EG: “Just as one’s moral obligations do not depend on whether one happens to believe what one ought to believe any more than they depend on whether one happens to desire or intend what one ought to desire or intend.” (2)

EG: “In particular: (i) Possibilist views fail to distinguish between cases in which a subject has deliberative control over what she does in the future and cases in which she does not; and (ii) they ignore the way we in fact reason about practical matters.” (3)

If possibilists ignore the way we in fact reason about practical matters—and I prefer to reason along possibilist lines—then that says something about (most of) us, that our reasoning is weak and immoral, that we’re not reasoning the way we ought to. It’s not about how we actually reason (or what we actually desire or intend); it’s about the way we ought to.

EG: “The act is excusable because it is precisely through this act that Procrastinate avoids acting in a way that displays, and perhaps develops, the vice. If one is going to put off doing act B (only) if one does act A, then there are two ways of avoiding vicious procrastination: either put off doing B while effectively intending to do B at some later time, or refrain from doing A altogether. If it’s not under one’s present deliberative control whether one does B if one does A, then it seems one ought not to do A. Procrastinate’s act of declining the invitation is permissible because it is the only act within his present deliberative control which does not exhibit a vice.” (5)

Maybe it doesn’t exhibit the vice of procrastination, but he still carries it instead of working to shed it. When he makes such decisions, though, he displays other vices: excessive selfishness, laziness, and perhaps even cowardice. He can avoid displaying any of these vices if he does what’s best both for himself and the world.

“That is, there’s no plan or intention available to Procrastinate at the time he accepts the invitation, that would result in his writing the review (either immediately or eventually).” (5)

But that’s just because he would choose to veer off the most morally attractive path available to him simply because he wants to. Procrastinate’s character is such that he intends to succumb to vicious temptation in a range of interesting cases. Procrastinate, at each point after he accepts the invitation to the review the book, can intend to do something other than succumb to his vice, it’s just that he doesn’t want to exert the requisite effort to do so. Why? Because—at least to some extent—he’s a moral jerk. This shouldn’t serve as an excuse for failing to do what’s best for himself and the world.
“If Procrastinate is vicious for having the tendency to procrastinate in such cases, he may nevertheless be morally excused for declining the invitation to avoid such procrastination.” (6)

I reject this. Being a moral jerk doesn’t excuse you from avoiding morally attractive situations in which you are tempted to engage in immoral actions. Morality requires that you enter such situations, resist temptation, and do what’s best for the world. Imagine a parent who is inclined to daydream or talk on the phone instead of helping his daughter study with a subject matter she finds difficult. A teacher and the daughter ask the father if he would work with her on her studies on a regular basis. He has the free time and the requisite ability, but he says “No”, because he realizes that even if he were to commit to helping her with the appropriate intention, whenever he sat down at the table with her he’d daydream or talk on the phone instead. Why? Because he’s a selfish, immoral asshole. But he’s doing just what securitism requires, and Gilbertson thinks this is reasonable because he’s avoiding a situation in which he would act immorally. He should be doing what possibilism requires instead: He should commit himself to helping her, resist temptation, and then help his daughter on a regular basis.

EG: “Things are otherwise for the virtuous, for whom success in producing the best possible outcome is more likely. If this seems unfair, I worry that this is only because we are thinking of the best available action as equally available to both the virtuous and the vicious.” (6)

Notice that the only reason it’s more likely for the virtuous to secure the best possible outcome is because the virtuous resist immoral temptations, the vicious don’t. Note also that such outcomes are equally available to both; both can choose to follow the schedule of intentions to it.