentially instantaneous parts throughout its persistence. Larry, therefore, is a perdurer.

So, if we suppose that for every consistent and empirically adequate modal profile, there is an object with that modal profile (MP), every non-empty spacetime region will contain something like Larry and something like Curly. It follows that in every non-empty spacetime region there are two objects that are exactly situated there: one object endures through the

temporal axis of that region, and another object perdures through it (PE). Therefore, PE follows from MP by universal instantiation.[39]

9 Ordinary Objects: Are They Among the Endurers or Among the Perdurers?

In an ontology where there are both endurers and perdurers, which ones would be the referents of talk of ordinary objects and their persistence? According to the best candidate theory of meaning, what a term refers to is an outcome of a trade-off between the intrinsic eligibility of the candidates and the term's usage (Lewis 1994, 489; Sider 2001, xxi, 184–185). According to PE, when people say things like "this is the same tree that grandpa planted all those years ago," there are both endurers and perdurers that can make their utterances come out true. We could say that in such "paradigm cases" use is indeterminate, especially since endurers and perdurers are both intrinsically eligible candidates. But as Sider argues, one "facet of use is the fact that the persistence of [Chisholm's] 3D sums best matches a kind of preanalytic picture we have of the nature of persistence—a kind of 'ideal of persistence'" (Sider 2001, 185). Chisholm's 3D sums are actually strongly wholly present over time. The endurers of PE are actually or potentially strongly wholly present over time. Perdurers are essentially incapable of fulfilling that 'ideal.' So, since endurers match this facet of use better than perdurers, they are better meanings than perdurers for persistence talk.[40]

It might be that on the best candidate theory of meaning, perdurers that overlap enduring objects are the best candidates to be the referents of talk of 'lives' or 'careers' of those objects. And certain sums of them appear as intrinsically perfect candidates to be the referents of 'concert,' 'football match,' and 'ceremony'—the events involving many of the enduring objects. Now, one could insist that these are events and that therefore they cannot be objects, but I'm afraid that this would be a sort of endurantist chauvinism that the argument from anthropocentrism shuns. On PE, there is a distinct *object* for every distinct modal profile. There is a modal profile of a perdurer as distinct from the modal profile of an endurer. Therefore, endurers and perdurers are distinct *objects*. Cats and footballs are enduring objects, and

[39] One upshot of the arguments of Sections 7 and 8 is that endurantism does not foreclose the possibility of Plenitude or MP. A more surprising upshot is that proponents of Plenitude or MP, who have tended to be perdurantists, should notice that there are enduring objects as well as perduring ones.

[40] This is an adaptation of Sider's discussion (Sider 2001, 185–186) of Roderick Chisholm's dual category ontology. Sider argues, from the Best Candidate Theory, that in terms of eligibility, what is achieved by Chisholm's essentially mereologically constant three-dimensional entities would trump what his *entia successiva* (part-changing objects as logical constructions out of the mereologically constant objects) do, and that the latter would therefore not fall into the extension of 'persists.'

lives and ceremonies are perduring objects. The ordinary language term 'event' refers to a specific kind of non-ordinary object.[41]

What if the best candidate theory of reference is rejected? Then perhaps the endurantist and the perdurantist can agree by settling on indeterminacy. For example, they could say that "the tree grandpa planted" refers either to an endurer or to a perdurer, but we don't (or cannot) know which.[42]

10 Conclusion

Thinking about persistence has usually involved fixing our ideas on an object and considering whether *it* endures or perdures. This need not be so for those of us who are acclimated to plenitudinous ontologies such as MP, since an endurer and a perdurer can cohabit our world as well as a car does with an incar. I have shown that once we allow a modal characterization of the kinds, *endurer* and *perdurer*, MP entails PE. Also, if the argument from anthropocentrism for MP is strong, a parallel argument supports PE. My view is not that endurantists and perdurantists have been making compatible claims all along. PE is a revisionary ontology—one that is intended to change the minds of both endurantists and perdurantists who are on board with the argument from anthropocentrism or with MP. There are likely to be readers who disagree with the specific modal characterizations of endurer and perdurer I have appealed to, but the program of egalitarian persistence need not stop with PE. Other expressions of egalitarianism about persistence can accommodate other types of persisting-thing-as-such so long as it is compossible with endurers and perdurers as I have characterized them here.

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[41] This way of putting it was suggested by a colleague, but sadly, I cannot remember who.

[42] The same considerations apply for all the gerrymandered objects in the Plenitude. C-persons, gollyswoggles, etc., can all be construed as enduring or as perduring.

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