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DESIRE SATISFACTION AND TEMPORAL WELL-BEING

TIME FOR A NEW VIEW

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IT IS COMMON to think that well-being has a temporal dimension—that people can be benefited and be harmed at various times. On most philosophical theories of well-being, accounting for temporal well-being seems straightforward. For example, on the objective list theory, well-being goods consist of objective goods like knowledge, pleasure, and friendship. According to such theories, a person benefits at the times that they have these goods.

However, accounting for temporal well-being is not a clear matter for one prominent theory of well-being—desire satisfactionism.[1] According to desire satisfactionism, a person non-instrumentally benefits if and only if a desire of theirs is satisfied, where a desire is satisfied if and only if the desired object (i.e., the desired state of affairs) obtains.[2] For many philosophers, desire satisfactionism is a plausible theory of well-being. It captures the idea that what is good *for you* must not alienate you.

To account for temporal well-being, desire satisfactionists need to answer the timing question: *When* does a person benefit from the satisfaction of their desires? Addressing this question is easy in cases involving present-directed desires (desires that are directed towards a present state of affairs).[3] Let t_d denote the time a person desires p (where p is some state of affairs); and let t_o denote the time p obtains. In cases where present-directed desires are satisfied, t_d and t_o are the same time. So, a person benefits at that time.

1 Although I raise this issue for desire satisfactionism, a similar issue arises for other similar subjectivist theories of well-being (e.g., pro-attitude, value-fulfillment, and aim-achievement theories), as well as for other objective-list theories of well-being that include a subjective component as one of the basic goods.

2 Having a desire satisfied is not to be confused with the feeling of satisfaction. If a desired state of affairs occurs, then the relevant desire is satisfied, regardless of whether the person feels satisfied or even knows that the state of affairs occurred.

3 In other words, their *content* makes reference to the present time.

However, things are not clear in cases involving past-directed desires (desires that are directed towards a past state of affairs) and in cases involving future-directed desires (desires that are directed towards a future state of affairs), where the person does not have the desire at the time the desired object obtains.[4] In such cases, since t_d and t_o do not overlap temporally, it is unclear when a person benefits. Henceforth, when I talk about cases involving past-directed desires and cases involving future-directed desires, I am referring to such cases where t_d and t_o do not temporally overlap.

To address such cases, desire satisfactionists have proposed the following views:

Unrestricted Time-of-Desire: A person benefits at t_d.[5]

Time-of-Object: A person benefits at t_o.[6]

Later-Time: A person benefits at whichever time comes later—i.e., a person benefits at t_d in cases involving past-directed desires and benefits at t_o in cases involving future-directed desires.[7]

Fusion: A person benefits at t_{d+o}, which is a fusion of t_d and t_o.[8]

Concurrentism: A person benefits only when t_d and t_o are at the same time.[9]

4 There are of course desires that do not fall into any of these categories. We may have desires that are not directed toward any particular time, desires that are directed toward our life as a whole, and desires directed toward eternity. I set these aside, as I think these desires pose a different sort of puzzle and should be addressed differently.

5 See Dorsey, "Desire-Satisfaction and Welfare as Temporal" and *A Theory of Prudence*; and Bruckner, "Present Desire Satisfaction and Past Well-Being." Although Bruckner only discusses cases involving future-directed desires, he has informed me that he is also inclined to hold that a person benefits at t_d in cases involving past-directed desires.

6 Time-of-object is rarely discussed because it has the implausible implication that someone could be benefited at times that they do not exist—a desired object can obtain before a person is born and after they die. However, see Baber, "*Ex Ante* Desire and *Post Hoc* Satisfaction," who defends this view and bites the bullet (64).

7 See Lin, "Asymmetrism About Desire Satisfactionism and Time," who proposes *later-time*, though he merely argues that later-time and concurrentism are the most plausible answers to the timing question. To note, Lin calls the view *asymmetrism*, but I have used the name 'later-time' (following Bradley, "Well-Being at a Time") instead since it is more informative and avoids confusion with my view, which also posits an asymmetry.

8 See Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time." See also Johansson, who defends Fusion in regard to the badness of death, given that the badness of death must be located in time ("The Time of Death's Badness").

9 See Heathwood, "The Problem of Defective Desires"; and Forrester, "Concurrent Awareness Desire Satisfactionism." Bradley also suggests that Concurrentism is the most plausible

Let me elaborate on the latter two views. First, fusion takes t_d and t_o to jointly form the time t_{d+o}. This might seem odd, but Duncan Purves argues that many events take place at fusions of discontinuous times.[10] For example, an academic class may meet only on Mondays and Fridays, so the class occurs at a fusion of the time t_{M+F}. Another plausible example is a soccer match, which can be said to occur at a fusion of the two forty-five-minute halves, even though there is a break between the halves.

Second, fusion is not the view that a person benefits at both t_d and t_o. Proponents of fusion hold that there are no times *within the fusion* at which you benefit.[11] So on their view, a person benefits at t_{d+o}, even though a person benefits neither at t_d nor at t_o.[12]

Third, concurrentism differs from the other views in that it rejects that people can benefit in cases involving past-directed or future-directed desires. As noted above, according to concurrentism, a person can benefit only when t_d and t_o are at the same time. This reveals that one way we might answer the timing question is by questioning the assumption that we benefit in the first place in the two cases under discussion instead of trying to specify a time when we benefit in such cases.

In this article, I advance a new view that I call *no-future time-of-desire*.[13]

> *No-Future Time-of-Desire*: (a) In cases involving past-directed (and present-directed) desires, a person benefits at t_d, and (b) in cases involving future-directed desires, a person cannot benefit.

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view for desire satisfactionists ("Well-Being at a Time"). To note, in a later paper, Heathwood defends *subjective desire satisfactionism*, which holds that well-being consists of *believing* that one is getting (will get or has gotten) what one desires ("Desire Satisfactionism and Hedonism"). Forrester also defends a similar view ("Concurrent Awareness Desire Satisfactionism"). I think this epistemic requirement is what leads them towards concurrentism. I set both their versions of subjective desire satisfactionism aside since this diverges from standard desire satisfactionism, and I think their views should be handled very differently since there is now another distinct time to consider—the time one has the belief.

10 Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 806.

11 Johansson, "The Time of Death's Badness," 475; and Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 805.

12 I find this view somewhat puzzling, especially given Purves's examples ("Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 806). In the case of the academic class, if a class occurs at a fusion of time t_{M+F}, it is because part of the class occurs on t_M and part of the class occurs on t_F. So, if someone benefits at t_{d+o}, it seems that part of the benefit should be incurred at t_d and part of the benefit should be incurred at t_o.

13 Although Bradley mentions the view ("Well-Being at a Time," 10), he neither endorses nor defends it. I worked on this view earlier and independently, and this article is the first defense of this view at length.

Although this view may seem odd, my goal is to argue that no-future time-of-desire is superior to the other existing views in the literature.

For easy reference, table 1 summarizes the implications of the views above with respect to past-directed and future-directed desires.

Table 1. Different Views

View	Past-directed desire (t_o precedes t_d)	Future-directed desire (t_d precedes t_o)
Unrestricted time-of-desire	Benefit at t_d	Benefit t_d
Time-of-object	Benefit at t_o	Benefit at t_o
Later-time	Benefit at t_d	Benefit at t_o
Fusion	Benefit at t_{d+o}	Benefit at t_{d+o}
No-future time-of-desire	Benefit at t_d	No benefit
Concurrentism	No benefit	No benefit

Here is the structure of this article. Section 1 advances the first argument for no-future time-of-desire using a pair of cases—one involving past-directed desires and the other involving future-directed desires. I argue that only no-future time-of-desire accommodates our intuitions in both cases. The second argument for no-future time-of-desire appeals to two plausible principles, which I defend further. The first principle is Dale Dorsey's *synchronic resonance constraint* (defended in section 2).[14] The second principle is Eden Lin's *all-conditions-met principle* (defended in section 3).[15] I argue that only no-future time-of-desire and concurrentism can accommodate both principles. In section 4, I then argue that no-future time-of-desire is preferable to concurrentism. Sections 5 through 9 handle various objections. Section 10 concludes.

Before moving on, I must note that there is one more view that I have set aside for this article: *atemporalism*. Atemporalism says that in all cases where people benefit, people benefit atemporally.[16] Harry Silverstein, for example, thinks that it does not make sense to ask *when* something is good for the

14 Dorsey, "Desire-Satisfaction and Welfare as Temporal," 156–57. The naming of this principle comes from Lin, "Asymmetrism About Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 179.

15 Lin, "Asymmetrism about Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 169. Lin calls this the "first principle." I have changed the name to make it more informative.

16 Silverstein, "The Time of the Evil of Death"; and Bramble, *The Passing of Temporal Well-Being*. See also Johansson, who defends atemporalism against an objection regarding the badness of death ("The Time of Death's Badness"), and Bykvist, who suggests atemporalism ("Sumner on Desires and Well-Being," 481).

person.[17] This applies no matter how a person's desires and the desired object are located temporally. So, atemporalism rules out temporal well-being entirely.

Holding that there is no temporal well-being at all is deeply unintuitive. We commonly speak in ways that imply that things can be good for us at particular times. For example, we often ask people how well their day or week was. We also think that people have different levels of well-being over time. For example, I might say that although things were not going well for me *when* I first started my own business, things are going well for me *now*. The idea that there is temporal well-being features not just in ordinary talk but in multiple fields of academic studies. Social scientists claim to measure well-being at times and to track well-being changes over time. Philosophers not only talk about temporal well-being, but they also discuss the shape of a person's life over time.[18] Those working in public policy often work at creating policies to improve the well-being of people. So, atemporalism has difficulty accounting for our ordinary thoughts about well-being. It would be surprising if we were totally wrongheaded in thinking about well-being. Hence, I set aside atemporalism. My goal is to argue with those who agree that at least some benefits can be located in time.

1. TWO CASES

In this section, I advance my first argument for no-future time-of-desire by appealing to two cases.[19] First, consider a case involving past-directed desires.

> *Singing*: Suppose that when Helen is at university (Youthful-Helen), she loves singing karaoke with her friends. Although she sings well, she does not care about whether she sings well—she just likes singing. A few years later, she loses interest, gets busy, and no longer goes to sing karaoke. Now suppose when Helen is fifty years old (Older-Helen), she picks up interest in singing again. She is very serious about it this time and cares about singing *well*. Older-Helen looks back at pictures

17 Silverstein, "The Time of the Evil of Death."

18 As Campbell notes, "It seems better to have a life that begins poorly and ends well than a life that begins well and ends poorly" ("When the Shape of a Life Matters," 565).

19 To note, although some cases like these have been raised by other authors, these authors typically do not consider both cases involving past-directed desires and cases involving future-directed desires. Furthermore, some of their cases seem incompatible with certain restrictions that desire satisfactionists may want to hold (e.g., counting only self-regarding desires or idealized/informed desires). My cases involve self-regarding desires, and one can read the cases as rational adults forming their desires under idealized conditions. I discuss this more in the conclusion.

of Youthful-Helen at karaoke. Helen does not know how well Youthful-Helen sang, but she desires that she sang well all those past times.[20]

Intuitively, it seems good for Helen if Youthful-Helen really did sing well. When does Helen benefit from having sung well? Intuitively, Helen benefits when she has the desire to sing well. This intuition is shared by several philosophers who write about desire satisfactionism.[21] It seems implausible for desire satisfactionists to say that Helen benefitted in the past—as time-of-object claims—since Youthful-Helen was not concerned about whether she sang well then. She cannot benefit in the past from a satisfied desire, since she had no desire then.

Some might be hesitant to hold that Helen benefits, since Older-Helen does not know whether Youthful-Helen sang well. To address this, it is important to note that desire satisfactionists standardly hold that a state of affairs can affect a person's well-being even if they never know about it, and it never affects their experiences.[22] Various cases illustrate this, the most obvious examples involving harm. Suppose you desire that your privacy is not violated by people spying on you and that your friends do not make fun of you behind your back. Intuitively, violations of your privacy and betrayals of friendship seem bad for you, even if you never come to know about them. There are also examples involving benefits. For example, if you desire that people listen to your music and love it, then it seems intuitive to think that it is good for you that people listen to your music and love it, even if you never come to know about this. Desire satisfactionists hold that it is a virtue of their view that they can accommodate such cases where a person's well-being is affected, even though the person does not know whether the desired state of affairs has occurred, and it never affects their experiences. So, if we grant this claim to desire satisfactionists, it seems right to hold that Helen benefits despite not knowing that she got what she wanted.

One might object that the intuition that Helen benefits from having sung well in the past is because singing well would have led to the satisfaction of other desires in the past.[23] Thus, the intuition is really about the instrumental benefits of having sung well. To address this, we can imagine that Youthful-Helen did sing

20 We might add that Older-Helen is not anxious or worried about not having sung well.

21 See, for example, Sarch, "Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 232–33; Lin, "Asymmetrism About Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 167; and Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 803.

22 Exceptions to this are Heathwood, "Desire Satisfactionism and Hedonism"; and Forrester, "Concurrent Awareness Desire Satisfactionism." Both their views require the person to believe that they are getting what they want. As mentioned in note 9 above, I set aside their views, as they diverge from standard desire satisfactionism and should be handled very differently.

23 I thank an anonymous reviewer for this objection.

well in the past, and consequently, any instrumental benefits she gained from having sung well has manifested in her life. Now, we can ask: Is there a difference in well-being when comparing a possible world in which Older-Helen has the desire to have sung well and another possible world in which Older-Helen has no such desire? The answer seems yes: Helen is better-off in the first world, where she had a desire to have sung well satisfied. Hence, the intuition that Helen benefits is not due to the instrumental goods of having sung well.

Which views can accommodate the intuitions above? Out of the different views, only no-future time-of-desire, unrestricted time-of-desire, and later-time accommodate these intuitions since these views locate the benefit at t_d in cases involving past-directed desires. Time-of-object gives the implausible result that Helen benefitted in the past at t_o. Concurrentism gives the implausible result that Helen does not benefit at all. Fusion gives the verdict that Helen benefits only at a fusion of the times Youthful-Helen sings well and the times that Older-Helen desires to have sung well in the past. Although this result is not implausible (as in the case of time-of-object and concurrentism), it is not a natural one. It is not intuitive to judge that Helen benefits at the fusion of those times (and does not benefit at either of those times). So, fusion is less favorable as it lacks the intuitive pull, though I think the Singing case does not rule it out.

Next, let us turn to a second case involving future-directed desires.

> *Living in Japan*: Suppose that when Gary is twenty-one years old (21-Gary), he loves Japanese culture. He desires to live in Japan in the future. He joins a Japanese company hoping they will send him to Japan. However, by his late twenties, Gary has a change of heart. He is no longer interested in Japanese culture and has completely lost the desire to live in Japan.[24] When Gary is thirty years old (30-Gary), his company requires him to be posted to Japan for two years. So, he ends up living in Japan.

Intuitively, it seems that living in Japan per se did not increase Gary's well-being.[25] Again, the intuition that a person does not benefit in cases involving

24 Gary should not be taken as having some con attitude towards living in Japan (e.g., desiring not to live in Japan). Rather, Gary is simply neutral towards it. He neither has a desire to live in Japan nor a desire to not live in Japan.

25 One might object that the intuition is because living in Japan would frustrate Gary's other desires. However, we can imagine that going to Japan would not frustrate his other desires—he would be able to satisfy his other desires regardless of whether he is living in Japan or staying where he is.

future-directed desires is shared by several philosophers who write about desire satisfactionism.[26]

Time-of-object and later-time give the wrong verdict since they entail that Gary benefits at thirty years old. This seems implausible since 30-Gary no longer desires to live in Japan. It does not seem good for Gary to get something when he no longer desires it. Unrestricted time-of-desire also gives the wrong verdict since it entails that Gary benefits at twenty-one years old. This seems implausible since 21-Gary's desire is still unsatisfied then—it is years before he gets what he wants. Hence, it seems implausible to say that Gary benefited at twenty-one years old.[27] Fusion gives the verdict that Gary benefits at the fusion of twenty-one and thirty years old (and does not benefit at either of those times). While it does not give the implausible result that Gary benefits at twenty-one years old or the implausible result that Gary benefits at thirty years old, fusion still clashes with the intuition that Gary does not benefit at all.[28]

Out of the different views, only no-future time-of-desire and concurrentism accommodate the intuition that Gary did not benefit. Both of these theories hold that a person does not benefit in cases involving future-directed desires. All the other theories give the wrong verdict as they entail that Gary benefits.

Since only no-future time-of-desire accommodates the intuitions in both Singing and Living in Japan, no-future time-of-desire enjoys intuitive support over the other competing views.

At this point, some may object that cases involving future-directed desires are not so straightforward because future-directed desires seem conditional on their own persistence.[29] It would be odd if 21-Gary desires to live in Japan in the future even if he would no longer want to in the future. Plausibly, 21-Gary's

26 See, for example, Sumner, *Welfare, Happiness, and Ethics*, 126–27; Bykvist, "The Moral Relevance of Past Preferences"; Heathwood, "The Problem of Defective Desires," 490; Portmore, "Desire Fulfillment and Posthumous Harm," 30; Bradley, *Well-Being and Death*, 27, and "Well-Being at a Time," 7; and Bruckner, "Present Desire Satisfaction and Past Well-Being."

27 In addition, Portmore (in "Desire Fulfillment and Posthumous Harm") and King (in "Pulling Apart Well-Being at a Time and the Goodness of a Life" and "The Good of Today Depends Not on the Good of Tomorrow") have argued that holding that past (and present) well-being depends on future events results in various other counterintuitive results. King also argues the idea that present well-being may depend on future events conflicts with the assumptions and practices in empirical research on well-being ("The Good of Today Depends Not on the Good of Tomorrow," 2371, 2378–79).

28 Even if we hold that Gary benefits, it is not intuitive to judge that Gary benefits at the fusion of twenty-one and thirty years old (and does not benefit at either of those times). So, fusion lacks the intuitive pull again.

29 I thank multiple philosophers who have raised this worry.

desire to live in Japan is a conditional desire—21-Gary wants to live in Japan in the future *only if* his future self still has such a desire when it occurs. If 21-Gary's desire is conditional, then it is not satisfied since 30-Gary lacks the desire. So, all the different views entail that Gary does not benefit in Living in Japan. This makes later-time, unrestricted time-of-desire, and no-future time-of-desire on par in capturing the intuitions of both Singing and Living in Japan.

To address this objection, we must first ask whether *all* future-directed desires *must* be conditional: either all future-directed desires must be conditional, or they can be unconditional sometimes. Whichever way we go, I think we still get support for no-future time-of-desire.

Consider the latter view (which I lean towards). Here is a plausible example of an unconditional future-directed desire. Given my love for my wife, I desire that I still take care of my wife when I am old, regardless of whether I desire so then.[30] Suppose that it is possible for future-directed desires to be unconditional in this way. In that case, we can imagine 21-Gary as having an *unconditional* desire in Living in Japan that is satisfied when he is thirty years old. Even given this specification, it still seems that Gary does not benefit. So, my appeal to Living in Japan can proceed as before.

Now suppose instead that all future-directed desires must be conditional. Notice then that such desires can never be satisfied in *all* cases involving future-directed desires. This is because a person lacks the desire at t_o in such cases, and hence, the condition cannot be met. The result of this view is that a person cannot benefit in cases involving future-directed desires. This again gives no-future time-of-desire an advantage over competing views since no-future time-of-desire claims exactly this—a person cannot benefit in cases involving future-directed desires.

To end this section, I must note that the intuitive support for no-future time-of-desire is not universal. Out of the people I have shared these cases with, it seems that the intuitions are prevalent among a significant number of people (at least, if they were sympathetic to desire satisfactionism or if they included satisfied desires on their objective list). But not everyone has the same intuitions regarding both Singing and Living in Japan. Also, philosophers who write about desire satisfactionism typically express their intuitions either only when considering cases involving past-directed desires or only when considering cases involving future-directed cases. So, it may not be clear that they have the intuitions I have expressed regarding *both* types of cases.

30 A reviewer provides another example of unconditional future-directed desires: "I hope that when I am older, I still desire peace and equality." However, this example only establishes that there are unconditional *second-order* future-directed desires. What is of concern here, however, are first-order desires.

Therefore, I want to advance a second argument for no-future time-of-desire by defending two principles in the next two sections. These principles jointly provide theoretical backing for no-future time-of-desire.

2. THE SYNCHRONIC RESONANCE CONSTRAINT

A major motivation for desire satisfactionism is the resonance constraint, which states that in order for something to be good for you, it must resonate with you.[31] The idea is that for something to be good *for you*, you must have a favorable attitude toward it. As Peter Railton says, "What is intrinsically valuable for a person must have a connection with what [the person finds] in some degree compelling or attractive, at least if he were rational and aware. It would be an intolerably alienated conception of someone's good to imagine that it might fail in any such way to engage him."[32] Desire satisfactionism accommodates the resonance constraint by holding that something is good for a person only if they desire it. When a person desires a state of affairs, that state of affairs resonates with the person.

In arguing for unrestricted time-of-desire, Dorsey proposes that desire satisfactionists further accept the synchronic resonance constraint.

> *Synchronic Resonance Constraint*: A person does not benefit at time *t* unless they have the relevant desire at *t*.[33]

Given that desire satisfactionists accept the resonance constraint because they think well-being goods should not alienate a person, it is natural to think that a person can benefit only at the time the object resonates with them. Without the synchronic resonance constraint, a person could benefit at times when the desired object does not resonate with them. As Dorsey says, if one does not accept the synchronic resonance constraint, then this "would leave it open that I can lack a desire for ϕ at a particular time, but that ϕ is nevertheless

31 This requirement is also often referred to as the nonalienation requirement and internalism. See, for example, Rosati, "Internalism and the Good for a Person," 297–326; Railton, "Facts and Values," 47–48; and Dorsey, "Why Should Welfare 'Fit'?" 685–708.

32 Railton, "Facts and Values," 47. Railton himself includes "at least if he were rational and aware" because he holds to an idealized version of desire satisfactionism. For nonidealized versions, what matters is whether an object resonates with the actual person (rather than with the counterfactual idealized person).

33 Dorsey, "Desire-Satisfaction and Welfare as Temporal," 156–57, and *A Theory of Prudence*, 193. See Bradley ("Well-Being at a Time," 4) and Purves ("Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 810), who also think desire satisfactionists must hold to the synchronic resonance constraint.

good for me at that time."[34] Rejecting the synchronic resonance constraint means that a person could be benefited at times when they are alienated from a state of affairs. Hence, desire satisfactionists should accept the synchronic resonance constraint.

Given the synchronic resonance constraint, which views can accommodate this principle? No-future time-of-desire, unrestricted time-of-desire, and concurrentism can accommodate it since these views always locate benefits at t_d. Time-of-object and later-time violate this constraint because in cases involving future-directed desires, they allow a person to benefit at a time they lack the relevant desire.

For fusion, Purves argues that it is a virtue of fusion that it can accommodate the synchronic resonance constraint. He says, "Any fusion of times at which the object of a desire benefits a person is one at which both the desire and its object obtain, as required by the synchronic resonance constraint."[35] I find this objectionable. Fusion says that Gary benefits at t_{d+o}, a fusion of t_d and t_o. If Gary benefits at t_{d+o}, the synchronic resonance constraint requires that Gary has the desire at t_{d+o}. However, Gary has the desire only at t_d, which is *part* of t_{d+o}. He does not have the desire at t_{d+o}. Hence, fusion fails to accommodate the synchronic resonance constraint.

Fusion proponents might try to avoid my objection by holding that if a person desires p at t_d, then the person desires p at t_{d+o}. This is because a fusion of time may take on the properties of its temporal parts. However, this view faces two problems. First, it is doubtful that desiring p at t_d entails that the person desires p at t_{d+o}. This seems deeply unintuitive. This is most evident when we consider other mental states. For example, if I enjoyed only the first half of a soccer match, it does not seem that I enjoyed myself at the fusion of the first half and second half of the soccer match. Another example: if I believe p during class on Monday but no longer believe p during class on Friday, it does not seem that I believe p at the fusion of time t_{M+F}. Fusion proponents bear the burden of showing that desiring p at t_d entails that the person desires p at t_{d+o}.

Second, I think such a view results in a contradiction. Suppose that at t_d, the person desires p; and at t_o, the person lacks a desire for p. If we apply the view of fusion proponents, we get the result that the person both desires p and does not desire p at t_{d+o}. We would have to say that p both resonates and does not resonate with the person at the same time. This seems like a contradiction.

34 Dorsey, "Desire-Satisfaction and Welfare as Temporal," 156.

35 Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 810.

Let me now consider one objection to the synchronic resonance constraint from Lin.[36] Lin asks us to consider a similar principle, the *synchronic resonance constraint*$_o$:

> *Synchronic Resonance Constraint*$_o$: A person does not benefit at any time from a particular event unless they have a desire toward that event at the time which the event occurs.[37]

If the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$ is true, then concurrentism is true. People can benefit only when t_d and t_o are at the same time. Lin points out that unrestricted time-of-desire proponents reject the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$ even though they hold to the resonance constraint. Since desire satisfactionists are motivated by the resonance constraint but need not accept the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$, Lin thinks that desire satisfactionists need not accept the synchronic resonance constraint as well.

I think Lin's objection fails. The resonance constraint motivates the synchronic resonance constraint but does not similarly motivate the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$. Since the resonance constraint is concerned that well-being goods do not alienate a person, desire satisfactionists should think that a person cannot benefit at a time when a purported good does not resonate with them. For if we suppose that a person can benefit at a time a purported good does not resonate with them, this would mean that an object could be good for a person at a time when the object alienates them. This seems to run against the spirit of the resonance constraint, which does not want well-being goods to alienate a person. Surely, those moved by the resonance constraint will find it hard to allow a person to benefit at times when they are alienated. What seems to flow naturally from the resonance constraint is that a person can benefit only at times when the desired object resonates with them. So, if desire satisfactionists are concerned that well-being goods must resonate with a person, desire satisfactionists should think that a person benefits at the time they have the desire rather than at a time they lack the desire. Therefore, those who accept the resonance constraint have reason to accept the synchronic resonance constraint. In contrast, there is no similar argument from the resonance constraint to the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$. It is unclear why the resonance constraint would give us reason to think that a person can benefit only if they desire the desired object *when it obtains*. Therefore, what motivates the synchronic resonance constraint does not similarly motivate the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$.

36 Lin, "Asymmetrism About Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 179.

37 Lin, "Asymmetrism About Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 179.

One might object by arguing that a desired object can resonate with a person only if they desire the object *at the time it obtains*. Given this, the resonance constraint similarly motivates the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$. In reply, I think it is unintuitive to think that a desired object can resonate with a person only if they desire the object *while it obtains*. Consider Living in Japan again. Since desire satisfactionists understand resonance in terms of desiring, desire satisfactionists should hold that living in Japan resonates with 21-Gary because 21-Gary has the relevant desires then. Therefore, desire satisfactionists should reject the idea that a desired object can resonate with people only if they desire the object *while it obtains*. Future states of affairs can resonate with people presently because people can presently desire future states of affairs.[38] So the resonance constraint does not motivate the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$.

3. THE ALL-CONDITIONS-MET PRINCIPLE

Now let me turn to a second principle. Lin argues for (what I call) the *all-conditions-met principle*.

> *All-Conditions-Met Principle*: "You do not receive a particular benefit at *t* unless, at *t*, all of the necessary conditions [for] receiving that benefit have been met."[39]

Lin says that a "condition has been met at *t* just if it either *is* met at *t* or *was* met at some time prior to *t*."[40] The all-conditions-met principle prevents a person from benefiting until the earliest time that all the necessary conditions for receiving the benefit have been met.

The all-conditions-met principle seems very plausible. It is intuitive to think that something cannot obtain until all the necessary conditions for the thing obtaining are met first. For example, even if I have submitted my tenure application and it will be approved next month, I am not tenured presently because the necessary conditions for being tenured are not met yet—the application has not yet been approved. Similarly, all necessary conditions for benefitting must be met first before a person can benefit at a time.

For desire satisfactionists, the necessary conditions for benefitting are *desiring p* and *p obtains*. So, the all-conditions-met principle prevents a person from

38 The same applies to past states of affairs as seen in Singing. People can presently desire a past state of affairs, and so past states of affairs can resonate with people presently.

39 Lin, "Asymmetrism About Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 169–71. Lin calls this the First Principle. See also Purves, who finds this principle attractive ("Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 809).

40 Lin, "Asymmetrism About Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 169.

benefiting at a time when they have not yet gotten what they wanted, and it prevents a person from benefiting at a time when they have not yet started having the relevant desire.

One objection to the all-conditions-met principle comes from Dorsey.[41] He argues that the all-conditions-met principle implies that we would have to assign "prudential benefits to times at which those benefits alienate" in cases involving future-directed desires.[42] We would have to hold that 30-Gary benefits since both conditions are met then, even though 30-Gary does not have the relevant desire anymore. This would violate the synchronic resonance constraint. So, we should reject the all-conditions-met principle.

However, I think Dorsey is mistaken. The all-conditions-met principle states only a necessary condition for benefitting at a time, not a sufficient condition. So, it does not entail that 30-Gary benefits. One can hold to the all-conditions-met principle and yet maintain that 30-Gary does not benefit (as no-future time-of-desire claims).

Given the all-conditions-met principle, which views can accommodate it? Neither time-of-object nor unrestricted time-of-desire can accommodate the all-conditions-met principle. In cases involving past-directed desires, time-of-object says that you benefit at t_o, although you do not have the relevant desire yet. In cases involving future-directed desires, unrestricted time-of-desire says that you benefit at t_d, although the desired object has not yet been obtained. So, both views allow a person to benefit at a time when only one of the necessary conditions for receiving that benefit has been met.

All the other views seem to be able to accommodate the all-conditions-met principle. Concurrentism allows us to benefit only in cases involving present-directed desires, and in such cases, all the necessary conditions are met by the time of benefit because both conditions obtain at the time of benefit. For fusion, Purves argues that fusion can accommodate the all-conditions-met principle because the "necessary conditions have been met at the fusion because they both obtain at the fusion."[43] For later-time, Lin argues that later-time accommo-

41 Dorsey, *A Theory of Prudence*, 199–200.

42 Dorsey, *A Theory of Prudence*, 199.

43 Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 809. One reviewer objects that it is not clear that fusion satisfies the all-conditions-met principle because it is not clear *when* t_{d+o} occurs. Does it occur before/after t_d or before/after t_o? I think fusion proponents would say that the fusion of time does not occur before or after any of its parts. Rather, the time is its parts constituted together. For example, the academic class that meets on Monday and Friday takes place at t_{M+F}. Yet the time the class meets is neither before/after t_M nor before/after t_F. In any case, it is not crucial to this article whether fusion satisfies the all-conditions-met principle. If fusion fails to accommodate the all-conditions-met principle, then all the better for my argument.

dates the all-conditions-met principle.[44] This is because in both cases involving past-directed and cases involving future-directed desires, a person benefits at a time when both conditions have been met.

Finally, consider no-future time-of-desire. In cases involving past-directed desires, a person benefits at t_d, and the desired object has obtained in the past. So, both necessary conditions have been met. In cases involving future-directed desires, a person does not benefit. Hence, no-future time-of-desire does not run into the same problem as unrestricted time-of-desire.

Let us take stock. I have defended the synchronic resonance constraint and the all-conditions-met principle. I have argued that no-future time-of-desire accommodates both principles. In contrast, I have argued that almost all of the other competing views cannot satisfy one or both of the principles, as shown in table 2.

Table 2. The Views and Two Principles

View	Synchronic resonance constraint	All-conditions-met principle
Unrestricted time-of-desire	Yes	No
Time-of-object	No	No
Later-time	No	Yes
Fusion	No	Yes
No-future time-of-desire	Yes	Yes
Concurrentism	Yes	Yes

Although I have argued that no-future time-of-desire can accommodate both principles, concurrentism can also accommodate both principles.[45] In the next section, I offer two reasons to prefer no-future time-of-desire over concurrentism.

4. CONCURRENTISM OR NO-FUTURE TIME-OF-DESIRE?

There are two reasons why I think no-future time-of-desire is preferable to concurrentism. First, we can look back to cases involving past-directed desires that

44 Lin, "Asymmetrism About Desire Satisfactionism and Time," 169.

45 To note, Bradley argues that desire satisfactionists should further accept the synchronic resonance constraint$_o$ and hence hold to concurrentism ("Well-Being at a Time," 7). He argues for this by pointing out that we intuitively judge that a person does not benefit in cases involving future-directed desires (such as in Living in Japan). I think this argument fails because both concurrentism and no-future time-of-desire can accommodate such intuitions. We need a further argument to see which view is preferable.

intuitively seem to affect a person's well-being.[46] Recall the Singing case from section 1. If Helen desired to have sung well in the past, it seems good for her that Youthful-Helen really did sing well. No-future time-of-desire can accommodate our intuitions in such cases. However, concurrentism cannot account for how such past-directed desires can seem to affect a person's well-being if they are satisfied. So, we have good reason to reject concurrentism.[47]

Second, various philosophers argue that since desire satisfactionists accept spatial distance in their theory, they should also allow temporal distance.[48] Ben Bradley, Dorsey, and Purves each note that desire satisfactionists hold that states of affairs can affect our well-being without making a difference in our experiences. As mentioned in section 1, this seems intuitive when considering various cases (e.g., a violation of privacy, a betrayal of friendship). Based on this idea of spatial distance, Purves (and the others) criticizes concurrentism: "if [we] accept that spatial distance between the experience of the desirer and the object of her desire is irrelevant to whether her desire counts as satisfied, then why should temporal distance matter?"[49]

While I think the general thought is intuitive, I find it odd to understand *spatial* distance in terms of whether an event affects a person's experiences (or enters their knowledge). I think this sense of spatial distance is not the right thing to compare with temporal distance.

Spatial distance is more naturally understood in terms of whether an event occurs at the same physical location as the person who benefits. With this understanding of spatial distance, we can still advance a similar argument (call this the *physical-temporal location argument*). Suppose I am in Singapore, while my wife is an astronaut on the moon. I desire that she does not cheat on me while she is there. Even though we are in different physical locations, desire satisfactionists agree that it is bad for me if she cheats on me. Since desire satisfactionists hold that spatial distance (in terms of the event occurring at a different physical location from the person who benefits) does not matter to whether people can benefit, desire satisfactionists should similarly hold that temporal distance does not matter to whether people can benefit.

46 See Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 803; and Dorsey, "Desire-Satisfaction and Welfare as Temporal," 157–58.

47 For the same reason, we should reject the synchronic resonance constraint$_0$.

48 See Bradley, *Well-Being and Death*, 23; Dorsey, "Desire-Satisfaction and Welfare as Temporal," 157–58, and *A Theory of Prudence*, 194–95; and Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 803. See also Fischer, who makes such an argument, though without reference to desire satisfactionism in particular (*Our Stories*, 45–46). In a later paper, however, Bradley abandons this argument ("Well-Being at a Time," 9).

49 Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 803.

Given this, concurrentism is problematic. It holds that people cannot benefit in cases involving past-directed desires and cases involving future-directed desires because the desire and the desired object are temporally distant in such cases. In contrast, no-future time-of-desire allows people to benefit despite temporal distance.[50] Hence, no-future time-of-desire is preferable to concurrentism.

Bradley rejects the physical-temporal location argument.[51] He points out that although we have a notion of temporal well-being, we do not have a notion of spatial well-being. We do not make statements like "I am benefited here."[52] This explains why spatial distance does not matter. However, since we have a notion of temporal well-being, he maintains that temporal distance plausibly matters.

In response, I do not see why whether we have a notion of spatial well-being would matter. We need to keep the following two questions separate.

> *Location Question*: Where does a person benefit?
>
> *Benefit$_s$ Question*: Can a person benefit if their desire and the object are spatially distant?

We might think that the location question does not make sense if there is no notion of spatial well-being. But notice that we can (and do) still give an affirmative answer to the benefit$_s$ question because these are distinct questions. Similarly, we need to keep the following two questions separate.

> *Timing Question*: When does a person benefit?
>
> *Benefit$_t$ Question*: Can a person benefit if their desire and the object are temporally distant?

We might propose various answers to the timing question. But it is unclear why thinking that there is an answer to the timing question (i.e., the mere fact that

50 One reviewer objects that no-future time-of-desire is problematic as it still restricts temporal distance partially since it proposes that one cannot benefit in cases involving future-directed desires. In reply, my view does not hold that we cannot benefit in such cases *because the desire and the desired object are temporally distant*. Instead, the reason why we do not benefit in such cases is because of the all-conditions-met principle and my argument to come in section 6, not because the desire and the desired object are temporally distant.

51 Bradley, "Well-Being at a Time," 9.

52 I am slightly worried about what we should make of the fact that we do not make such statements. Although we typically do not talk about spatial well-being, it seems natural to say that we benefit wherever we are located.

we have a notion of temporal well-being) should entail that we answer no to the benefit$_t$ question.

How the physical-temporal location argument should be understood is this: since desire satisfactionists say yes to the benefit$_s$ question, it seems that they should say yes to the benefit$_t$ question as well. Whether or not desire satisfactionists think that the location question and the timing question have answers is irrelevant to how we should answer the benefit$_s$ and benefit$_t$ questions, respectively.

I conclude then that no-future time-of-desire is superior to the other existing views in the literature. Let me now turn to some objections.

5. Unrestricted Time-of-Desire and the All-Conditions-Met Principle

Earlier, I argued that although unrestricted time-of-desire satisfies the synchronic resonance constraint, it violates the all-conditions-met principle. However, one might object that unrestricted time-of-desire can actually satisfy the all-conditions-met principle. In defending unrestricted time-of-desire, Donald Bruckner argues that truths about the future can make it the case that a person's desire is satisfied in the present, and so they can benefit prior to the state of affairs occurring.[53] For example, suppose that in 2025 (now), Eve desires to be pregnant in 2026; and she will get pregnant in 2026. So, it is true in 2025 (now) that she is pregnant in 2026. Since it is true now that she is pregnant in 2026 and she presently desires to be pregnant then, her desire is satisfied presently in 2025.

Bruckner argues that this is plausible because there are cases where future states of affairs seem to determine the status of past states of affairs. For example, "A shooting acquires the status of a killing only if the victim dies as a result of the gunshot, which may be some time later."[54] Another example is the truth value of propositions that reference the future. If a person says that there will be a sea battle tomorrow, the truth value of the statement uttered now seems to depend on what happens tomorrow.[55] Similarly, although the desired object obtains in the future, it is plausible to think that Eve's desire is satisfied in the present, and so Eve benefits presently because the desired state of affairs will obtain. Therefore, unrestricted time-of-desire can accommodate the all-conditions-met

53 Bruckner, "Present Desire Satisfaction and Past Well-Being," 18, 25–26. See also Bradley, *Well-Being and Death*, 23–24.

54 Bruckner, "Present Desire Satisfaction and Past Well-Being," 25–26.

55 Bruckner, "Present Desire Satisfaction and Past Well-Being," 18.

principle by holding that the relevant necessary conditions for benefitting are actually *desiring p* and *it is true that p obtains at some time*.

I think this argument is unsuccessful for three reasons. First, intuitively, the two necessary conditions for having a desire satisfied are actually (a) desiring *p* and (b) *p* obtains. Even if it is true now in 2025 that Eve gets pregnant in 2026, it seems that her desire is not yet satisfied in 2025 because she has not gotten what she wants in 2025. Instead, her desire will be satisfied in 2026 when she gets what she wants. The 'it is true that' talk is simply irrelevant to having a desired satisfied at a certain time.[56]

Second, I think we should not hold that the necessary conditions for benefitting include a 'it is true that' clause. Suppose a desire satisfactionist proposes that we add the 'it is true that' clause to *both* necessary conditions. The necessary conditions for having a desire satisfied would then be (a) it is true that the person desires *p* at some time, and (b) it is true that *p* obtains at some time. A desire would count as satisfied at the time at which it is true that a person has the desire and at which it is true that the object obtains. For example, if, in 1999, it is true that Eve will form the desire in 2025 to be pregnant in 2026, and if, in 1999, it is true that Eve will be pregnant in 2026, then we would get the result that Eve's desire was satisfied in 1999. This result is absurd. How can Eve's desire be satisfied in 1999, years before she has the desire and years before she gets pregnant? From this example, it is clear that whether *it is true* that a person has the desire at a future time is irrelevant to counting a desire as satisfied. Similarly, we should think that whether *it is true* that the event obtains at a future time is irrelevant to counting a desire as satisfied. Those who think that the 'it is true that' clause matters to one necessary condition but not to the other bear the burden of offering some explanation for this asymmetry. Without such an explanation, we should reject adding the 'it is true that' clause to any of the necessary conditions.[57]

Third, in many cases, we do not just desire that a proposition is true. Rather, we desire the obtaining of the future state of affairs itself. In other words, the object of a person's desire is a future state of affairs rather than the truth value of a proposition. When we consider cases involving future-directed desires, I submit that we need to focus on the cases in which we desire the obtaining of the future state of affairs itself. The problem with focusing on the truth value of propositions is that the desire is plausibly not actually *future*-directed. If Eve

56 This point is illustrated in the tenure example earlier. I am not tenured now even though (a) I have submitted my application, and (b) it is true that my application will be approved next month.

57 See also Bradley, "Well-Being at a Time," for a different argument based on truth makers that further supports this point (24).

desires that it is true *now* in 2025 that Eve gets pregnant in 2026, this desire is *present*-directed—the desire is directed towards what truth value the proposition *presently* has in 2025.[58] Insofar as what a person desires in a case involving future-directed desires is the future state of affairs itself, desire-satisfactionists should hold that the necessary condition of having a future-directed desire satisfied is (a) desiring *p* and (b) *p* obtains.

6. Can People Benefit in Cases Involving Future-Directed Desires?

My argument for no-future time-of-desire relies on the synchronic resonance constraint and on the all-conditions-met principle. However, one might object to my argument for no-future time-of-desire by pointing out that both the synchronic resonance constraint and the all-conditions-met principle address only the timing question. In cases involving future-directed desires, these principles jointly entail that a person benefits neither at t_d nor at t_o. However, these principles do not drive us to hold that people cannot benefit in such cases. We need to consider the possibility that in cases involving future-directed desires, a person benefits (1) at some other time, (2) across their whole life, (3) eternally, or (4) at no time.

I think that these options are all problematic. Consider option 1. The synchronic resonance constraint rules out all times Gary did not have the desire to live in Japan. The all-conditions-met principle rules out all times before he lived in Japan. So, there does not seem to be any other time that we can specify when Gary benefits except times when he had the desire and is living (or has lived) in Japan. Options 2 and 3 can also be ruled out. Since Gary does not have the desire across his whole life or eternally, the synchronic resonance constraint entails that he does not benefit across his whole life or eternally.

This leaves option 4. Since the two principles I use rule out the various times, one might find it appealing to hold that a person benefits atemporally in cases involving future-directed desires. This view—call it *future-atemporal time-of-desire*—would hence look like this:

> (a) In cases involving past-directed (and present-directed) desires, a person benefits at t_d; and (b) in cases involving future-directed desires, a person benefits atemporally.

58 Various philosophers hold that the truth value of propositions is not actually temporally indexed to the present. Some hold that propositions are true eternally, while others hold that propositions are true atemporally. However, even on such views, the desire that a proposition is true is not *future*-directed. They are *eternally* directed or *atemporally* directed.

However, I think future-atemporal time-of-desire faces at least three problems. First, such a view clashes with our intuitions regarding Living in Japan. In Living in Japan, it seems that Gary does not benefit at all, whether at any time or timelessly. Second, it would be odd if we hold that benefits are located temporally in cases involving past-directed and present-directed desires, but not in cases involving future-directed desires. What could possibly explain this asymmetry? Third, it is odd if a benefit is not located in time, even though both the future-directed desire and the desired object are located temporally. This calls out for an explanation.

One might object that no-future time-of-desire's different treatment of future-directed desires and past-directed desires also posits an odd asymmetry. In response, I agree that both no-future time-of-desire and future-atemporal time-of-desire look odd because they treat future-directed desires differently from past-directed and present-directed desires. However, the two earlier theoretical principles—synchronic resonance constraint and the all-conditions-met principle—are supposed to explain why an asymmetry is expected. So, the oddness of the asymmetry has an explanation.

In any case, I maintain that future-atemporal time-of-desire has *additional* oddness that these principles cannot help explain since its oddness is due not just to positing an asymmetry. The oddness is also about explaining why the benefit is atemporal even though the desire and the desired object are located temporally.

Given that options 1–4 fail, we can conclude that a person benefits neither at any point in time nor atemporally in cases involving future-directed desires. Hence, people do not benefit in such cases.

7. THE NORMATIVE SIGNIFICANCE OF POSTHUMOUS EVENTS

Next, one might object directly to no-future time-of-desire by arguing that the satisfaction of future-directed desires is relevant to well-being. One might argue for this by appealing to the normative significance of posthumous events. There is a widespread intuition that people should honor dead people's wills, people should not harvest a dead person's organs if they had objected to donating their organs, and so forth. Many of the desires people have while alive seem to have normative significance for others after their death.[59] In order to account for why such desires have normative significance for others, one might suggest that we should hold that posthumous events can be good or bad for a person.

59 See, for example, Bykvist, "The Moral Relevance of Past Preferences," 117–20.

So, future-directed desires people had while they were alive can contribute to their well-being if satisfied.

This is an interesting objection, and I cannot fully take it up in this article as the literature on the philosophy of death is complicated. Let me sketch one short reply. I think desire satisfactionists have good reason to think that people cannot be benefited by posthumous events. *When* could such events benefit a person? Trying to account for when posthumous events can benefit (or harm) a person runs into similar problems for those trying to account for the timing of death's badness.[60] If desire satisfactionists propose that posthumous events can benefit a person after they die, they face the same problem as those who hold that death is bad for a person after the person is dead. The problem is that neither the person nor their well-being level exists after they are dead.[61]

If desire satisfactionists propose that posthumous events can benefit a person before the person dies, they face the same problem as those who hold that death is bad for a person before the person is dead. The problem is that death does not seem bad for us while we are alive because it has not yet occurred. Similarly, it seems implausible to think that posthumous events can benefit us at a time when the event has not yet occurred. In addition, desire satisfactionists should hold that posthumous events cannot benefit a person prior to their occurrence as such benefits would violate the all-conditions-met principle, which I have defended.

One might instead propose that posthumous events can benefit a person atemporally instead. However, given my arguments in section 6, this seems like an implausible option for desire satisfactionists. If people can benefit in cases involving future-directed desires, desire satisfactionists should locate the benefit temporally. Given that desire satisfactionists should hold that posthumous events cannot benefit people before they die, after they die, or atemporally,

60 The problem of locating the time of benefit of posthumous events is even worse than locating the time of death's badness. In accounting for the badness of death, we might propose a deprivation account that appeals to comparative badness: our well-being level when dead is lower than our well-being level in the closest world in which we did not die. But when discussing desire satisfactionism, we are not talking about comparative benefits. To hold that our well-being is higher in a world where the posthumous event occurs than in a world where the event does not occur, we first need to show that the occurrence of the event benefits us in the former world.

61 Although most philosophers seem to hold this, some instead think that nonexistent people have a well-being level of zero permanently. See, for example, Bradley, *Well-Being and Death*, 98–111. This view faces various problems. See Ekendahl, "Responding to the Timing Argument," 765–66. More importantly, this view does not affect my argument—since the view holds that a dead person's well-being is always at zero after death, they are not (noncomparatively) benefitted or harmed after death.

desire satisfactionists have good reason to think that people cannot be benefited by posthumous events.

I suggest, then, that desire satisfactionists should look elsewhere to explain the normative significance of past desires that people had while they were alive. Indeed, Dorsey notes various problems with appealing to well-being to explain the normative significance of dead people's past desires and has proposed his own account that appeals to reasons of friendship instead of well-being.[62] Fully figuring out why such desires are normatively significant if they cannot affect well-being is a task I leave for another paper.

8. SIMPLICITY AND RELATED WORRIES

Some critics say that my proposed view seems objectionably ad hoc, is nonparsimonious, is not simple, is less elegant, or seems to posit an odd and unexpected asymmetry.[63] How problematic are these sorts of worries for my theory? First, I reject the claim that the theory is objectionably ad hoc. Typically, a theory is objectionably ad hoc when it is unmotivated and/or tweaked just to handle special cases or counterexamples. However, I have motivated the theory by appealing to both intuitions and plausible principles. Furthermore, the theory is not proposed just to avoid some special cases or counterexamples.

Second, a common way of understanding parsimony and simplicity is in terms of Ockham's razor, according to which "entities are not to be multiplied beyond necessity."[64] Given Ockham's razor, we should prefer a more ontologically parsimonious theory, given that all other things are equal. Notice, however, that my theory does not violate Ockham's razor. No-future time-of-desire does not posit a greater number of types of entities (and also does not posit a greater number of entities). It is as ontologically parsimonious as its competitors.

Third, one might instead think that the problem with my proposal has to do with *syntactic* simplicity or elegance.[65] Since no-future time-of-desire posits an asymmetry between past-directed desires and future-directed desires, it is syntactically more complex than a number of its competitors, which treat both types of desires the same. I do not, however, think this is very problematic.

62 For example, Dorsey argues that many desires we have while alive are not relevant to our well-being but are instead relevant only to the well-being of others ("Friendship and the Wishes of the Dead," 139–32). Yet it seems that such desires have the same normative significance.

63 This objection has been raised by reviewers, at conference presentations, and in correspondence with other philosophers.

64 Baker, "Simplicity." See also Fitzpatrick, "Simplicity in the Philosophy of Science."

65 See Baker, "Simplicity"; and Fitzpatrick, "Simplicity in the Philosophy of Science."

Standardly, it is thought that we should prefer a simpler theory to more complex theories *all other things being equal*.[66] However, I have argued that things are not equal between the theories.[67]

Finally, I have argued that there are two plausible principles that give us reason to expect an asymmetry. In past-directed cases, both conditions for benefitting are fulfilled only at t_d. Since the object resonates with a person at t_d, they can benefit then. In future-directed cases, both conditions for benefitting are fulfilled only at t_o. However, since the object alienates the person at that time, the person cannot benefit then. Given this, we should expect that the right theory is not simple and unified and that it would have this "odd" asymmetry. Hence, the lack of simplicity is not objectionable since it is explained by plausible principles.

9. But We Have Many Future-Directed Desires!

There is one final objection I want to address. In objecting to concurrentism, Bradley, Dorsey, and Purves each argue that because many of our desires are past-directed and future-directed, desire satisfactionists should think their satisfaction benefits us.[68] For example, Dorsey says, "Insofar as many of our evaluative attitudes are future-directed, one would expect a subjectivist theory to account for their prudential significance."[69] Hence, concurrentism is problematic. This objection to concurrentism extends to no-future time-of-desire since no-future time-of-desire does not allow benefits in cases involving future-directed desires. Hence, no-future time-of-desire may seem similarly problematic.[70]

66 Baker, "Simplicity"; and Fitzpatrick, "Simplicity in the Philosophy of Science."

67 An objector might depart from standard formulations and hold that simplicity is still a virtue even when other things are not equal. Still, I think that it is unclear how much weight we should put on simplicity, and I am skeptical that simplicity should be given so much weight that it can trump the arguments and intuitions outlined in this article.

68 Bradley, *Well-Being and Death*, 23; Dorsey, "Desire-Satisfaction and Welfare as Temporal," 157, and *A Theory of Prudence*, 194; and Purves, "Desire Satisfaction, Death, and Time," 803.

69 Dorsey, *A Theory of Prudence*, 194.

70 One reviewer notes that a more charitable interpretation of their objection is not that the mere quantity of future-directed desires gives us reason to think they are relevant to well-being. Rather, the problem is that if we count the great number of future-directed desires as welfare irrelevant, it leads to counterintuitive results whereby a person's life is not high in well-being even though their life is filled with a great amount of satisfaction of future-directed desires. In response, I do not think that it is intuitive to think that having a great amount of satisfaction of future-directed desires results in lots of benefits *given that the desired objects obtain at times when one has no desires for them*. We can imagine that a lot

I think this objection fails. First, the quantities of a certain kind of desire do not make a difference in whether satisfying those desires can contribute to well-being. Suppose everyone takes a drug that causes them not to care much about the present. Hence, people have few present-directed desires. Would the reduction in the quantity of present-directed desires make satisfying such desires irrelevant to well-being? It seems not. Intuitively, satisfying present-directed desires is relevant to well-being regardless of their quantity.

Second, we often have reasons to think that certain types of desires are irrelevant to well-being. Desire satisfactionists themselves have introduced various restrictions over which desires are relevant to well-being. For example, desire satisfactionists usually think that nonintrinsic desires are irrelevant to well-being because well-being is about what is *intrinsically* good for a person. So, even though we have a great number of nonintrinsic desires, there is a principled reason not to account for their welfare value. This is not the only example. Some desire satisfactionists argue that only idealized/informed desires or self-regarding desires are relevant to well-being. They argue that other types of desires are irrelevant to well-being (even though people have a great number of such desires). Similarly, given my arguments, we have a principled reason to think that future-directed desires are irrelevant to well-being despite a large number of such desires.

10. CONCLUSION

Let me summarize. First, I have argued that only no-future time-of-desire accommodates our intuitions in both Singing and Living in Japan. Second, I have defended the synchronic resonance constraint and the all-conditions-met principle and argued that no-future time-of-desire accommodates both principles. Although concurrentism can similarly accommodate both principles, I have argued that concurrentism has unintuitive results and objectionably restricts temporal distance while allowing spatial distance. Finally, I have argued that in cases involving future-directed desires, a person neither benefits at any point in time nor atemporally, and hence they do not benefit in such cases. Therefore, we have good reason to accept no-future time-of-desire over competing views.

One final thing to note. Although I have not discussed restricted forms of desire satisfactionism, I believe the cases and arguments apply to many of these other versions. The desires discussed in Singing and Living in Japan are

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of cases similar to Living in Japan occur in a person's life. It does not seem like the person's life is high in well-being in virtue of these types of occurrences.

nonaltruistic, nonmoral, self-regarding, and plausibly directed towards fitting objects; and we can take Helen and Gary as being under idealized conditions (e.g., being fully rational adults at their different ages and aware of the relevant facts at each time). So, no-future time-of-desire can be applied to various restricted forms of desire satisfactionism. Similarly, the cases and arguments can also be framed in terms of other pro-attitudes (like valuing) instead of desires. Therefore, no-future time-of-desire can also be applied to other similar subjectivist theories of well-being.[71]

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