



The Interpersonal Comparative View of Welfare: Its Merits and Flaws

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Abstract

According to the person-affecting view, the ethics of welfare should be cashed out in terms of how the individuals are affected. While the narrow version fails to solve the non-identity problem, the wide version is subject to the repugnant conclusion. A middle view promises to do better – the Interpersonal Comparative View of Welfare (ICV). It modifies the narrow view by abstracting away from individuals' identities to account for *interpersonal* gains and losses. The paper assesses ICV's merits and flaws. ICV solves the non-identity problem, avoids the repugnant conclusion, and seems to accommodate the person-affecting intuition. But it cuts too many things along the way: ICV obstructs the advantage of the wide view to account for all future individuals' welfare, abandons the intuitions that underlie the narrow view, and even violates its own presuppositions by turning out to be merely pseudo person-affecting.

Keywords Ethics of welfare · Population ethics · Person-affecting view · Non-identity problem · Problem of suffering · Repugnant conclusion

1 Introduction

Many philosophers believe that the part of ethics that is concerned with the welfare of individuals should be cashed out in terms of how the individuals are affected – in terms of what is good and bad or better and worse for the individuals. This is known as the *person-affecting view* or *person-affecting restriction*.¹ According to

¹ It is championed by, for example, Holtug 2004: 129–132 and 2010 ch. 6; Frick, 2020: 61, 65; Bader, 2022a. It is often attributed to Narveson 1967 and 1973. Narveson, however, advocates a *narrow* person-

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the opposing *impersonal view*, welfare is good, period.² On that view, the value for the individuals has no moral significance itself; individuals do not morally matter in themselves but are of moral importance only as containers for what is of actual moral significance: welfare as such. Intuitively, however, we are fundamentally concerned with individuals and how *they* fare.³ Hence, the person-affecting view seems the way to go.

Person-Affecting View: With respect to welfare, only personal value is morally significant.

On a person-affecting view, however, it turns out to be rather difficult to account for our moral concerns towards future individuals. The person-affecting view can be specified in a narrow and a wide version which differ on their construal of the personal value that is of moral significance. For better reference, call the extent to which an outcome is better (worse) for an individual than another outcome the personal comparative value; and call the extent to which an outcome is good (or bad) for an individual the personal absolute value.

According to the *narrow* person-affecting view, the personal *comparative* value of welfare is morally significant. However, this view is confronted with Parfit's Non-Identity Problem: The welfare of future individuals whose identity depends on our choices would not have any moral bearing on our decisions.⁴ According to the *wide* person-affecting view, by contrast, the personal *absolute* value of welfare is morally significant. But that view risks running into the Repugnant Conclusion: An outcome in which the individuals live lives barely worth living would then be better than an outcome in which the individuals lead very happy lives if sufficiently many individuals exist in the former outcome.⁵ Both implications seem highly implausible.

Recently, several philosophers proposed novel, allegedly person-affecting solutions to the Non-Identity Problem that avoid the Repugnant Conclusion.⁶ The common feature of their proposals is to relax the narrow person-affecting view by abstracting away from the individuals' identities in order to account for *interpersonal* welfare gains and losses, not just gains and losses of particular individuals. I call this position the Interpersonal Comparative View of Welfare (ICV). It promises to

affecting view. See also Parfit, 1987: 394.

²The impersonal view was championed by Parfit 1987: part IV, but he rejects it in Parfit 2017: 123–124.

³This is often called the Container Objection; cf. Regan 1983:205–206; Parfit, 1987: 393; Chappell 2015: 224–225; Bader, 2022a: 254. Under certain assumptions, the impersonal view has further troublesome implications, in particular the Repugnant Conclusion and replaceability, i.e. the moral neutrality of killing and replacing individuals; cf. Parfit 1987: ch. 17; Singer 2011: 105–121, Višak 2013: 90–124.

⁴Cf. Parfit 1987: ch. 16 and 393–396.

⁵Cf. Parfit 1987 396–401. The view may entail replaceability, too.

⁶I will concentrate on Hare 2007 and Bader, 2022a. See also Meacham 2012. For non-consequentialist approaches in the spirit of ICV see Kumar 2003: 110–115 and 2009; Meyer 2018 49–52; Frick 2020: 78–81. For an earlier work on the permutation-invariance, universalizability, or unanimity of morality that have some similarity to ICV see Suppes 1966. At the end of Sect. 6 I briefly discuss a construal of ICV that seems very close to that approach. Therefore, the objection that I raise there may apply to that and similar approaches, too.

provide a middle way between the narrow and the wide person-affecting views that captures our moral concerns towards future individuals in a person-affecting manner but avoids their flaws.

However, as I will argue, ICV is unsound. The paper is structured as follows. I introduce ICV more precisely in Sect. 2 and point out its alleged merits in Sect. 3. I will then raise three objections against ICV. First, it fails to solve the more comprehensive problem behind the Non-Identity Problem, because it still does not account for the moral significance of the welfare of some future individuals whose existence depends on our choices (Sect. 4). Second, ICV contradicts some plausible assumptions associated with the narrow person-affecting view. It leaves no room to account for the difference between harms and benefits for particular individuals and mere interpersonal differences in welfare levels of non-identical individuals (Sect. 5). Third, proponents of ICV do not align with their own presuppositions. They can assign moral significance only to either personal value or comparative value, but not to personal comparative value. Therefore, I will argue, they fail to align ICV with the Person-Affecting View altogether (Sect. 6).

2 The Interpersonal Comparative View of Welfare

Recently, some philosophers offered novel approaches to account for our moral concerns of future individuals' welfare in different people choices. The common feature of these proposals is to abstract away from the particular identities of individuals while holding on to the Person-Affecting View. Consider the following two positions.

Caspar Hare discusses Mary's choice between conceiving a child now while she is still recovering from some disease and waiting to conceive a child until she is recovered. The choice influences the identity of the child she would conceive; and the child she would conceive now would be less healthy than the child she would conceive later. He then states:

“One morally relevant way for things to be bad is for things to be *de re* bad for a person. Another is for things to be bad *simpliciter*. Since Mary has not made things *de re* worse for any actual person, a natural way to explain why she has done something wrong is to say that she has made things worse *simpliciter*. But I say that the earlier sort of explanation remains on the table. By conceiving immediately, Mary makes things *de dicto* worse for the health of her future child, and this is something she should have been concerned to avoid.” (Hare 2007: 515–516.)

Hare rejects an impersonal view to capture what is morally relevant about Mary's choice and maintains a person-affecting reasoning. Mary makes things worse for her child. However, he claims, *de dicto* rather than *de re* betterness or worseness for an individual is morally significant in cases that involve non-identical individuals: betterness for an individual whoever that individual turns out to be rather than betterness for a particular individual morally matters.

Ralf Bader proposes a person-affecting view according to which

“[t]he betterness ordering of distributions [...] has to consist in betterness facts for the members of the distributions, which means that the evaluation of distributions has to be reducible to facts about personal good” (Bader 2022a: 260).

On Bader’s proposal, the evaluation of outcomes is concerned only with betterness facts for the individuals. Yet, he accounts for interpersonal welfare gains and losses by comparing lives independently from the identities of the individuals. To do so, he considers the personal betterness relation as “a dyadic relation that has lives as its relata” (Bader 2022a: 263), rather than as a triadic relation that includes, as one relata, the individual whose value it is. Since the identities of the individuals drop out of the picture, as he clarifies in his widely circulated yet unpublished manuscripts, Bader can build the evaluation of outcomes on bijective, though not necessarily identity-tracking, mappings of the individuals.⁷ On such mappings

“every member of [one outcome] has a corresponding image in [the other outcome]. Distributions can then be compared by comparing the members of [the one outcome] with their images in [the other outcome] under the various bijections.” (Bader, *Neutrality and conditional goodness*, p. 32, unpublished manuscript.)

The moral evaluation of outcomes, thus, consists in betterness facts for the individuals based on potentially non-identity-tracking, yet bijective mappings of the individuals in the compared outcomes.

Both accounts abstract away from the particular identities. Thus, they consider neither the personal comparative nor the personal absolute value of welfare as morally significant, but rather the *interpersonal comparative value of welfare*: the extent to which an outcome O_1 is better (or worse) for an individual than another outcome O_2 is for the individual’s relevant and potentially non-identical counterpart. This definition of interpersonal comparative value leaves open how a particular account abstracts away from particular individuals’ identities – or more accurately, how an individual’s relevant counterpart is determined. The formulation, therefore, captures the different proposals – for example, Hare’s dicto betterness and Bader’s betterness of lives in bijective mappings of the individuals.⁸ An individual’s counterpart can be identical if the very same individual figures as the relevant counterpart in the compared outcome; but it can also be non-identical, which is crucial to solve the Non-Identity Problem.

Given the definition of interpersonal comparative value, Hare and Bader accept the

⁷ “Bijections other than the identity-mapping are required if one is to have a general aggregative procedure that applies to different-people (though same number) comparisons and that can accordingly deal with non-identity cases.” (Bader, *Personal, general and impersonal good*, p. 17, fn. 22, unpublished manuscript.)

⁸ Note that “counterpart” is not meant to refer to accounts of counterpart relations in the discussions about trans-world identity as proposed by Lewis (1973: 39–43 and 1986: ch. 4). Rather “relevant counterpart” figures as placeholder for the specification of the particular accounts that instantiate ICV.

Interpersonal Comparative View of Welfare (ICV): With respect to welfare, the interpersonal comparative value is morally significant.

Note that ICV is formulated in evaluative terms, but “morally better (worse) than” may be substituted with deontic notions. I will conduct this inquiry in evaluative terms. Nevertheless, if you have reservations about evaluative comparisons of outcomes, you can substitute it with the respective equivalent in terms of moral reason to bring about O_1 rather than O_2 . Furthermore, ICV claims a particular kind of personal value to be morally significant. This may be an unfamiliar way to define such a view. However, the formulation has the advantage that it neither presupposes any particular function in order to determine the overall moral value of an outcome nor must it accept that we can determine such an overall moral value. Hence, we can discuss ICV without relying on controversial claims about the aggregation of welfare or moral value.

Proponents of ICV also accept the already mentioned Person-Affecting View. As much is clear for Bader, given his reducibility claim which I have quoted above. In order to avoid that individuals matter merely as containers, he explicates, it must be the case that “personal good itself matters and is morally good” (Bader 2022a: 256). Hare also dismisses an impersonal explanation for the moral badness of Mary’s action to conceive a child now. Rather the explanation that Mary’s action is bad for a person “remains on the table” (Hare 2007: 215). Nevertheless, one may think that Hare accepts an impersonal view, because he also states that Mary’s responsibility not to conceive the child now is impersonal in nature.⁹ However, the Person-Affecting View is not a claim about the nature of an agent’s responsibility. It is a claim about which kind of value is morally significant with respect to welfare, which in turn gives rise to the agent’s responsibility. Regarding the morally significant value, Hare is clear though.

“I suggest that it is a responsibility to avoid bringing about states of affairs that are in one particular way worse than other states of affairs—*not worse simpliciter, but de dicto worse for the health of her child.*” (Hare 2007: 514; emphasis added.)

Mary’s responsibility may be an impersonal one to bring about one rather than another state of affairs. However, as the quote explicates, the grounding fact is not about impersonal betterness, but about betterness for people. And since “betterness for someone” denotes personal value, Hare claims that personal, not impersonal, value is morally significant. Thus, he accepts the Person-Affecting View as well.

Furthermore, proponents of ICV accept the

Comparative View: With respect to the comparison of outcomes, only comparative value is morally significant.

⁹ “The challenge is to identify precisely the nature of Mary’s *impersonal* responsibility.” (Hare 2007: 514; emphasis added.)

Bader claims that the moral evaluation of outcomes “consists in betterness facts for the members” (Bader 2022a: 263). In a footnote, he explicates that this is not reducible to mere goodness:

“In order for the goodness of option ϕ to favor ϕ over alternative ψ , the goodness of ψ must also be defined. There is only a stronger reason if there is more goodness, and this requires comparability of the options. Accordingly, in order to favor choosing one rather than the other, it must be the case that the one is better than the other. Being good is not enough. What is needed is betterness.” (Bader 2022a: 263, fn. 22.)

Thus, Bader is committed to the Comparative View. Hare, even though not endorsing the Comparative View explicitly, only talks about “the morally significant concept of *betterness*” (Hare 2007: 212; emphasis added.) He does not consider mere goodness; in particular, he does not consider the explanation that Mary’s conceiving now may merely be *bad* rather than *worse* for Mary’s child. Therefore, I consider his approach to be concerned only with how individuals are affected for the better or the worse and not how they are affected for merely being well or badly off.¹⁰

Finally, proponents of ICV typically accept

Existence-Non-Comparativism: Existence cannot be better or worse for an individual than her non-existence.¹¹

I cannot argue for this claim here but state my profound belief that it is correct, as many others have argued.¹² Bader, for example, argues that we cannot compare personal value with non-existence since the underlying betterness-relation does not apply. This is because, in a comparison with non-existence, one of the relata is missing, and non-existence does not provide any good-making features on which the personal value could supervene.¹³ While Bader endorses Existence-Non-Comparativism, Hare remains vague about his view on the matter.¹⁴ Importantly, however, if we were to reject Existence-Non-Comparativism, there would not be any good

¹⁰ If he were concerned not only with comparative but also with absolute value, he would have made that explicit, I think. He knows the potential solutions to the Non-Identity Problem as discussed by Parfit one of which is the wide person-affecting view, which claims personal *absolute* value to be morally significant. See Hare 2007: 215.

¹¹ One notable exception is Meacham 2012: 262. He can, therefore, avoid the objection I raise in Sect. 4, but his account is subject to objections against the contrary view: Existence-Comparativism; see fn. 12.

¹² Cf. Broome 1993: 77 and 1999: 168; Bykvist 2007 and 2015; Herstein 2013. Existence-Comparativism is defended (in different versions) by Roberts 2003; Holtug 2001 and 2010: ch. 5; Arrhenius/Rabinowicz 2015; Fleurbaey/Voorhoeve 2015. For earlier discussions see Parfit 1987, appx. G and McMahan 1981.

¹³ Cf. Bader 2022a: 263 and 2022b: 17–18.

¹⁴ Sometimes, Hare assumes claims which contradict Existence-Non-Comparativism: “we may assume that Mary’s actual child is better off existing than not” (Hare 2007: 500). And he claims Existence-Non-Comparativism to be highly controversial (Hare, 2007: 209, fn. 22). At other points, he seems to grant the assumption to his opponents, though: It “is highly controversial. But that’s beside the point.” (Hare 2007: 209.) Hence, it remains unclear whether he denies Existence-Non-Comparativism for the sake of the arguments he discusses or whether he is indeed committed to it.

reason to accept ICV in the first place. Consider Mary's choice as an example. If Mary's child could be made better (or worse) off by being brought into existence, there would be an obvious moral reason for Mary to not conceive now: she would make the child she would conceive later better off to a greater extent, or benefit it more, than she would make, or benefit, her child she would conceive now. Therefore, if Existence-Non-Comparativism were false, there would not be any need to explain Mary's moral reasons to not conceive now in terms of *de dicto* betterness for her child, or any other way of specifying an individual's relevant counterpart. Even without a counterpart, an individual would gain or lose welfare relative to their non-existence. Thus, I consider any plausible version of Hare's approach to accept Existence-Non-Comparativism as well.¹⁵ Therefore, Existence-Non-Comparativism is, at least for the sake of the arguments for and against ICV, a plausible assumption.

3 The Alleged Merits of the Interpersonal Comparative View of Welfare

ICV promises (i) to solve the Non-Identity Problem but (ii) to avoid the Repugnant Conclusion while (iii) still being committed to the Person-Affecting View and the Comparative View. I will consider those merits one at a time.

(i) ICV solves one of the biggest challenges for the ethics of future individuals: the Non-Identity Problem.¹⁶ The problem starts from the insight that our choices can influence the identity of future individuals. Given a choice that affects the very existence of some individuals, call the individuals whose existence it affects *non-identical* (with respect to that choice). Since existence cannot be better or worse for individuals than their non-existence, our choices are neither better nor worse for non-identical individuals. On the narrow person-affecting view, therefore, the welfare of non-identical individuals does not have any moral bearing on our decisions.¹⁷ Intuitively, however, our actions are morally constrained by how future individuals fare. We would better save some natural resources for the sake of future individuals; we should refrain from leaving behind, for example, nuclear waste that is potentially catastrophic for future individuals; and we ought to stop, or at least mitigate, climate change and, thus, prevent future individuals from suffering the consequences of global warming. Importantly, we believe that this is so even if our choices determine who those individuals are and even if they had all lives worth living.

¹⁵ Furthermore, if Existence-Non-Comparativism were false, proponents of ICV would not have a principled way to avoid the Repugnant Conclusion. (See Sect. 3). This is because every individual with a life barely worth living would be better off existing than not existing, which would count in favour of the highly populated outcome. Meacham (2012: 270–271) claims that his account would avoid the Repugnant Conclusion anyway. However, it does not in three-outcomes comparisons as shown by Hinz/Rückert in their unpublished manuscript *The Repugnant Conclusion Strikes Back. A Critical Examination of Meacham's Account in Population Ethics*.

¹⁶ Cf. Parfit 1987: ch. 16. The Non-Identity Problem is often presented in deontic rather than in evaluative terms; for example, in Boonin 2008.

¹⁷ Cf. Arrhenius 2005: 188–189.

ICV provides a straightforward solution to the Non-Identity Problem. Even though non-identical individuals would be neither better nor worse off, they could be better or worse off than other individuals – their relevant counterparts – who would exist in the alternative outcome. Hence, if our actions influence both the level of welfare and the identity of an individual, the outcome resulting from the action that brings about a happier individual can be better for the individual than the alternative is for a less happy individual. Thus, according to ICV, if the two individuals qualify as relevant counterparts, the extent to which the first outcome is better for the happier individual than the alternative outcome is for the less happy individual is morally significant.

(ii) ICV avoids implausible implications of other solutions to the Non-Identity Problem, in particular the

Repugnant Conclusion:

Compared with a population of very many individuals with very high levels of welfare (population A), there is some much larger population (population Z) which is morally better although all the individuals in the larger population have lives that are barely worth living.¹⁸

The impersonal view and the wide person-affecting view imply the Repugnant Conclusion if supplemented with a total sum function of welfare. The total sum of welfare in population Z is higher than in population A if sufficiently many individuals with positive welfare exist in population Z.¹⁹ In addition, there are further powerful arguments well known from Parfit's and others' writings which show that, even without a total sum function, the Repugnant Conclusion might seem inevitable on the impersonal view and the wide person-affecting view.²⁰

ICV, by contrast, has the potential to avoid the Repugnant Conclusion even with a total sum function or even given the assumptions of the mentioned arguments. The reason is that ICV does not assign moral significance to absolute welfare but only to interpersonal comparative welfare – the interpersonal welfare gains and losses. To see that, we need to distinguish two cases. On the one hand, if some of the individuals in population Z have a relevant counterpart in population A, these individuals are worse off in Z than their relevant counterparts in A. Thus, the individuals in Z have only negative interpersonal comparative value relative to their counterparts in A and, therefore, Z – the larger population – is worse than A – the smaller population. In that case, ICV implies the opposite of the Repugnant Conclusion. On the other hand, if no individual in Z has a relevant counterpart in A, there is no interpersonal comparative value at all. Then, it is not the case that Z is better than A, and, thus, ICV does not

¹⁸ Cf. Parfit 1987: 388.

¹⁹ Cf. Parfit 1987: 384–388 and 396–401.

²⁰ For example, arguments based on Parfit's mere addition paradoxes or on the assumption that a sufficient increase in the quantity of welfare can outweigh a (small) loss in the quality of welfare; cf. Parfit 1987: ch. 19; Arrhenius, 2000: 51–53; Tännsjö, 2002: 354–359. See Temkin 2012, Sect. 10.6, 10.7, and 12.6 for strategies how to reject those arguments.

imply the Repugnant Conclusion.²¹ Therefore, ICV avoids the Repugnant Conclusion at least in the sense that it does not imply it.

(iii) ICV's third merit is its persisting – but, as we will see later, alleged – commitment to the Person-Affecting View and the Comparative View. Many people believe, at least initially, that if an outcome O_1 is morally better (worse) than another outcome O_2 , it is better (worse) for someone. This is the basic intuition underlying the narrow person-affecting view.²² It reflects the idea that outcomes should be assessed based on how they affect the individuals' lives for the better or the worse. In other words, the comparative personal value is relevant for the moral evaluation and comparison of outcomes. Both the impersonal view and the wide person-affecting view deviate from that idea which, as Bader analyses, is the “reason that impersonal [and wide person-affecting, I add] versions of utilitarianism lead to Repugnant Conclusions in variable-population cases” (Bader 2022a: 257). The narrow person-affecting view, on the other hand, is confronted with the Non-identity Problem, as mentioned in the beginning of this section.

ICV manages the balance between the two sides by considering only personal comparative value as morally significant but allowing that value to be conceived interpersonally – from comparisons of the welfare of individuals with the welfare of those individuals' relevant and potentially non-identical counterparts. In this manner, ICV seems to preserve the commitment of the narrow person-affecting view to the moral significance of personal comparative value.

In what follows, however, I will argue that ICV should be rejected. It fails to avoid the broader problem behind the Non-Identity Problem (Sect. 4), contradicts plausible assumptions associated with the narrow person-affecting view (Sect. 5), and violates the Person-Affecting View (Sect. 6).

4 The Problem of Contingent Individuals

ICV solves the Non-Identity Problem. Nevertheless, it fails to comprehensively account for the moral value of future individuals' welfare. This becomes clear when we realise that there is a broader problem underlying the Non-Identity Problem.

A moral theory of welfare should be able to account for our moral concerns towards future individuals, I assume. It should do so at least in the sense that the welfare of all future individuals *can* make a difference on the moral assessment of the outcomes in which the individuals exist. For example, such a theory should be able to assess

²¹ This might mean that the two populations are morally equal, that Z is not morally better than A , or that (as in Bader's proposal) the two populations are incomparable. In either case, ICV avoids the Repugnant Conclusion in the sense that it does not *imply* it. However, we might not seem to be able to explain the repugnancy. In order to solve that problem, Bader quantifies over all comparisons of A with all *subsets* of Z , respectively, which would determine a “meta-betterness-relation”. Z would then be meta-worse than A because all subsets of Z that are equinumerous with A are worse than A . That, in turn, could guide our decisions. Cf. Bader's unpublished manuscript *Neutrality and conditional goodness*, pp.46–47.

²² It is also denominated as narrow person-affecting principle or claim, or just the slogan, commonly attributed to Narveson 1967 and 1973. Even people who eventually reject the intuition highlight its intuitive plausibility, for example, Temkin 1993: 249–255 and 2000: 132; Parfit 1997: 219; Arrhenius 2005: 187–188.

whether an outcome with unlimited climate change or an outcome with only moderate climate change is morally better with respect to the welfare of the individuals that exist in those outcomes. One way to spell that out is

Concern for Future Individuals: The welfare of all future individuals can be morally significant.

ICV, however, does not satisfy Concern for Future Individuals. Our choices can influence not only the identity of future individuals but also their number. This is so in procreative choices, but also in large-scale decisions. If the identity of individuals or their number differs in the compared outcomes, some of the individuals exist in only one of the compared outcomes. Their existence is not settled yet. We can call the individuals whose existence depends on the compared outcomes *contingent individuals*.²³ Concern for Future Individuals and the fact that some individuals are contingent lead to the

*Problem of Contingent Individuals*²⁴

- (1) The welfare of all future individuals can be morally significant.
- (2) Some future individuals are contingent.
- (3) With respect to welfare, only interpersonal comparative value is morally significant.
- (4) The welfare of some contingent individuals cannot have interpersonal comparative value.
- (C1) It is not the case that the welfare of all future individuals can be morally significant (from (2) to (4)).
- (C2) It is not the case that the welfare of all future individuals can be morally significant, but the welfare of all future individuals can be morally significant (from (1) and (C1)).

(1) is Concern for Future Individuals. (2) stems from the empirical fact that our choices can influence which particular individuals will come into existence. If so, some future individuals exist in only one of the compared outcomes – the contingent individuals. (3) is ICV considered as a specification of the Person-Affecting View. And (4) is true because, if the numbers of individuals in the compared outcomes differ, some contingent individuals cannot be better or worse off than some other individual in the compared outcome on any bijective mapping of the individuals. Necessarily, some individual in the higher populated outcome will not have any counterpart in the lesser populated outcome on any bijective mapping and, thus, cannot be better or worse off than their counterpart.²⁵ Together, (2) to (4) imply that it is

²³ By contrast to *non-identical* individuals, *contingent* individuals include all future individuals whose existence is not settled yet, not only the individuals whose identity is not settled yet.

²⁴ The problem can be extended to the narrow person-affecting view by altering premises (3) and (4) accordingly. The welfare of contingent individuals cannot have any personal comparative value. Thus, on the narrow person-affecting view, (C1) follows as well.

²⁵ Merely surjective mappings – such that multiple individuals in the higher populated outcome are mapped onto one and the same individual in the lesser populated outcome – are no solution, because they

not the case that the welfare of all future individuals can be morally significant, but (1) claims that the welfare of all future individuals can be.²⁶ I call this contradiction the Problem of Contingent Individuals.

Proponents of ICV might object that we would not need to be concerned with the welfare of *all* future individuals. In particular, the welfare of merely additional individuals should not morally matter. Therefore, it would suffice to solve the Non-Identity Problem rather than the Problem of Contingent Individuals. However, this claim is troubling for two reasons. On the one hand, it does not make any difference for a particular individual that comes into existence whether their non-identical counterpart existed in the alternative outcome or not. Accordingly, we might wonder why the individual's welfare would be morally significant if there is a relevant counterpart in the alternative but why it would not be morally significant if there is no such counterpart in the alternative. That difference does not affect the individual in any way; in both cases the individual exists in one outcome with the same level of welfare (we can stipulate), and it does not exist in the alternative. If we make a difference in the two cases, we seem to deviate from the Person-Affecting View. ICV's proponents can avoid this implication, though, by claiming that there is a difference in *interpersonal* comparative value and, thus, can be explained in person-affecting terms. For now, I must grant this. In Sect. 6, however, I will argue that interpersonal comparative value does not always qualify as personal value.

On the other hand, literally everyone would want to count the welfare of at least some of the individuals who do not have any counterpart in the alternative. That is best shown by what Nils Holtug calls the Problem of Suffering Fig. 1.²⁷

Ivy exists in outcome A with a miserable life, but she does not exist in outcome B, everything else being equal. Intuitively, A is morally worse than B. We should, therefore, accept the

Negative Addition Intuition: The addition of an individual with a miserable life makes an outcome morally worse, everything else being equal.

As the narrow person-affecting view, ICV fails to account for that intuition. If the number of individuals in two compared outcomes differs, there is at least one individual who does not have any counterpart on any one-on-one mapping of the individuals

lead to double counting of the welfare of those individuals multiple other individuals are mapped onto. This is because their welfare would count repeatedly, namely as many times as the number of individuals who are mapped onto an individual. Clearly, however, no individual's welfare should count multiple times just because there are less individuals in the outcome in which they exist than there are in the alternative outcome.

²⁶Note that premise (1) does not say that the welfare of all future individuals *must* be morally significant. For example, if the welfare level of a contingent individual is within a certain *neutral range*, the welfare might not be morally significant on a particular theory. However, it still *could* be morally significant if it had a higher or lower level of welfare in that outcome. According to (C1), however, the welfare of some contingent individuals *cannot* be morally significant at all, not even if the level of welfare were different. It cannot be morally significant, because there is no counterpart in the alternative outcome relative to which the individual could have interpersonal comparative value.

²⁷Cf. Holtug 1998: 170 and 2010: 161.



Fig. 1 The Problem of Suffering

in the compared outcomes.²⁸ Consequently, at least one individual does not have any interpersonal comparative value. The outcome is neither better nor worse for that individual than the alternative is for her counterpart, because no such counterpart exists. On ICV, the individual's welfare cannot make an outcome morally better or worse and, thus, ICV does not account for the Negative Addition Intuition.²⁹

²⁸ One might, again, be tempted to allow other than one-on-one mappings. However, this will lead to double counting of the welfare of the individuals who are mapped onto more than one other individual as mentioned in fn. 25.

²⁹ For that reason, some authors supplement ICV with further principles, for example, Frick 2020: 73–75 and Bader 2022b: 19–25. Bader claims that we can account for the spirit of the Negative Addition Intuition by appealing to the idea that it is (both personally and morally) better if lives worth not living are as short as possible. He proposes a “structural consistency constraint that actions have to satisfy” (Bader 2022b: 20), which commits us to always shorten a life whenever this makes the life better. With respect to lives *never* worth living – lives for which it holds that “for any point in time t in that life the value of the life up to that point [...] is smaller than the value of the life up to some earlier point t' ” (Bader 2022b: 20) – this is so for every point in time of that life. Since the limit of making a life shorter and shorter is to not bring the individual into existence in the first place, we would have reason to not do so. This is because, if we were to bring the individual into existence, there would always be an earlier point in time at which we should have ended the life and, thus, we cannot satisfy the consistency constraint. (Cf. Bader 2022b: 21–25.) Bader extends the idea to those lives worth not living which consist of certain happy temporal parts. For such lives, he claims, it is better to shorten them rather than to let them continue to the end, because it would hold for such lives that every shortening is better than the whole life. (Cf. Bader 2022b: 26–28.) There are at least three problems with that approach. First, the account does not debunk the Negative Addition Intuition itself. Second, it is questionable why we should accept such a strong consistency constraint. Even consistency constraints should be limited by what an agent is able to do. Since actual agents are not able to make anything at *every* point in time, it seems that no consistency constraint should appeal to such a strong condition. Hence, one may argue, while we have reason to shorten lives worth not living, we do not have reason to shorten them infinitely. If so, we do not have reason to shorten the life up to the point where the life is not brought into existence in the first place. Rather, some temporal slice of that life would always be left. And if the final slice were to be removed, we would compare the existing life with a non-existing life, which contradicts Existence-Non-Comparativism (which Bader accepts himself).

Both the Problem of Suffering and the Non-Identity Problem are mere instances of the more comprehensive Problem of Contingent Individuals. They are not concerned with *all* contingent individuals. The Non-Identity Problem focuses only on those contingent individuals who have counterparts in the compared outcome onto which they can be mapped. The Problem of Suffering addresses only those contingent individuals who do not have counterparts in the compared outcome and lead miserable lives. The underlying reason for both to be problems in the first place, however, is that the welfare of some contingent individuals cannot have any kind of interpersonal comparative value. To tackle the problems at their core, we are well advised to focus on the broader problem – the Problem of Contingent Individuals – rather than to find solutions only to certain aspects of that problem. However, ICV does not do so and, therefore, fails to account for our moral concerns towards the welfare of all future individuals.

5 The Moral Significance of Individual Harms and Benefits

ICV considers interpersonal comparative value as morally significant – the extent to which one outcome is better or worse for an individual than the alternative is for her relevant and potentially non-identical counterpart. Since that does not exclude identity-mappings of the individuals, ICV might seem able to accommodate the merits of the narrow person-affecting view. However, on closer inspection, it contradicts plausible assumptions which make the narrow person-affecting view so attractive.

ICV cannot distinguish between welfare gains and losses for particular individuals and interpersonal welfare gains and losses. To see that, consider the difference between the following two cases Figs. 2 and 3.

S_i denotes different individuals; the height of the bars illustrates their levels of welfare; a missing bar indicates that the respective individual does not exist. The welfare profile of the two cases is identical. In all four outcomes, there is one individual with a high level of welfare and another individual with a moderate level of welfare. The difference is that, while S_1 exists in both I and J, S_1 exists only in K but not in L. Instead, another individual, S_4 , exists in L.

Many people believe that individual harms and benefits morally matter in themselves. If we assume that harms and benefits should be spelled out in a counterfactual comparative way, that belief resembles and arguably motivates the narrow person-affecting view: outcomes are morally better or worse insofar as they benefit or harm individuals – insofar as they are better or worse for individuals than the alternative would have been for those individuals.³⁰ If the belief is true, there must be a difference in the comparisons between the outcomes I and J, and the outcomes K and L.

Third, Bader's proposal does not account for miserable lives who start, for example, extremely miserable and continuously get better over time, yet never become worth living. For such lives, it is not true that each shortening of the life would be better than the continuation of that life to its end. Quite the contrary! Nevertheless, if they still end below the neutral level, even those lives qualify as miserable. Thus, Bader's approach cannot account for all miserable lives.

³⁰A powerful reason for the view that harms and benefits are at least partly determined by counterfactual comparative assessments is its extensional adequacy in many cases. Potential problems for such an

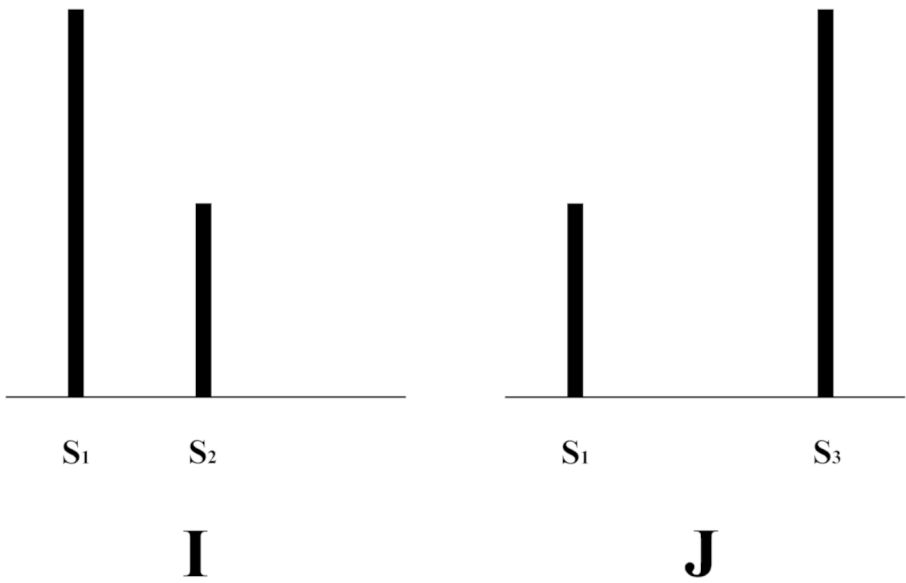


Fig. 2 Identical Welfare Profile with Pareto-Inferiority

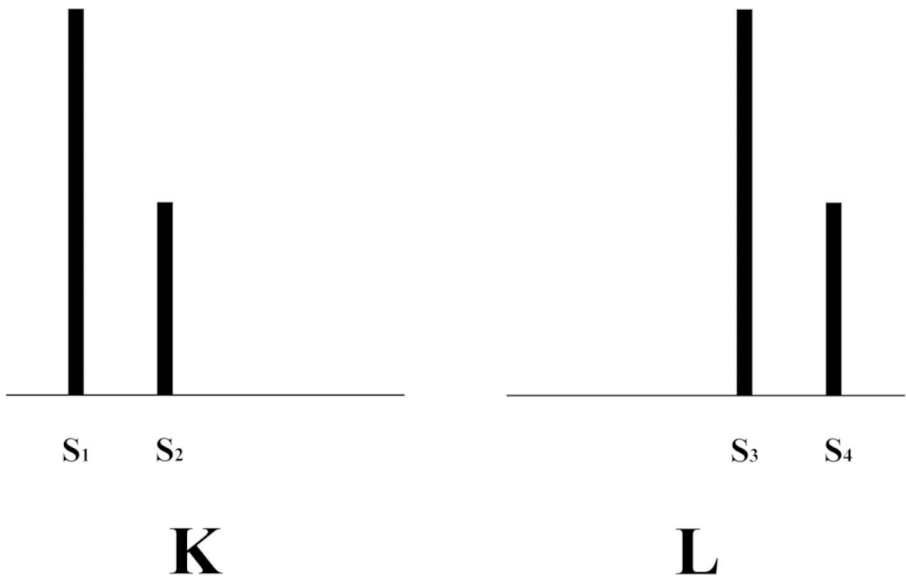


Fig. 3 Identical Welfare Profile without Pareto-Inferiority

For, while S_1 is harmed in J relative to I, no one is harmed in L relative to K. Only if there is a difference in the evaluation between J and I, and K and L, it can be true that benefits and harms to particular individuals matter in themselves.³¹

You might reject either a counterfactual comparative account of harm and benefits or the belief that harms and benefits matter in themselves. However, the argument also works with the extremely plausible assumption that a pareto-inferior outcome is in at least one respect morally worse, where, as I use the term here, an outcome is pareto-inferior to another outcome if and only if it is worse for some individual but better for no individual.³² While J is pareto-inferior to I, L is not pareto-inferior to K. Thus, if the assumption is true, there must be a difference between the comparison of I and J, and the comparison of K and L.

ICV, however, is not able to account for the difference between the two cases, because the comparative value it claims to be morally significant is derived from one-on-one mappings of individuals with their relevant counterparts.³³ While my formulation of ICV leaves open the particular way of determining those mappings, we can still go through the possible mappings. Suppose S_1 is mapped to itself in I and J, and S_2 in I is mapped onto S_3 in J. Then, S_1 's welfare is reduced from I to J to the same extent as the welfare of S_3 in J exceeds the welfare of S_2 in I. Thus, ICV implies that I and J are morally equal.³⁴ If S_1 in I is mapped onto S_3 in J and S_2 in I is mapped onto S_1 in J, there are no interpersonal gains or losses in I relative to J and vice versa. Thus, again, I and J turn out to be morally equal on ICV. The same holds for the comparison of K and L. Either S_1 in K is mapped onto S_3 in L, and S_2 in K is mapped onto S_4 in L, in which case there are neither interpersonal welfare gains nor losses, and K and L turn out to be morally equal. Or S_1 in K is mapped onto S_4 in L, and S_2 in K is mapped onto S_3 in L, in which case the interpersonal gains and losses cancel each other out, and, thus, K and L are morally equal.³⁵ Therefore, ICV does not account for the difference in the comparisons of the outcomes in the two cases and, thus, contradicts the plausible assumptions closely associated with the narrow person-affecting view: benefits and harms to particular individuals matter in themselves, and pareto-inferior outcomes are at least in one way morally worse.

Proponents of ICV might object that we should understand the relevant intuitions in interpersonal terms. The pertinent way to argue for that is to advance a principle of impartiality, universalizability, or permutation-invariance; the idea that – to bor-

account can be solved by an appeal to context-sensitivity and the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic harms; cf. Klocksiem 2012.

³¹The argument does not presuppose a full-blown counterfactual comparative account of benefits and harms but only some counterfactual comparative element.

³²Note that many social economists and philosophers use pareto-inferiority in a narrower sense insofar as they restrict its application to same people choices. My definition is not restricted in that sense but applies to all kinds of variable population comparisons.

³³Again, one might be tempted to allow other than one-on-one mappings. However, that will lead to double counting of the welfare of the individuals who are mapped to more than one other individual.

³⁴Assuming that two outcomes are morally equal with respect to interpersonal welfare if a negative interpersonal comparative value $-v$ is counterbalanced by a positive interpersonal comparative value v , everything else being equal.

³⁵Under the same assumption as mentioned in the previous footnote.

row Christoph Fehige’s terms – “it must not matter who plays which part” (Fehige 1998: 527) or that – in Bader’s terms – “permuting the identities of the members of the distribution, whilst holding fixed the structure or value profile of the distribution, does not affect the betterness ordering” (Bader 2022a: 262). If plausible, it might not be the harm or benefit to particular individuals that is in itself morally significant, but rather the *interpersonal* welfare gains and losses. Analogously, not (personal) pareto-inferiority would make an outcome in one respect morally worse than another, but *interpersonal* pareto-inferiority. This can be seen by the fact that permutation-invariance allows to permute the individuals in J such that permuted J is identical with L, namely, if S_1 is permuted with S_4 .

However, for the argument to succeed, we need a particularly strong version of permutation-invariance. Bader proposes

Strong Permutation-Invariance: For any two outcomes O1 and O2, O1 is morally better (worse) than O2 if and only if the restriction to O1 of any permutation of the universal domain is morally better (worse) than the restriction of O2 of any permutation of the universal domain.³⁶

A weak version of permutation-invariance would allow only for permutations of the individuals that actually exist in an outcome. Strong Permutation-Invariance, by contrast, allows to permute the actual individuals in an outcome with merely possible individuals, that is, individuals who exist only in the alternative outcome. Just by advancing Strong Permutation-Invariance we can permute the individuals such that J turns out identical with L. Hence, in order to argue for the claim that interpersonal gains and losses rather than individual benefits and harms matter in themselves, Strong Permutation-Invariance is needed.

What should we make of the argument? Many people believe that moral assessments should be impartial in the sense that it does not matter which particular individual is affected. For example, if you can benefit (in the counterfactual comparative sense) a particular individual – call her Sarah – to a certain extent, it does not matter that this is Sarah. If you benefited another individual – Stefan – to the same extent, there would not be any difference from a moral point of view. It does not matter who plays which part. Nevertheless, this does not amount to Strong Permutation-Invariance. A weaker version would account for the idea that moral assessments should be impartial insofar as it does not matter which particular individual is benefited or harmed. Strong Permutation-Invariance, by contrast, does not only abstract away from the particular identities of the individuals but even from whether an individual exists in the alternative and, thus, from whether the outcome *can be better or worse for the particular individual* – whether the individual can be harmed or benefited at all. Therefore, a mere reference to impartiality does not suffice to establish Strong Permutation-Invariance.

On the contrary, we have the strong intuition that benefits and harms morally matter in themselves. And without any further arguments in favour of Strong Permutation-Invariance, there is no good reason to accept it. But since weaker versions

³⁶ Cf. Bader 2022a: 261, fn. 16.

of permutation-invariance would not suffice to rule out the intuition that individual benefits and harms matter in themselves, I do not see any reason why we should reject that intuition in favour of the interpersonal equivalent. Thus, my point remains: ICV contradicts plausible assumptions that make the narrow person-affecting view so attractive.

6 Pseudo Person-Affectingness

Proponents of ICV claim that the morally significant value of welfare is personal – they accept the Person-Affecting View. Plausibly, a value is personal if and only if it is the value *for* an individual *S*, which is indicated by our value-relations to include “for an individual *S*” as in “*x* is good (or bad) *for Sarah*” and “*x* is better (or worse) *for Stefan*”. Furthermore, proponents of ICV consider the morally significant personal value as *comparative*, it seems at least, insofar as it is the extent to which one outcome is better than the compared outcome. If that were correct, the morally significant personal value of welfare would have to be both personal *and* comparative – that is, it must be the extent to which one outcome is better for an individual *S* than the compared outcome.³⁷

However, as I will argue in this section, ICV does not provide personal value if the value is derived from interpersonal comparisons. And since interpersonal comparisons are necessary in order to account for the moral significance of the welfare of individuals in different people comparisons – that is, in order to solve the Non-Identity Problem – ICV violates the Person-Affecting View.

Consider a standard non-identity case: In one outcome, one individual – call her Happy – is well off; in the alternative outcome, another individual – call her Very Happy – is very well off; and the two individuals do not exist in the other outcome, respectively. Mary’s choice in Hare’s discussion is an instance of that example. The two outcomes are neither better nor worse for both Happy and Very Happy given Existence-Non-Comparativism. Hence, in the non-identity case, ICV cannot claim that interpersonal comparative value is personal.

Interpersonal comparative value can be personal only in the sense of the extent to which the first outcome is worse for Happy than the second outcome is for Very Happy. But that is not the value for any particular individual. Rather it is a comparative value of one individual’s welfare relative to another individual’s welfare – the value of Happy’s welfare relative to Very Happy’s welfare but neither of Happy’s welfare nor of Very Happy’s welfare themselves. Therefore, the value ICV claims to be morally significant is no personal value at all; it is not the value for any particular individual. Thus, ICV violates the Person-Affecting View.

How can ICV be compatible with the Person-Affecting View, then? Hare might argue that we should understand interpersonal comparative value as the extent to

³⁷ Remember that Bader explicitly claims that the betterness ordering of outcomes “has to consist in *betterness facts for the members of the distributions*” (2022a: 260; emphasis added) and that Hare explicitly claims that “Mary makes things *de dicto worse for* the health of her future child” (Hare 2007: 515–516; emphasis added).

which an outcome is better for one individual than the alternative outcome in the *de dicto* rather than in the *de re* sense. While *de re* betterness for individuals picks out the betterness for a particular individual, *de dicto* betterness is concerned with the value relation between two outcomes for an individual under a general description that can be instantiated by different particular individuals who fit the description. The interpersonal comparative value would, therefore, be a personal value in the *de dicto* sense. We should accept that, Hare would argue, because we are sometimes morally concerned with *de dicto* betterness for individuals (rather than with *de re* betterness only). In particular, he claims that a safety officer who is in charge of regulating rules for safe driving must be concerned with how *de dicto* better the rules are for car accident victims, because the introduction of the rules changes which particular individuals have car accidents. And since this case shares the non-identity feature of non-identity cases (the decision changes the identity of the affected individuals), *de dicto* betterness would be morally significant in non-identity cases, too.³⁸

However, Hare's argument does not help ICV to get aligned with the Person-Affecting View. It does not yield personal value understood as value for a particular individual but only value of, as we might put it, a *general individual*. A general individual, however, is a set of possible individuals only one of whom is going to actually exist. It is not a particular individual.³⁹ The idea that the value of a general individual is personal, however, blurs the meaning of personal value. It is a rather obscure way to just say that interpersonal comparative value is the extent to which an outcome is better for one individual than the alternative outcome is for *another* individual, because the *de dicto* better for relation does not refer to one particular individual but to at least two. Or in other words: There is no betterness for any particular individual but only betterness for one rather than for another individual. Therefore, the *de dicto* construal of interpersonal comparative value is confronted with the very same objection and, thus, fails to align ICV with the Person-Affecting View.

One might claim that this is no problem for Hare's account. Even though interpersonal comparative value indeed refers to two particular individuals, the safety officer case would show that we are sometimes concerned with precisely that: the "personal" value of a general individual, or the "personal" value of one individual relative to another individual. Therefore, we should accept interpersonal comparative value to be morally significant in non-identity cases as well even if it does not align with the Person-Affecting View.

However, as David Boonin shows, the safety officer case is unconvincing. On the one hand, it is disanalogous to the non-identity cases. Car accident victims are harmed (in a counterfactual comparative sense) but non-identical individuals are not. Thus, even if the safety officer case would show that we are sometimes concerned with *de dicto* betterness, we cannot conclude that we should also be concerned with it in non-identity cases. On the other hand, we can explain the safety officer case by the fact that the overall harm (in a comparative counterfactual sense) done to car accident victims is morally significant: introducing a safety rule is morally better if the overall harm done to car accident victims is minimized. This explanation refers only to what

³⁸ Cf. Hare 2007: 515–520.

³⁹ Cf. Parfit 2011: 236 for a similar, but very brief objection along those lines.

is better or worse for particular individuals. Thus, there is no need for de dicto betterness to explain the safety officer case. Consequently, we have no reason to accept that de dicto betterness is morally significant in the first place.⁴⁰

Bader's account also seems to be subject to the objection that it does not align with the Person-Affecting View. He understands the betterness relation between two lives L_x and L_y as *personal* betterness relation. Consequently, the morally significant interpersonal comparative value seems to be the extent to which L_x is better than L_y . But since the lives are detached from the particular individuals' identities, x and y can be different individuals. Thus, in the non-identity case, the interpersonal comparative value would not be the value of any particular individual but of two individuals just in the same way as Hare's de dicto construal of interpersonal comparative value.

Bader's proposal might suggest a different construal of interpersonal comparative value. He claims that "the betterness ordering [...] has to consist in betterness facts for the members" but then specifies that "the evaluation of distributions has to be reducible to facts about personal good" (Bader 2022a: 260) – to personal *goodness* not personal *betterness*, that is. We might, therefore, understand the personal betterness relation in Bader's proposal as L_x is good for x to a greater extent than L_y is good for y . We could then construe interpersonal comparative value as the extent to which one outcome is more good (bad) for one individual than the alternative outcome is good (bad) for another individual. This construal is indeed *based* on personal value: One outcome is good (or bad) for an individual, and it is so to a larger extent than the alternative outcome is good (or bad) for another individual. The "good (or bad) for" relations are relative only to one individual, respectively.⁴¹ Hence, ICV construed in this way might seem to avoid the objection that it fails to provide personal value in non-identity cases.

However, it remains unclear in which sense the so understood *betterness* relation or the so understood interpersonal *comparative* value is still personal. For as soon as we invoke the comparative element according to which L_x is good for x to a *greater extent* than L_y is for y , we seem to fall back into the construal of interpersonal comparative value discussed above. The so understood interpersonal comparative value is not the value for any particular individual but only some value derived from the value for one individual relative to the value for some other individual. Therefore, even that alternative version of Bader's construal of interpersonal comparative value violates the Person-Affecting View.

Proponents of ICV might alternatively claim that they indeed accept absolute personal value as the morally significant personal value but restrict its moral significance to those cases in which the individual in question has a relevant counterpart in the compared outcomes. The idea would be that absolute personal value yields moral value only in those cases in which both values are defined, which is the case only if one individual exists in one outcome and that individual's counterpart exists in the

⁴⁰ Cf. Boonin 2014: 31–38.

⁴¹ I adopt this way of phrasing it from Parfit. He claims, for example, that one outcome would be in one way better than other outcome if it would be "less good for people, by benefiting people less than the other outcome would have benefited people" (Parfit 2017: 139), where benefits are understood as absolute rather than as comparative.

alternative outcome. While the resulting value is not comparative in a strict sense, it still invokes a comparative element insofar as the value depends on the existence of absolute personal value for the individual's counterpart in the compared outcome. In that way the construal would still redeem the claim that ICV avoids the Repugnant Conclusion.

The restriction, however, implies that, in different people choices, the morally significant personal value of a particular individual's welfare depends on facts about the existence of *other* individuals. Suppose that in one case, Happy exists in one outcome and Very Happy exists in the alternative outcome, but in another case Very Happy does not exist in the alternative outcome, everything else being equal. Happy's welfare would have moral value in the first case, but it would not in the second case. The difference is not reducible to any difference in Happy's welfare, neither in the first nor in the second outcome. In both cases, Happy exists in the first outcome and is well off and Happy does not exist in the second outcome. Therefore, the restriction implies that the moral value of Happy's welfare depends on something else than Happy's welfare. This, again, fits badly with the Person-Affecting View: The moral value of an individual's welfare would not only depend on the personal value for that individual, but also on the personal value for another individual. Therefore, we should reject the construal of ICV as a restricted version of the wide person-affecting view, too.

ICV is supposed to be person-affecting and comparative: the morally significant value must be value for someone, and it must be the extent to which one outcome is better than another outcome. However, ICV cannot fulfil this desideratum in non-identity cases. If ICV is meant to be understood as basing moral assessments on comparative value, that value cannot be personal in non-identity cases, because it would not be the value for any particular individual but merely of a general individual. This violates the Person-Affecting View. If, by contrast, the value was meant to be understood as personal, that value could not be comparative in non-identity cases but only absolute. This violates the Comparative View. Hence, either way, the value that is claimed to be morally significant – interpersonal comparative value – cannot be comparative *and* personal. In addition, by taking the latter route, proponents of ICV have to invoke a restriction on personal absolute value in order to avoid the Repugnant Conclusion. Yet, the restriction implies that some moral differences are due to other things than differences of the personal value of particular individuals. This, again, violates the Person-Affecting View. ICV is, therefore, no person-affecting view at all but merely *pseudo* person-affecting: it comes in the guise of the Person-Affecting View but, as I have argued, turns out to violate that view in non-identity cases.

7 Conclusion

In this paper, I have dealt with the merits and flaws of the Interpersonal Comparative View – the view that the extent to which an outcome O_1 is better (or worse) for an individual than another outcome O_2 is for the individual's relevant and potentially non-identical counterpart is morally significant. ICV solves the Non-Identity Problem by allowing personal comparative value to be conceived interpersonally. But, I argued, it does so only on pain of contradicting the intuitions that individual harms

and benefits are morally significant in themselves and that pareto-inferior outcomes are at least in one way morally worse. ICV avoids the Repugnant Conclusion by invoking a comparative element that considers an individual's welfare as morally relevant only if the individual can be mapped onto a counterpart in the alternative outcome. But that restriction renders ICV unable to solve the Problem of Contingent Individuals and, thus, fails to account for the moral value of the welfare of those future individuals that do not have counterparts in the alternative outcome. And ICV is claimed to align with the view that welfare has moral value insofar as it has personal value for the individual whose welfare it is, and that personal value is comparative in nature. However, in non-identity cases, ICV can assign moral significance only either to personal absolute value or to non-personal comparative value, but not to personal comparative value. Therefore, ICV does not stand with its alleged commitments.

The three objections should make us question how much of an advantage ICV actually is. It is supposed to provide a middle way between the narrow and the wide person-affecting views by considering personal comparative value as morally significant but allowing that value to be derived from interpersonal comparisons. However, by striking this middle, it cuts too many things along the way. ICV abandons the intuitions that underlie the narrow person-affecting view, obstructs the advantage of the wide person-affecting view to account for the welfare of all future individuals, and turns out to be pseudo person-affecting. Therefore, I conclude, we should reject ICV.

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