

## Abstract:

Within the past thirty years, there has been a steady growth of philosophical literature on well-being or welfare, variously described as what is good for, in the interest of, or of benefit to, a person. A cluster of issues has been the subject of heated debate, for example, what well-being ultimately consists in or the relationship between well-being and time. But what is perhaps the most fundamental issue regarding well-being, the question of just what the concept of well-being is, still remains unsettled. When we invoke the concept of well-being, what exactly is it that we are talking about? A failure to properly identify the concept of well-being can have dire consequences: it may turn out that many of the disputes about well-being are merely terminological—every philosopher’s nightmare. I want to focus on some of the methods that have recently been offered to help elucidate the concept of well-being. I will argue that none of these methods work because they do not elicit from us judgments about a single concept, but rather, two distinct concepts that can both plausibly be termed 'well-being'. As I will demonstrate, both concepts have been at work in the current philosophical literature and have generated much unnecessary confusion. My main task will be to provide an analysis of these two concepts by identifying their formal features, and determine which of the two is more fundamental to ethical theorizing.

## (I) Introduction

Many contemporary philosophers attest to well-being’s importance for moral theory.

According to Shelly Kagan:

The concept of well-being is one of the most central ideas in all of moral philosophy...Considerations of well-being also play a significant role in many accounts of the *foundations* of morality; indeed, on some accounts the entire point of morality is to ameliorate the human condition, that is, to improve the overall level of well-being.<sup>1</sup>

So Christopher Heathwood:

---

<sup>1</sup> Kagan 1994: 309. L.W. Sumner is one of the philosophers who endorse welfarism, the view that the fundamental reasons for action bottom out in considerations of well-being.

It hardly needs arguing that the question of what makes a person's life go well [i.e. well-being] is important. First, the question is just inherently interesting, and worth studying in its own right, even if answering it were relevant to no other important questions. It also has obvious practical implications: most of us want to get a good life, and knowing what one is might help us get one. Aside from these direct reasons to be interested, our topic is relevant to many of the most important questions we as people face. Most obviously, it is relevant to our moral obligations.<sup>2</sup>

And so L.W. Sumner:

The centrality of welfare in ethics has long been recognized by moral philosophers. It is difficult to think of any major ethical theory which does not assign an important role to protecting the interests of some favoured set of welfare subjects.<sup>3</sup>

Few would dispute their claims that the concept of well-being plays an important role in moral philosophy. Nevertheless, the exact nature of the concept of well-being (or welfare) remains unclear.<sup>4</sup> When we invoke the notion of well-being or discuss how well someone's life is going, what exactly is it that we are talking about? There is general agreement that well-being is a concept that carries great normative significance, and that it pertains to a distinctive kind of value, the value connected to what is good for a person, often labeled 'prudential value,' that our lives

---

<sup>2</sup> Heathwood 2012: 2.

<sup>3</sup> Sumner 1996: 3.

<sup>4</sup> Although I acknowledge a subtle difference in ordinary usage between the terms 'well-being' and 'welfare', in this paper I will follow standard philosophical terminology and use them interchangeably.

can or can fail to exemplify.<sup>5</sup> Prudential or well-being value, according to these accounts, should be sharply distinguished from other kinds of values, e.g. moral value, perfectionist value, or aesthetic value. According to many contemporary philosophers, a life can be morally good or aesthetically good without being (non-instrumentally) good for the individual, that is to say, good from the perspective of the individual's welfare.<sup>6</sup> So to say that well-being concerns what makes a person's life go well is on these accounts ambiguous. For in order to answer the question: "Did X's life go well?" we need the person asking the question to distinguish between different ways of going well. "Well in what way? Prudentially, morally, or aesthetically?" How do we, then, make sure that our discussions of 'well-being' concern a single subject matter? Daniel Haybron has recently noted that the disagreement between Aristotelian objectivists and contemporary subjectivist theorists about well-being may be merely terminological: "we should not be surprised, then, that Aristotelians and their critics, notably subjectivists about well-being, so often seem to end up talking past each other, and that they frequently regard each others' views with bafflement, if not outright contempt."<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Some philosophers may find the use of the term "prudential value" misleading. Note that I'm only using it to go along with what has become standard terminology.

<sup>6</sup> Such philosophers include Sumner 1996: 20-25, Heathwood 2005: 500, Feldman 2010: 164.

Here and throughout this paper, whenever I use the phrase "good for" or "beneficial for" I always mean to refer to what is intrinsically or non-instrumentally good for or beneficial for a subject.

<sup>7</sup> Haybron 2008: 21. Daniel Haybron also draws a distinction between the good life and well-being which in many ways corresponds to the distinction that I make in this paper. The difference is that Haybron regards the concept of 'well-being' which is more closely related to the narrow sense of well-being that I discuss below, as an important subcategory of the good life, while I do not believe that the narrow concept of well-being carries as much normative significance as he seems to think. A related distinction can also be found in Kagan 1994.

Haybron's comment suggests the possibility of some serious confusion at work in the philosophical literature on welfare and the need for a cogent diagnosis. We need to get back to basics and clarify our understanding of the very notion of well-being. I want to contribute to this process by examining the most widely discussed methods that have been offered to help isolate the concept of well-being. My attention will be on two kinds of methods: test-based strategies and triangulation. Although these methods upon examination turn out to be unsuccessful, their failures reveal an important fact about the nature of our discussions concerning what we call 'well-being', namely, that there is more than one underlying notion. The structure of the paper will be as follows. I will begin by discussing and analyzing two frequently discussed examples of test-based strategies. Then, I will discuss and analyze the method of triangulation as it applies to the concept of well-being. I will argue that both of these methods fail to help us identify the concept well-being, but that this failure is due to the ambiguity of 'well-being'. There are, I will argue, two concepts that lie behind the term 'well-being': the concept of 'narrow well-being' and the concept of 'wide well-being'. Because we cannot determine which of these two concepts the methods elicit from us, they do not provide much guidance in helping us clarify a single concept of well-being. As I will show, contemporary philosophers have not adequately distinguished these two concepts, resulting in pseudo-disagreements rather than substantive disputes. Of course, distinguishing these two concepts will leave untouched most of the deep and difficult questions concerning the nature of well-being. Our discussion will give rise to new, important questions: are both concepts equally useful for ethical theorizing? Is one concept more useful or fundamental than the other? My contention will be that although the concept of wide well-being has been less discussed by contemporary philosophers than the narrow concept of well-being, the wide concept of well-being carries greater normative significance and better satisfies the roles

that we believe well-being ought to occupy in our ethical theories. In addition, by centering our attention on the wide concept of welfare, we can preserve what at least appear to be genuine, substantive disagreements among different competing accounts of well-being. More will be said about both points below.

## (II) Test-Based Strategies

### *(a) The Sympathy Test*

Brad Hooker has offered what he calls the Sympathy Test to help us clarify the concept of well-being by providing a way of identifying well-being's fundamental components. Although the Sympathy Test does not help us directly identify the formal features of the concept of welfare, it will (if successful) help identify the extensions of the concept. The test is based on the fairly intuitive idea that when we feel sorry for someone because of some feature of her life, e.g. the loss of some good or the experience of crippling pain, we see that feature as detrimental to her well-being. Imagining that a close friend just told you that his wife had been killed in a tragic car accident, you would feel quite sorry for him because you believe that he suffered a tremendous loss; loving relationships, you think, are a constituent of welfare. In this case, the Sympathy Test appears to successfully identify a fundamental component of welfare. We may now begin with the following formulation for the Sympathy Test:

*Sympathy Test* (ST): X is a fundamental component of well-being iff reflecting upon the fact that Y lacks X gives rise to a sympathetic response toward Y.

While (ST) isn't wholly without merit, there are at least four problems with it. The first is that what Y lacks may merely be instrumentally connected to well-being.<sup>8</sup> For example, we may come to feel sorry for Smith upon learning that all his savings had been wiped out by the recent recession. So, according to (ST), money is a fundamental component of well-being. But contrary to what (ST) seems to suggest, we should not think that money is a fundamental component of well-being. This is because wealth, whatever importance it may have for our lives, is still only a non-intrinsic good carrying only instrumental value.<sup>9</sup> So (ST) suffers by extending too widely; our sympathy can be triggered by the perceived loss of goods that are only instrumentally good for us.

The second problem is that reflecting upon the fact that Y lacks X may not trigger sympathy even though X is a fundamental component of well-being. One possibility is that Y's life is already too rich for our sympathy to be triggered. Take, for example, a case involving the life of someone with no genuine friendships. Let us call him Friendless. Although Friendless lacks what most of us take to be a constituent of well-being, along every other dimension of welfare, his life ranks extremely high. All his desires are satisfied to a maximal degree, and he is truly content and happy living his solitary life. Although his life is missing the distinctive pleasure that arises from deep friendships, his life is rich in other pleasures: he eats scrumptious meals, enjoys long walks around his beautiful garden, and watches the sun go down every evening in his magnificent beach-side condo. We may still, of course, feel that Friendless' life

---

<sup>8</sup> I thank \_\_\_\_\_ for bringing this objection to my attention.

<sup>9</sup> This doesn't mean that one cannot come to value wealth or other merely instrumental goods as non-instrumentally good. J.S. Mill discusses how we can come to psychologically desire goods that were initially desired only for their instrumental value as intrinsically desirable. See Mill, 1998: Ch.4.

would be enhanced by genuine friendships since many of us believe that friendship is a fundamental component of welfare. But most, I think, would not feel sympathy for Friendless. Because of all the other ways in which his life is going well, his life just doesn't seem to merit that kind of response, even if we do think that he is missing out on a fundamental component of well-being. It is possible, of course, that there may be some who take friendships to be such a crucial aspect of well-being that they do feel sorry for Friendless. This brings us to our third problem.

Whether or not a sympathetic response is generated will vary too widely since such responses are closely bound up with the character and values of the evaluating agent. With regard to character, we need to note that the degree to which one feels sympathy depends on the level of one's sympathetic capacity. While there are those who find themselves quite easily aroused by sympathy at the perception of even fairly minor pains, there are those who find themselves unmoved by even what most would consider intense suffering. I think one way to help resolve this problem might be to refine (ST) so that it is indexed to only those subjects who have a properly developed capacity for sympathy. So the Revised Sympathy Test (RST):

Revised Sympathy Test (RST): X is a fundamental component of well-being iff when S, an ideal sympathetic agent, reflects upon the fact that Y lacks X, S feels sympathetic toward Y.

(RST) may, however, generate a circularity worry since it could seem that what makes a sympathetic agent ideal will have to be analyzed in terms of the disposition to produce a sympathetic response in cases that involve a genuine loss of welfare. Now we could just claim that what makes a sympathetic agent ideal is that the agent possesses a developed psychological

capacity to feel sympathy where we leave the details of having a *developed* sympathetic capacity to the psychologist.<sup>10</sup> But whether or not the circularity worry is avoided, it is not clear if different ideal sympathetic agents will share sympathetic responses across different cases. One important cause for possible differences in the reaction of even ideal sympathetic agents is differences in their values.<sup>11</sup> Besides character traits such as sympathetic disposition, the values of an agent can also heavily influence the outcome of the Sympathy Test. Reflecting back on the case of Friendless, those who prefer isolation over companionship may not feel sympathy for Friendless, but those who not only find friendship essential, but highly important for well-being may very well feel sorry for Friendless. One's response to Friendless' situation depends on the degree of value placed on friendships. Moreover, it's plausible to think that this fact generalizes to other goods and values as well. Although most of us (albeit to varying degrees) think pleasure is intrinsically valuable, and would feel sorry for someone who rarely experienced pleasure, an ascetic who believes that pleasure is not intrinsically valuable may not feel sorry for such a person at all.

I think all three problems are enough to generate sufficient doubt about the usefulness of both (ST) and (UST). But there is also an additional difficulty that really makes this sort of test problematic; it does not elicit from us judgments about a single concept. To illustrate this point it

---

<sup>10</sup> We can imagine psychologists coming up with a set of empirically verifiable criteria that allows us to determine if an agent is more or less sympathetically attuned to the suffering of others.

<sup>11</sup> Now one could at this point revise (ST) to also require that the sympathizing agent not only be ideal sympathizers but also ideal valuers. But not only would such a move seem to make (ST) theoretically useless, the very notion of "ideal valuers" will confront much skepticism.



will be helpful to focus on Hooker's own discussion of the Sympathy Test as applied to moral virtue:

Suppose Upright and Unscrupulous have lives maximally full of (exactly equal amounts of) pleasure. Upright's life contains some moral pleasure unavailable to any immoral person, such as Unscrupulous; and Unscrupulous's life has some pleasure unavailable to any morally good person, such as Upright. Suppose also that both Unscrupulous and Upright have lives maximally full of (exactly the same amounts of) knowledge of important matters, friendship, autonomy, and the appreciation of beauty. And let us suppose their lives full of exactly the same amount of each of the list's goods—with the disputed exception of having led a morally virtuous life.<sup>12</sup>

Hooker claims that when we reflect upon these two lives that seem to be going equally well, with the exception of the disputed moral value, we don't feel sorrier for Unscrupulous than Upright. But since moral virtue was the only differentiating value between Upright and Unscrupulous, it looks like moral virtue is not a fundamental category of welfare.

But not everybody will share Hooker's judgment about Unscrupulous. As Hooker admits, there will be some who do see moral virtue as a fundamental component of well-being and so may very well feel sorry for Unscrupulous. Even those who have acknowledged some of the merits of the Sympathy Test have taken this possibility as providing a decisive reason to treat the test as an unreliable guide for clarifying the concept of welfare. According to Fred Feldman, the fact that those who are very keen on the moral virtues may feel sympathy for Unscrupulous

---

<sup>12</sup> Hooker 1998: 151-152.

shows us that the Sympathy Test does not help us isolate the concept of well-being, since it may identify moral value instead.<sup>13</sup> But in response, one could question why it couldn't be the case that those who do find themselves feeling sympathy for Unscrupulous have the well-being of Unscrupulous in mind. Why couldn't it be that the diverging judgment is due to different *conceptions* of well-being and that the Sympathy Test does successfully isolate the concept of well-being, but reveal that there may be diverging substantive accounts of well-being?

Many contemporary philosophers, such as Feldman, deny that this is a possibility because of the very nature of the concept of well-being. According to these philosophers, one of the fundamental features of the concept of welfare is that it pertains to a value that is wholly separate from moral value. That's just a simple, brute fact about the kind of concept we are interested in. Christopher Heathwood also takes this line: "I do distinguish a life rich in personal welfare from lives rich in virtue, excellence, dignity, achievement, aesthetic value, etc. But this is standard practice; many writers on well-being do precisely the same thing when characterizing their subject matter for their readers."<sup>14</sup> Heathwood's comment helps to reveal why Aristotelian

---

<sup>13</sup> Feldman 2010: 164.

<sup>14</sup> Heathwood 2005: 500. That Heathwood invokes a concept well-being that conceptually excludes other dimensions of value from its domain is supported by a number of other statements:

For example, perhaps there is a necessary connection between bestiality and low dignity. If so, then we do have a case of an intrinsically defective desire, but not one whose defects contaminate welfare. We therefore need a distinction among types of intrinsically defective desire—there are those that are welfare-defective, virtue-defective, dignity-defective, and achievement-defective. (There may be others for any additional scales on which life can be ranked.) The lesson is that the Moorean argument must find an intrinsically welfare-defective desire, not merely an intrinsically defective desire... (Heathwood 2005: 497-498)

objectivists and contemporary subjectivists about well-being seemed to, as Haybron notes, “frequently regard each others’ views with bafflement.” For the term “well-being” is used by many prominent contemporary philosophers to refer to a narrow, non-moral concept, whereas Aristotelian objectivists understand “well-being” as referring to a concept closer to *eudaimonia*, a concept that embraces a wider range of values than the narrower concept, and allows for the conceptual possibility of moral value to be one of its constitutive elements.

We need to distinguish between the broader concept of well-being that possibly encompasses a wider range of values (e.g. virtue or dignity) and the narrower concept of well-being that Feldman and Heathwood have in mind. Let us call the narrow concept, ‘narrow well-being’ and the broader concept, ‘wide well-being’. A more thorough analysis of both concepts will be offered in due course, but let us for now roughly characterize the concept of wide well-being as referring to the realization and integration of all of the positive values that can enrich a person’s life, and the concept of narrow well-being as referring to a non-moral concept that stands independent of values such as achievement or excellence. Both concepts have been the object of attention by different philosophers working on “well-being”, and unfortunately, have not always been separated clearly. My hope is that this paper will provide the necessary groundwork for making this distinction clear and draw attention to its importance so that we may avoid merely terminological disputes.

---

For excellence is a scale on which a life can be measured that is distinct from the welfare scale.

The grass counter’s life lacks engagement in the excellent, and is all the worse for it, but this is not to say that its well-being is damaged. (Heathwood 2005: 499)

Besides Feldman, Heathwood cites a number of philosophers who also endorse this view: Griffin 1986: 23; Sumner 1996: 20-25; Crisp 2001.

So one important reason why the Sympathy Test fails is that it isn't clear whether the sympathetic responses help us identify the fundamental components of narrow well-being or wide well-being. Some, like those who find themselves sorry for Unscrupulous will be employing the notion of wide well-being whereas those who find no sympathy for Unscrupulous could have in mind the concept of either narrow or wide well-being.

*(b) The Crib Test*

Another example of the test-based strategy used to clarify prudential value is what Fred Feldman calls the "Crib Test":

We might say that welfare is the type of value that a loving parent has in mind when she looks into the crib at her newborn innocent child and hopes that he will have a "good life." The idea here is that when the loving parent thinks of a "good life" for her child, she is thinking of a life high in welfare.<sup>15</sup>

Although the Crib Test looks plausible, it has been much criticized in recent years. One objection is that there can be insane or fanatical parents who may want what is clearly bad for their children by projecting on to them their own idiosyncratic desires and beliefs.<sup>16</sup> A way to help avoid this result is to emphasize that a proper application of the Crib Test requires imagining oneself as the loving parent, from the perspective of love, reflecting on the future life of the child. If, for example, the parent wanted the child to become a powerful dictator, just so that the child can carry out all the fantasies that the parent was not able to realize, there would be a reason to suspect that the parent wasn't thinking from the perspective love, since the perspective of love

---

<sup>15</sup> Feldman 2010: 164.

<sup>16</sup> See Bradley 2009: 3.

requires caring about what would be best for the child for child's own sake. The perspective of love requires that the one who loves perceives the condition of the beloved as important in itself and not because of other ends that may be instrumentally served by bringing about that condition. As long as we make sure that it is the perspective of love that is at work, I think we have good reason to think of the Crib Test as eliciting our judgments about well-being. Of course, it may turn out that the parent really does believe that the life of a powerful dictator is the best life for the child. While such a possibility shows us that the Crib Test is not an infallible guide for identifying the fundamental components of well-being, it doesn't *ipso facto* falsify the claim that the Crib Test is a reliable guide for clarifying our understanding of what constitutes welfare.

The more common objection to the Crib Test is that it fails to track the concept of well-being since what a loving parent often wants is for the child to become a morally good human being and so identifies moral value rather than welfare value.<sup>17</sup> Feldman raises this objection:

Suppose the loving parent utters a prayer: 'Please, God, allow my beloved child to have a good life.' Suppose that an emissary from God then appears to the mother and says that he can arrange to have the prayer answered, but first he needs some clarification. 'Your prayer is somewhat ambiguous. Are you just praying that the child has a life high in welfare?—that things go well for him in terms of prudential value? Or are you praying that the child has a life high in moral value?—that he leads a thoroughly virtuous life? The problem is that we cannot arrange for both. If we give him a life of high welfare, he will have to be somewhat immoral. If he is perfectly virtuous, his welfare will suffer. Which were

---

<sup>17</sup> See Bradley 2009: 2 and Feldman 2011: 164-170.

you praying for?’ Surely the loving mother might say that she had been praying for the morally good life. Thus the appeal to the crib-side prayers of a loving parent may not succeed in isolating the concept of welfare.<sup>18</sup>

As in the Sympathy Test, an initial reaction to Feldman’s analysis might be to wonder why the loving parent couldn’t have wanted her child to be morally good *because* she thinks that moral goodness is a constituent of welfare. Along these lines, a possible response to the emissary could have been: “I wanted my child to have the life that was best for her, which I took to involve both being as morally good as possible and other things besides that are good for her” and then go on to lament the fact that all the goods cannot be integrated into a single life.

The reason why Feldman doesn’t, and couldn’t, consider this possibility is because he assumes the narrow concept of well-being.<sup>19</sup> If the loving mother really responded in this way Feldman would claim that she doesn’t have in mind the concept of well-being, but a different concept. But it’s clear, I think, that a loving mother could want a virtuous life for her child because she believes that moral goodness is a constituent of well-being. So it looks like the Crib Test may elicit from us our intuitions not about narrow well-being, but about wide well-being.<sup>20</sup> Of course, which values or goods are thought to be constituents of wide well-being will depend

---

<sup>18</sup> Feldman 2010: 164.

<sup>19</sup> This also appears to be true of Ben Bradley as well: “What we want for our children is not merely that they be well-off. Usually we also want them to be good people, to do the right thing, and to make a positive impact on the world. It is not clear that these desires can be explained by appeal to our desire that our children be well-off.” (Bradley 2009: 2)

<sup>20</sup> See Robert Adams 1999:97 and Aaron Smuts 2012. Philippa Foot also expresses a thought that is closely related in Foot 2001: 85-86.

on the individual parent's substantive beliefs. The Crib Test in no way settles which values are constitutive of wide well-being—it's just a heuristic device. So the Crib Test, just like the Sympathy Test, is ambiguous since it may elicit from us judgments about either narrow or wide well-being.

Although the ambiguity between the two concepts of well-being does pose a problem for the Crib Test, I believe that we have some reason for thinking that the Crib Test can be a reliable guide in helping us clarify the concept of wide well-being. This is because I think that the majority of those responding to the Crib Test will want their child to exemplify a much broader range of positive values, including moral virtue, than the narrow concept allows. There may, of course, be some who do not want their child to lead morally good lives. But I think we need to first make sure that such a judgment isn't the result of an improper understanding of the Crib Test. What we are after in the Crib Test is a judgment about what the ideal life for a child would be, given non-defective circumstances. The parent reflecting upon the Crib Test should not *assume* that a morally good life *must* imply the sacrifice of other important components of well-being.<sup>21</sup> For a proper application of the Crib Test we need to make sure that the parent is not presupposing that a life that contains the goods that constitute narrow well-being must be incompatible with values such as moral goodness or achievement. The question that is being posed is whether or not *given* the choice to have one's child realize narrow well-being and other kinds of values such as moral goodness, one would, as a loving parent, want only narrow well-being or a broader range of goods for the child.

---

<sup>21</sup> Of course many philosophers do believe that morality and self-interest do conflict. But the question here is about whether or not morality and self-interest *must* conflict, in the sense that it is not even conceptually possible for a morally good life to overlap with the life that is high in welfare.

One difference between the Sympathy Test and the Crib Test is that the Crib Test operates from a longer-term perspective, one that reflects upon a subject's life as a whole, whereas the Sympathy Test tends to focus more directly on (the loss of) a particular good in a person's life.<sup>22</sup> This difference may partially explain why the Sympathy Test is more likely to elicit judgments about narrow well-being. The narrow concept of well-being, by being limited to a narrower range of goods that are more closely related to a person's mental state, is what plays a larger role when it comes to more short term, immediate assessment about how well a person's life is going. The concept of wide well-being, on the other hand, which embraces a wider range of values and concerns, will tend to be connected to our evaluative assessments of lives from a more diachronic, reflective point of view, that takes into consideration not only how pleasurable or subjectively satisfied our lives are "from the inside" but also whether or not our lives possess worth, dignity, achievement, or moral goodness. These points are reflected in the fact that while we tend to think of other-regarding actions, say, taking care of our aging parents, as involving the sacrifice of our own interests, we can also think of such actions as also, on the whole, good for us by making our lives more fulfilling and meaningful.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Of course, we could apply the Sympathy Test from a more global perspective by reflecting upon a person's life as a whole and asking whether or not we feel sympathy for the person. But I think that even in such scenarios our minds would tend to focus on the loss of goods that affect the agent on a more local level. Additionally, if sympathy is psychologically connected to empathy (which involves taking on the perspective of another) which we have some reasons to believe, then the evaluating agent in the Sympathy Test would also naturally be more sensitive to the evaluated subject's mental states.

<sup>23</sup> Some philosophers will want to claim that meaningfulness is a value that lies outside the domain of well-being. But as I will argue, if we take well-being in the wider sense, it is intelligible to think of one's well-being as being



Let us now turn to our last method, offered by Fred Feldman, the method of triangulation. Since Feldman endorses triangulation while rejecting both the Sympathy Test and the Crib Test, it will be worth the effort to see what triangulation has to offer.

### (III) Triangulation

While Fred Feldman ultimately rejects both the Sympathy Test and the Crib Test as adequate methods for identifying the concept of well-being, he does think that a different method, the method of triangulation, holds more hope. The method of triangulation aims to clarify our understanding of a particular concept by connecting it to other relevant concepts. The idea is that by taking a range of distinct but related concepts and linking them to the concept of welfare, we can build a network of interrelated concepts that clarifies our understanding of the concept of welfare. This network analysis of concepts does not get us to a definition of the concept of well-being, but does, Feldman hopes, allow us to obtain a more solid understanding of what kind of concept we have in mind. Moreover, triangulation is a method that has also enjoyed success within other areas of philosophy as well. Alvin Plantinga, for example, has proposed that although we may not be able to come up with strict definitions of such modal concepts as necessity or possibility, we may obtain a clearer grasp of them through a network analysis of concepts.<sup>24</sup> By invoking other concepts that are distinct from the concept of necessity but are analytically linked to it, e.g. the concept of possible worlds, we may also get a better handle on the concept of necessity. One of the benefits of triangulation is that it also allows us to develop a

---

enhanced by greater meaning. It seems plausible that such a value, by enriching a person's life and providing a source of reasons for action, do advance a person's interest or good.

<sup>24</sup> Plantinga 1974: Ch.1.

better sense of what kind of role a concept might play within our theoretical framework, and consequently, a deeper understanding of how useful or important it may be within the overarching structure of a theory.

Feldman lists many concepts that he believes to be tightly connected to the concept of well-being including benefit, harm, self-interest, gratitude, altruism, and quality of life. Take the concepts of benefit and harm. On one extremely plausible understanding, when we benefit a person we affect that person's well-being positively, and when we harm a person we affect that person's well-being negatively. So by having a grasp of the concepts of benefit and harm, it looks like we can also gain some traction for the concept of well-being as well; well-being is that aspect of a person's life that is affected whenever she is benefited or harmed.

Unfortunately, I think the method of triangulation also suffers from the same ambiguity that afflicted both the Sympathy Test and the Crib Test. The problem is that each of the other terms that are conceptually connected to the concept of welfare may also represent either the concept of narrow or wide well-being. Instead of demonstrating this by examining each term that Feldman invokes, let's take the two terms that seem to bear the tightest relationship to the notion of welfare: benefit and harm.

On one hand, the terms 'benefit' and 'harm' admit of a usage that seems connected to the concept of narrow well-being. We speak, for example, of the benefits of working for a company or of the ways a person was harmed by the recent recession—economic or material good.<sup>25</sup> We also speak of the harmful effects of smoking and overeating, and the benefits of daily exercise—physical health, as well as the benefits of morning meditations and the harm generated by stress

---

<sup>25</sup> Of course, economic or material goods in these context are often thought to be instrumentally connected to narrow well-being, by being connected to positive psychological states such as security, comfort, and pleasure.

and anxiety—psychological health. When we invoke the notions of benefit and harm in these contexts, we are commonly referring to our narrow well-being.

On the other hand, we can think of the concepts of benefit and harm as being connected to values such as virtue or dignity. Starting with the concept of benefit, it seems plausible that one of the ways in which we can benefit children is by providing them with an adequate moral education so that they become good, decent human beings. Here the concept of gratitude, which Feldman also sees as linked to the concept of welfare, is relevant. When you are grateful to someone, you see that person as having intentionally provided a benefit to you, i.e., as having improved your well-being. And one of the reasons why we might be grateful to our parents or teachers is because they helped us to develop what we take to be the right moral values. However, I think that if we imagine a child being indoctrinated into upholding the malicious values of a nastily oppressive regime, many of us would think of such an event as being directly harmful to the child. The content of benefit and harm is not restricted to just one's material, physical, or psychological states, but can also cover character and values. Philippa Foot seems to understand the concept of benefit in this way:

For suppose that we think of some really wicked persons such as the serial killers Frederick and Rosemary West, who did not even spare their own children in their career of abuse and murder. For many years they were able to act out their sexual fantasies free from detection, and might well have continued to do so to the end of their natural lives. What then would it have been right to say about the contribution of those whose behavior made this kind of thing possible? Would they have *benefited* the horrible Wests? It seems to me that in our natural refusal to say so we glimpse a conceptual truth that does not usually lie so clearly on the

surface. And that if the usual conceptual connections hold here, as they surely do, between benefit and what is for someone's good, what has come to the surface is also about that.<sup>26</sup>

While there are those, like Foot, who would refuse to claim that one would have benefited the Wests by helping them fulfill their malicious desires, I don't believe that this judgment will be shared by all. We can imagine the following reply: "*Of course* the Wests would have been benefited by contributing to the satisfaction of their desires. Although we may want to condemn their ends from the moral point of view, *they* certainly found much fun and enjoyment in carrying out their heinous deeds." The intelligibility of such a reply suggests that there are also two possible senses of 'benefit' corresponding to the two senses of well-being—a narrow and wide sense. Those who would reply to Foot's comments in the way that our imagined interlocutor did may have in mind the concept of narrow benefit whereas those who share the judgment of Foot is probably employing the concept of wide benefit. Since the concepts of benefit and harm, which seem as tightly connected to the concept of welfare as any of the other concepts listed by Feldman carries the same ambiguity as the notion of 'well-being', the method of triangulation cannot be taken as a reliable guide for helping us clarify the concept of welfare.

When it comes to the way we ordinarily use the terms 'well-being', 'welfare', or 'good for', we often use them to refer to a range of goods that are connected to positive mental or physical states. Often, we ask questions like "how is she doing?" and receive the reply, "she is doing well" we often have in mind the person's psychological state. This is at least in part a

---

<sup>26</sup> Foot 2001: 94. Although Foot's discussion is about the relationship between *happiness* and the human good, she carefully distinguishes among the different senses of happiness. The sense of happiness she is identifying in this passage is, I believe, close to the concept of wide well-being.

result of our modern tendency to measure how well our lives are going in terms of happiness, broadly understood as positive emotional states. We do also use these terms to refer to physical health as well, but that is due to the tight instrumental correlation between physical health and positive psychological states. The reason why most people value physical health is because a malfunctioning body is often correlated with pain and is associated with negative mental states. Since just about all of us take our physical and psychological health quite seriously, such considerations can provide us with a fairly uncontroversial way of measuring our well-being. Once we begin thinking of values such as virtue or dignity as components of well-being, measuring welfare becomes much more difficult. Since the physical and psychological goods, or rather, the lack of such goods, have a more direct and immediate impact on our lives, we naturally begin to develop the tendency to think of our well-being as being solely constituted by these items. So the concept of narrow well-being is not a formal notion, but, rather, a substantive one; its meaning and content is derived largely from the substantive conceptions of well-being that is generally endorsed by the linguistic community.<sup>27</sup> And since this is the way in which the term ‘well-being’ or ‘welfare’ is so often used, it is no wonder that many philosophers have construed the concept of well-being in the narrow sense.

So one of the features of the concept of narrow well-being is that it is inseparable from a substantive understanding of what constitutes well-being, which I have roughly postulated as

---

<sup>27</sup> One fact that supports this view is that in many other academic areas such as psychology, the terms ‘well-being’ or ‘welfare’ almost always refers to positive psychic states or goods that are instrumentally connected to such states.

positive psychological states connected to happiness.<sup>28</sup> This is perhaps why those philosophers that appear to identify the concept of narrow well-being as their subject of investigation all provide some form of a mental state theory that makes well-being either solely or primarily constituted by positive mental states such as pleasure or happiness.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> This doesn't mean that we cannot investigate the nature of narrow well-being since philosophers may give different accounts of what such positive mental states ultimately consists in, e.g. pleasure, subjective desire-fulfillment, happiness, etc.

<sup>29</sup> Christopher Heathwood defends a desire-cum-pleasure theory of well-being in which well-being is constituted by pleasure which just is the subjective satisfaction of desire. (Heathwood 2006) Fred Feldman upholds a form of hedonism which he calls "attitudinal hedonism". (Feldman 2010) L.W. Sumner takes well-being as "authentic happiness" which differs from hedonism by taking authenticity, which requires information and autonomy, as a necessary ingredient of well-being. (Sumner 1996: Ch.6)

One interesting but complicated question is how desire-fulfillment theory fits into the distinction between narrow and wide well-being. Desire-fulfillment theory, if considered as a "state-of-world" rather than "state-of-mind" theory, implies that no change in an agent's mental state is necessary for the advancement of her well-being. So, it looks like those who defend a desire-fulfillment theory will be defending an account of wide well-being. But the issue is more difficult since many philosophers think that there is a deep connection between desire and pleasure. (See Heathwood 2006, 2007.) So whether or not desire-fulfillment theory can be viewed as an account of narrow well-being (for certainly it can be a possible account of wide well-being) depends on how closely one believes that desires and pleasures are related. Those, like Christopher Heathwood, who believe desire-fulfillment theory and hedonism collapse into a single theory may be providing an account of narrow well-being. But a strict desire-fulfillment theorist who does not believe in any deep connections between pleasure and desire will, I think, be articulating a view about wide well-being. But since the welfare theorists that I have suggested are discussing the concept of narrow well-being all accept some form of hedonism or happiness theory, not fully resolving this issue should not affect the central claims of this paper.

By contrast, the concept of wide well-being is a formal, rather than a substantive, notion. It leaves conceptual space for disagreements about what constitutes well-being—whether welfare ultimately consists in pleasure, desire-fulfillment, achievement, dignity, self-respect, moral virtue, some other good, or perhaps a subset of these goods. So while concept of narrow well-being cannot but be characterized subjectively, the concept of wide well-being embraces neither subjectivism or objectivism about well-being since it leaves open whether subjective or objective values or goods are constitutive of well-being.

The concept of wide well-being is less commonly used within ordinary discourse because it takes up a much broader range of goods and values than is permitted by the concept of narrow well-being. It is more often employed in deliberating about choices that will have more significant, longer-term impact on a person's life. One's choice of occupation or the choice of whom to marry can both naturally elicit from us considerations that seem more properly to belong to our wide well-being—concerns having to do with values that extend outside of the boundaries of narrow well-being such as friendship, accomplishment, and self-respect.

#### (IV) Choosing Between the Two Concepts of Well-Being

Having distinguished the two concepts of well-being let us now examine whether one concept is more theoretically fundamental or useful than the other. Discovering that one concept fits the theoretical role carved out for well-being better than the other may not only be useful for our ethical theorizing, but could also help clear up some long-standing debates in the welfare literature.

To help determine which of the two concepts, the narrow and the wide, we should prefer in our discussions of the philosophy of well-being, I think it is worth turning toward some of the recent developments concerning the classification of welfare theories. If one concept better accommodates the taxonomies that philosophers have proposed for categorizing the various accounts of well-being, assuming that the taxonomies are reasonably accurate, that fact would provide at least one powerful reason for favoring it over the other.

Ever since Parfit's famous proposal for classifying accounts of well-being, theories of well-being have been divided into three categories: hedonism, desire-fulfillment theory, and objective list theory.<sup>30</sup> Since then, the welfare landscape has become more complex, with the introduction of new, sophisticated theories, that do not neatly fall into any of the three traditional categories.<sup>31</sup> Recently, some philosophers have employed Roger Crisp's distinction between *enumerative* and *explanatory* theories of welfare with the aim of developing a less procrustean, more comprehensive taxonomy.<sup>32</sup> Enumerative theories of well-being are theories that provide us with a list of ingredients that are intrinsically good for us. Objective list theories, for example, are paradigmatically enumerative theories since they provide us with a list of items that advance our welfare. Explanatory theories of well-being are theories that provide an explanation for *why* some good, value, or state of affairs is good for us. So perfectionism (or nature-fulfillment) about well-being is an explanatory theory of welfare since it claims that the reason why, say, pleasure

---

<sup>30</sup> Parfit 1984: 493.

<sup>31</sup> The discussion below is far from an exhaustive discussion of all of the different taxonomies that have been offered by philosophers. Mark Murphy, for example, offers a different way of categorizing the various theories of well-being by distinguishing different dimensions along which a theory can be subjective or objective. See Murphy 2001: 46-48.

<sup>32</sup> See Woodard 2012 and Fletcher, *Utilitas*, forthcoming.



or virtue are good for us is *because* they develop or fulfill our essential capacities as human beings.

While the distinction between enumerative and explanatory theories is helpful, its application is not always clear. For example, is hedonism an enumerative or explanatory theory? On one hand, it looks like it should be counted as an enumerative theory, with just a single item on the list: pleasure. On the other hand, it looks like it could also be counted as an explanatory theory since it can help explain why a state of affairs is good for us, namely, that it provides us with pleasure or enjoyment. Both Chris Woodard and Guy Fletcher claim that hedonism should be classified as an enumerative theory rather than an explanatory theory. Unfortunately, they do not seem to provide any positive argument for this move and to my mind it looks quite plausible that hedonism can also count as an explanatory theory of well-being; a state of affairs is good for us because it brings us pleasure.<sup>33</sup> But providing a thorough analysis of the proposed taxonomies of Woodard and Fletcher is outside our scope. What is important for our purposes is how these taxonomies are related to the two concepts of well-being that are the focus of this paper.

Both Fletcher and Woodard offer taxonomies that are designed to leave wide open questions regarding what kinds of goods or values are non-instrumentally good for us. Woodard, for example, offers a category of enumerative theories that reject both the *experience*

---

<sup>33</sup> Fletcher does argue that hedonism and objective-list theory do not have deep differences and so should not be categorized differently. But while he successfully argues against some of those distinctions that philosophers have made to separate hedonism from objective-list theory, they do not show that hedonism cannot be an explanatory theory of welfare. He does, however, believe that a theory of well-being can be both enumerative and explanatory. The example he gives is that of Aristotle's theory of well-being which is enumerative by specifying the list of elements that are constituents of welfare and is also explanatory by taking up perfectionism.

*requirement* (requiring that the only constituents of a person's well-being are her experiences) and the *desire requirement* (requiring that the only constituents of a person's well-being are the satisfaction of her desires or some set of desires appropriately related to her desires). Such a category can then include a variety of objective values such as moral goodness or excellence. Fletcher's taxonomy also allows objective-list theory and perfectionism to count as theories of welfare. And his own enumerative theory of well-being offers, along with other goods, the kinds of goods that objectivists about well-being would happily endorse: achievement, friendship, self-respect, and virtue.

Given the facts about the taxonomies provided by both of these philosophers I think it is clear which of the two concepts of well-being these taxonomies concern: the wide concept of well-being. Their taxonomies leave open the possibility that, for example, moral goodness can be constitutive of well-being—a possibility that is explicitly denied by those who are dealing with the narrow concept of well-being such as Sumner, Heathwood, and Feldman. This is especially clear when we focus on perfectionism, a theory of well-being with ancient roots that has been rejuvenated in recent years.<sup>34</sup> But despite the fact that a number of contemporary philosophers have endorsed some form of perfectionism, whether or not perfectionism is even a theory about well-being remains a contentious issue. L.W. Sumner comments: "...the teleological theory [i.e. perfectionism] is fundamentally misconceived as a theory about the nature of welfare; it is really about something quite different."<sup>35</sup> Thomas Hurka, who defends perfectionism as an ethical theory agrees with Sumner on this point:

---

<sup>34</sup> For some recent defenses see Kraut 2007 and Murphy 2001.

<sup>35</sup> Sumner, 1996: 80.

Well-being itself is often characterized subjectively, in terms of actual or hypothetical desires. Given this subjective characterization, perfectionism cannot concern well-being. Its ideal cannot define the “good for” in a human because the ideal is one he ought to pursue regardless of his desires. In my view, perfectionism should never be expressed in terms of well-being.<sup>36</sup>

In response Dale Dorsey has recently criticized that Hurka’s claim that perfectionism cannot count as a theory of well-being is unwarranted:

But Hurka’s rejection of perfectionism *qua* theory of welfare is unmotivated. Indeed, he seems to suggest that perfectionism cannot be an account of welfare because welfare is subjective. But this is certainly up for grabs. Indeed that welfare is subjective has been disputed not only by perfectionists, but others as well...<sup>37</sup>

So is perfectionism a theory of well-being or not? I think that once we realize that there are actually two concepts that can plausibly be termed ‘well-being’, we can dissolve the disagreement between Dorsey and Hurka. Insofar as Hurka is discussing the concept of narrow well-being, he is right that perfectionism is, on conceptual grounds alone, ruled out as a possible

---

<sup>36</sup> Hurka, 1993: 17-18. Hurka does believe that perfectionism can be an account of “the good human life” which may correspond to the notion of wide well-being that we have been discussing. But I would still contend, against Hurka, that perfectionist values cannot also enhance one’s well-being by being *good for* an individual, a point that Hurka seems to deny. It may turn out, however, that there is no real disagreement between Hurka’s and my own view.

<sup>37</sup> Dorsey, 2010: 60. While Dorsey does think that perfectionism is a legitimate candidate for a theory of well-being, his paper aims at showing why perfectionism about well-being fails.

theory. But insofar as Dorsey is discussing the concept of wide well-being, he is right that perfectionism is a legitimate contender as a theory of well-being. There is no real difficulty here.

Nevertheless, combining Dale Dorsey's comments with reflection on some of the recent development on classifying theories of well-being provide us with a reason to favor the wide concept over the narrow concept of well-being. By focusing on the wide concept, we conceptually leave open the possibility that well-being can be constituted by those 'objective' values such as moral virtue, dignity, self-respect, and achievement. Not only that, but we also leave open space for those objective *theories* of welfare that many philosophers find quite appealing: objective-list theory and perfectionism. Those philosophers who take up the narrow concept of well-being, on the other hand, take what's good for someone or is in a person's interests as being exhausted by physical or psychological goods. But this simply appears to beg the question against those who think that other values or goods such as moral virtue are also good for us.<sup>38</sup> By taking the concept of well-being only in the narrow sense, we seem to, just by verbal fiat, rule out the possibility that values outside of the scope of narrow well-being can also be constitutive of well-being. This is why some philosophers have thought that Aristotelian perfectionism cannot possibly be an account of well-being. But this isn't a result that I think we should want. Whether or not values such as moral virtue, achievement, dignity, or self-respect

---

<sup>38</sup> Of course, such philosophers who are discussing narrow well-being aren't actually begging questions since their topic isn't wide well-being, but narrow well-being. But the crucial point is that because such philosophers haven't clearly articulated which of these two concepts they are trying to discuss it will either look like they are begging the question, or it will turn out that despite their use of the term "well-being" the target of their analysis is different from the concept being discussed by defenders of objective list theory or perfectionism. In either case this is clearly a confusing state of affairs and one that needs to be cleared up in the welfare literature.

are in our interests and constitutive of well-being ought to be a conceptually open question subject to investigation.

Now to the points above the following response might follow: "Sure, the concept of narrow well-being automatically excludes those other 'objective' values that Aristotelians want to include. But so what? This is just a term that we use to group together a range of goods that are closely connected to positive mental states. What's wrong with that?" Nothing would be wrong, if those who invoke the term "well-being" to refer to the concept of narrow well-being clearly stated that they were simply using "well-being" as a philosophical term of art to designate those goods connected to narrow well-being. The problem, however, is that this is not what philosophers have been claiming in the welfare literature. Welfare theorists such as Christopher Heathwood, Fred Feldman, and L.W. Sumner who appear to be discussing the concept of narrow well-being do not employ 'well-being' as a term of art, but as referring to a concept that already enjoys great prominence; whatever well-being is, it's clear that we have a significant stake in it.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Heathwood, in responding to the objection that he is employing an idiosyncratic concept of welfare, claims that the concept he discusses still retains a core feature of well-being, its status as a source of reasons for action: "Welfare as it is understood here is relevant in the sense that it still provides reasons for action: that some state of affairs would be good for some agent gives that agent a reason to bring about that state of affairs." (Heathwood, 2005: 500) I don't know of anyone who would disagree with Heathwood that welfare considerations provide reasons for action. But whether or not desires, independent of their propositional content, always provide a reason for action is a contentious topic. A host of contemporary philosophers including Derek Parfit, Warren Quinn, Joseph Raz, and T.M. Scanlon would argue that desires do not always provide a reason for action. So Heathwood's view, it appears, straightforwardly rules out their theories of reasons for action. This is an undesirable result and indicates another possible consequence that counts in favor of using the concept of wide well-being over the concept of narrow well-being.

But if we are discussing *that* concept, the claim that well-being consists solely in positive psychological states will meet strong resistance. Many philosophers will deny that positive subjective states can play the kind of role in moral theory that we assume well-being occupies, and on that basis alone, deny such accounts of well-being. Of course it may turn out that only those goods falling under the concept of narrow well-being ultimately constitute wide well-being. But whichever position ends up being correct, attending to the concept of wide well-being will leave these kinds of issues open for debate, and that is a result that I think we should want.

So there are two theoretical advantages for turning our focus toward the concept of wide well-being. One important advantage is that it would allow us to preserve what appear to be genuine disagreements between those who believe that only what is properly connected to one's mental states can have an effect on one's interests or well-being and those that do not; we can allow for the possibility of a substantive debate between those who do and do not think that goods such as virtue or dignity are constituents of well-being and can be (non-intrinsically) good for a person. The second advantage is that by making the concept of wide well-being the center of attention in our investigation of welfare, we also clearly capture the core idea that well-being has enormous significance for moral philosophy, significance so great that well-being may very well play a foundational role in ethical theory. Even those philosophers such as Heathwood and Sumner who have focused on the concept of narrow well-being would I think agree that because the concept of wide well-being encompasses both those goods that fall under the concept of narrow well-being and other positive values (although determining which values will require substantive enquiry), the concept of wide well-being has greater significance for ethical theory. In fact, as I believe the Crib Test helps to show, the concept that lies behind our thoughts concerning what kind of life we want for ourselves and our children is not the concept of narrow

well-being, but the concept of wide well-being. So it appears that when it comes to questions about what kind of life we would like to obtain from the viewpoint of a reflective agent, what we are really interested in is wide well-being.

## (V) Conclusion

Distinguishing the two concepts of well-being is only a small (though important) step in advancing our discussions of the philosophy of welfare. It helps us identify the target of our discussions so that we can focus on substantive questions rather than get embroiled in merely terminological disputes. I have suggested that we ought to attend the wide concept of well-being over the narrow concept since it appears to more aptly capture the current taxonomies of well-being and keep genuine disagreements from being settled by merely verbal stipulations. Doing this will not, of course, settle any of the deeper controversies that surround the topic of well-being. In fact, we may have to grapple with more theories of well-being than were previously thought possible. While this doesn't make our work easier, it will keep our eyes open to all of the conceptual possibilities that inhabit the welfare landscape.

## References

Adams, R.M. (1999). *Finite and Infinite Goods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bradley, B. (2009). *Well-Being and Death*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Crisp, R. (2006). *Reasons and the Good*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- (2008). 'Well-Being'. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Available at:  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/well-being>.
- Darwall, S. (2002). *Welfare and Rational Care*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Dorsey, D. (2010). 'Three Arguments for Perfectionism'. *Nous*, 44.1: 59-79.
- Feldman, F. (2010). *What Is This Thing Called Happiness?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fletcher, G. 'A Fresh Start for Objective-list Theories of Well-being', *Utilitas* (forthcoming).
- Foot, P. (2001). *Natural Goodness*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Griffin J. (1986). *Well-being*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Haybron, D. (2008). *The Pursuit of Unhappiness*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Heathwood, C. (2005). 'Defective Desires'. *Australian Journal of Philosophy*, 83.4: 487-504.
- (2006). 'Desire Satisfactionism and Hedonism'. *Philosophical Studies*, 128: 539-563.
- (2007). 'The Reduction of Sensory Pleasure to Desire'. *Philosophical Studies*, 133: 23-44.
- (2010). 'Welfare', in J. Skorupski (ed.), *Routledge Companion to Ethics* (Rou
- (2012). 'Subjective Theories of Well-Being', forthcoming in B. Eggleston and D.
- Mill, J.S. (1998). *Utilitarianism*. Edited by Roger Crisp. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Miller (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Utilitarianism*, Cambridge University Press.



Murphy, M. (2001). *Natural Law and Practical Rationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kagan, S. (1994). 'Me and My Life', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 94:309-24.

Kraut, R. (1994). 'Desire and the Human Good', *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 68: 39-54.

----- (2007) *What Is Good and Why*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Parfit, D. (1984) 'What Makes Someone's Life Go Best', Appendix 1 of *Reasons and Persons*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Plantinga A. (1974) *The Nature of Necessity*, Oxford: Clarendon.

Sumner, L.W. (1996) *Welfare, Happiness, and Ethics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Woodard, C. (2012) 'Classifying Theories of Welfare', *Philosophical Studies* DOI 10.1007 (Published Online).