Combining Good and Bad

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How does good combine with bad? Most creatures are neither so blessed as to only enjoy good nor so cursed as to only suffer bad. Rather, the good and bad they receive throughout their lives combine to produce their overall quality of life. But it's not just whole lives that have combined good and bad. Many stretches within contain both positive and negative occurrences whose value is joined to form the overall quality of that span of time. In a single morning someone might wake up, brush their teeth, stub their toe groggily lumbering down the stairs, and have a sip of coffee that's tasty but so hot they burn their tongue. These events are good and bad for them to various degrees, and their value comes together to form an overall value for them of that morning. A single moment, even, can have combined value from distinct pockets of good and bad that occur simultaneously. The tastiness of the coffee is good, but the pain of the heat is bad. They combine to form an overall value of the sipping moment – negative if the pain outweighed the flavor. Thus, wellbeing and illbeing combine. But how? How can someone rightly chastise themselves for sipping the overly hot coffee when it was, in fact, good because it was tasty? To pose the question starkly, a life can be bad, even so bad to not be worth living, and yet it can have many instances of good, where these goods are, in themselves, pure of any negativity. But how can good make something bad?

Let **partial value** be the non-instrumental personal value received from various value bearers – pleasures, pains, achievements, satisfied desires, or whathaveyou. Let **aggregate value** – for vocabularic variation, **overall value** – be the non-instrumental personal value received from the combination of various instances of partial value. Such combination can involve the *intra-valence* aggregation of partial good combing with partial good or partial bad combing with partial bad. If someone brushes their teeth while finding the toothpaste tasty, they receive aggregate good from the good of the minor brushing achievement combined with the good of the tastiness. If they stub their toe while also being groggy, then they receive aggregate bad from the distinct disagreeable sensations. However, there is also *inter-valence* aggregation of partial good combining with partial bad. The good of the coffee's tastiness combines with the bad of the pain from the burn to form an overall value of the sipping moment. These are just two instances of value. Lives usually contain more. The overall quality of any significant stretch of time, let alone the entire life, contains a plethora of goods and bads whose value is combined to form aggregate value. Thus, there is an

overall amount of personal value – either positive, negative, or neutral – that comes from the balancing of the value from distinct goods and bads. How is such aggregation possible?

Focusing on just the intra-valence combination of good with good or bad with bad promotes a misleading picture of aggregation as merely the 'smushing' together of portions of value, so that aggregate value is thought to be just the collecting up of partial value – akin to how any random parts may compose some sort of whole. Yet considering inter-valence combination of good with bad undermines this conception. Partial good and bad can't merely be 'smushed' together to form overall value, since good and bad cancel each other out.

However, this presents a puzzle. Partial good and bad cancel one another yet nevertheless remain intact, since the aggregation of value does not remove value from valuable things. The good of the tastiness and the bad of the burn remain, even though their combined value is not so good as the tastiness nor so bad as the burn. The task of the paper is to resolve this puzzle. A conception of aggregation needs to be underwritten by a metaphysical account of how partial good and bad combine such that they cancel yet remain. The resolution I defend is that partial and aggregate value are distinct types of value. Overall value is not simply 'more' partial value, but rather a new sort of value grounded in partial value. Thus, thinking about how partial good combines with partial bad present opportunities for rethinking the nature of personal value.

1. A Puzzle for the Calculus of Lumps

A tempting picture is to treat a person's life as a sort of container for value, where value fills it up in something like the way clay fills a bucket – consider Figure 1.[1] Instances of partial value are 'lumps' of value that a person 'contains', and aggregate value is simply those lumps merged together in a manner akin to balls of clay sticking together in a bucket. Whatever partial value comes from – pleasure and pain, achievement and failure, satisfied and thwarted desire – the aggregate value of various instances of partial value is constituted by the mere agglomeration of that value. Bad from a given pain and bad from a given failure form a larger amount of bad just because they are both bads. There is this bad here and that bad there, and their 'overall' bad is simply that the person's life contains both. Analogously, a lump of clay here and a lump of clay there form a larger lump just because they smush together in the bucket. Thus, aggregate value is the mere collection of instances of partial value unified by befalling the same subject.

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[1] Indeed, a standard way to gloss hedonism is that lives are neutral containers to be filled with the value of pleasures and pains (Kagan 2012: 258-260). This container metaphor is related to the picture of utilitarianism as treating creatures as containers for the *impersonal* value of pleasure and pain (Parfit 1984: 393; Schultz 1986: 721), and of consequentialism more generally as taking subjects to be containers for impersonal goods and bads. But such thinking, I take it, is common even among those who reject these particular theories.

Figure 1
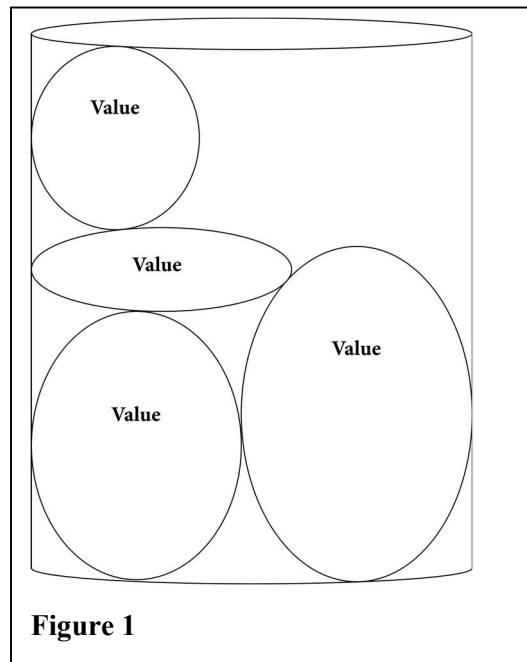
The **smushing model** is naturally tied to an **additivistic** conception of aggregation (Feldman 2004; Bradley 2009: ch. 2), according to which overall value is aptly represented by the addition of the magnitudes of partial value. So the combining of partial into aggregate value is taken to operate in much the way that quantities of mass or volume combine such that overall lifetime value is just the simply sum of the value of all the goods and bads that occur within it. This sort of view comes under fire from those who think that the shape of value over time can make a difference to overall value, say if declining quality of life is bad in itself (Kamm 2003; Glasgow 2013). Then, aggregation can't be represented by addition, since the magnitude of goods and bads forming an incline and decline can sum to the same. However, views that treat shape as important tend to take the relevant shape to be that of the distribution of momentary value over time, where momentary value is either taken as given or treated as the mere summation of the value of goods and bads that occur at that time. In the former case, we have as of yet no account of aggregate momentary value. In the latter case, the smushing model would arise again.

But before even getting to shape over time, the smushing model faces a more basic difficulty which affects it even when restricted to momentary value: the view can't account for how good combines with bad. Partial good and bad are distinct types of value in that they are different valences. They both pertain to personal value, and they can be compared in that any partial good is better than any partial bad. But good is not *greater* or *larger* than bad in the sense of being *more* of the same sort of value. Greater good is not more of the stuff of badness – more bad is even worse, not better. And greater bad is not less of the stuff of goodness. Partial bad is not the mere *absence*

of partial good (Kagan 2014: 262; Bradford 2021: 588-589). Removing all goodness leaves you with neutral, not bad value. The bad from a painful toe stubbing is not merely the absence of good from some alternate event, but rather a magnitude of negatively valenced value in its own right. Good and bad are distinct types of value in that there can be more or less of one independently of whether there is more or less of the other.

Therefore, goods and bads are their own magnitudes of value. Yet when they combine, they *cancel* each other out. A partial good worth +3 when combined with a partial bad worth -7 makes for something worse than +3 overall good and at the same time something better than -7 overall bad. So neither the full force of the +3 or the -7 are present in their aggregate value, but instead reduced by one another. Likewise, when a pocket of partial bad worth -2 combines with a pocket of partial good worth +9, the +9 removes the effect of the -2 while the goodness of the +9 is lessened. Partial good and bad cancel out to some extent when they aggregate. But the smushing model does not give us a way to understand this cancellation. Combining red clay with green clay just makes for even more clay.

So partial good and bad cancel each other to some extent, yet at the same time they *remain intact*. Cancellation is not deletion in the form of removing value from existence. The good from the tasty coffee and the bad from the painful burn reduce the impact of each other on the person's overall value, but, despite this, their value remains in full. If the burn outweighs the taste, then this means that taken together there is net bad for the person. But it doesn't mean the tastiness is not good for them. The tastiness is still as good as it was 'prior' to aggregation. Likewise, if the taste instead outweighs the burn, then that means that together they produce net good for the person. But it's not as if the pain of the burn is no longer bad for them. The pain is still as bad as 'before'.

So not only does the value remain, but it remains to the *same extent*. The good of the tastiness and bad of the burn retain their full value, even after canceling one another when producing overall value. Indeed, good and bad remain after combination in just the same way that good and good remain and bad and bad remain after they are combined. The good from brushing your teeth and the good from waking up combine to form a larger good of the start of the morning, but this does not remove the value from the separate occurrences of tooth brushing and bed rising. They are still good to the same extent as they are sans aggregation. In the same way, the bad from being groggy combines with the bad from stubbing your toe to form a larger bad of the next phase of the morning, but both instances of badness remain. There are still two smaller magnitudes of bad that persist even once they combine to form a magnitude of aggregate bad.

Hence, the **puzzle**: partial good and bad combine to form overall value in such a way that they cancel each other out and yet their value remains intact. Cancellation cannot be deletion of the existence of value, but if it's not deletion, and partial value remains in full, then how could overall value be good if it contains bad or bad if it contains good? More generally, how could overall value be less good than some of the good it contains and less bad than some of the bad it contains?

We can't simply say: "Partial bad lowers someone's level of welfare. Partial good raises their level welfare. So they cancel each other out in that one raises while the other lowers, but both raising and lowering remain." Because this simply restates the puzzle, since 'level of welfare' *is* aggregate value. The question is: *How* can partial bad lower welfare – aggregate value – while partial good raises it, such that they cancel each other out and yet remain?[2]

The puzzle stems from two apparently incompatible conditions on combination: that good and bad combine by cancelling, and that they remain in full after combination. Might we just then deny one of those conditions? No.

Consider denying that good and bad cancel. The suggestion would be that just as any two amounts of good combine to form larger amounts of good, and any two amounts of bad combine to form larger amounts of bad, then any two amounts of good and bad, respectively, combine to form larger amounts of value. On the smushing conception, this would consist in a lump of good merging with a lump of bad to form a larger lump that is the smushed together admixture of their value. Contrary to what I claimed above, this view holds that good and bad do combine like two types of clay – red clay and green clay – where the volumes of the respective clumps of clay combine to make an even bigger volume of mixed color clay. This is represented in Figure 2, where the dot indicates combination and the arrow indicates the result of such combination.


Figure 2
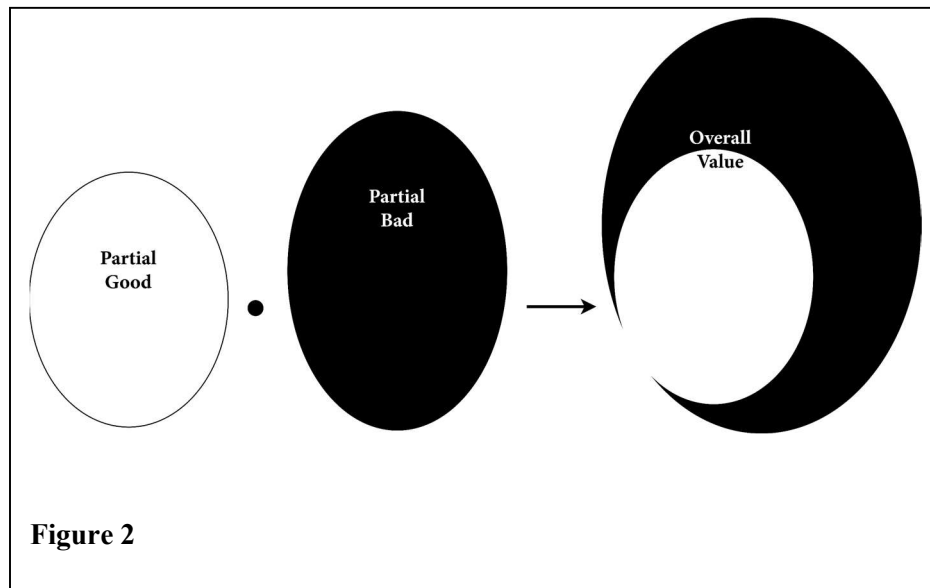
Yet, this gets the wrong results. For presumably they would then combine additively in the way that mass or volume combines. So if the amount of good of the tastiness is +3 and the amount of bad of the burn is -7, then they would combine to form an overall amount of value of 10. Yet, what is the valence of this value? It can't be good, because it contains -7 bad. It can't be bad, because

it contains +3 good. So it would just be a mixed value of +3 good and -7 bad, like red clay and gray clay stuck side by side. But, then, this doesn't amount to any sort of aggregate value. It just amounts to the +3 good and the -7 bad occurring within the same life. It is a collection of two separate instances of partial value, not their *combined* value.

Consider, next, denying that the full amount of good and bad remain after combination, so that cancellation is understood as deletion. Good is anti-bad and bad is anti-good. So, perhaps, one unit of good annihilates one unit of bad. This proposal modifies the smushing conception by holding that sub-portions of lumps annihilate one another when they combine – portrayed in Figure 3. Thus, when a +3 lump combines with a -7 lump, then a -3 portion of the -7 lump and the entirety of the +3 lump remove each other from existence so that what remains is a -4 lump. At first glance, this approach might seem more promising, since it holds out hope of delivering the right amounts for overall value, but it faces severe problems of its own.


Figure 3
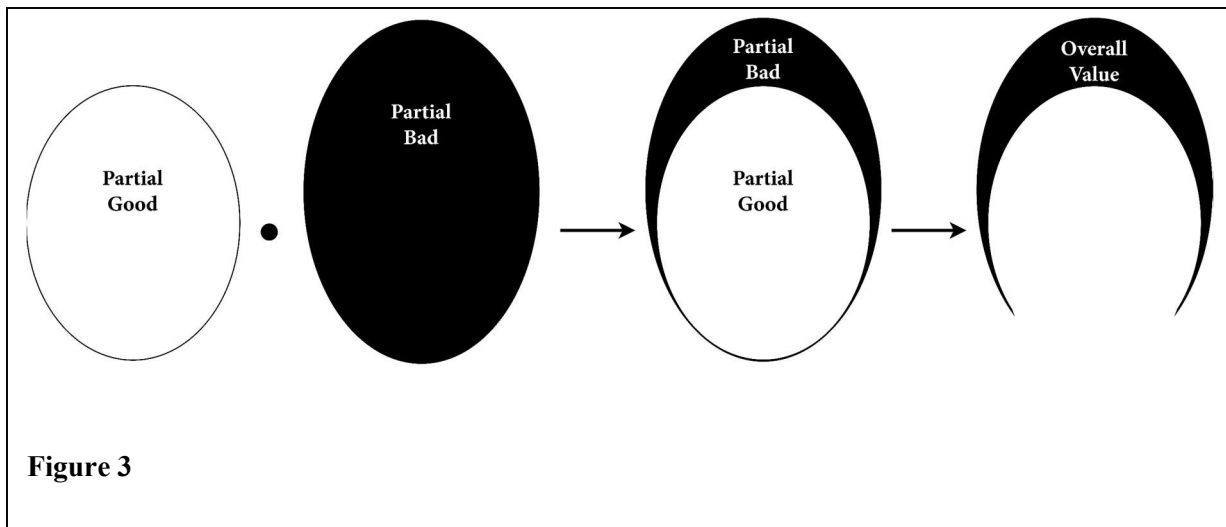
First, if cancellation were deletion, then, as I remarked above, many valuable things would no longer be valuable after combination – either to the same degree or at all. If the +3 lump stemming from the tastiness were annihilated by a -3 portion of the -7 bad from the pain, then the tastiness would no longer be good once its value was aggregated. But this is wrong. It stays good. It's just that its good is balanced against the bigger magnitude of bad from the pain when producing overall value. Likewise, the -7 from the pain also remains to its full extent. The impact of its value on overall value is lessened by being balanced against the +3 from the taste, but the pain is still -7 bad.

Second, the view requires that there is a fact of the matter about *which lumps* of value are deleted or reduced. This is obscured by considering just a single instance of partial good combining with a single instance of partial bad. But consider the whole morning sequence. Someone gets up and brushes their teeth for +5 good. They are groggy for -2 bad, and stub their toe for -4 bad. They then have a sip of coffee, getting +3 from the tastiness and -7 from the burn. How do these annihilate one another? Does the +5 combine with the -7 to leave -2? Or does the +5 instead combine with the -4 to annihilate all but +1? And then does this +1 lump annihilate a -1 portion of the -7 to leave -6, which then annihilates the +3 to leave just -3? Or do the -7 and +3 combine to annihilate all but a -4 lump, which then combines with the +1 to annihilate a -1 portion of the -4 to leave just -3? Or is it some other way? First in first out? Last in first out? But what if multiple bads and multiple goods occur simultaneously? There would seem to be no non-arbitrary and systematic way to induce an ordering of annihilation, so the view seems ill-posed – as brought out in Figure 4.[3]

Figure 4

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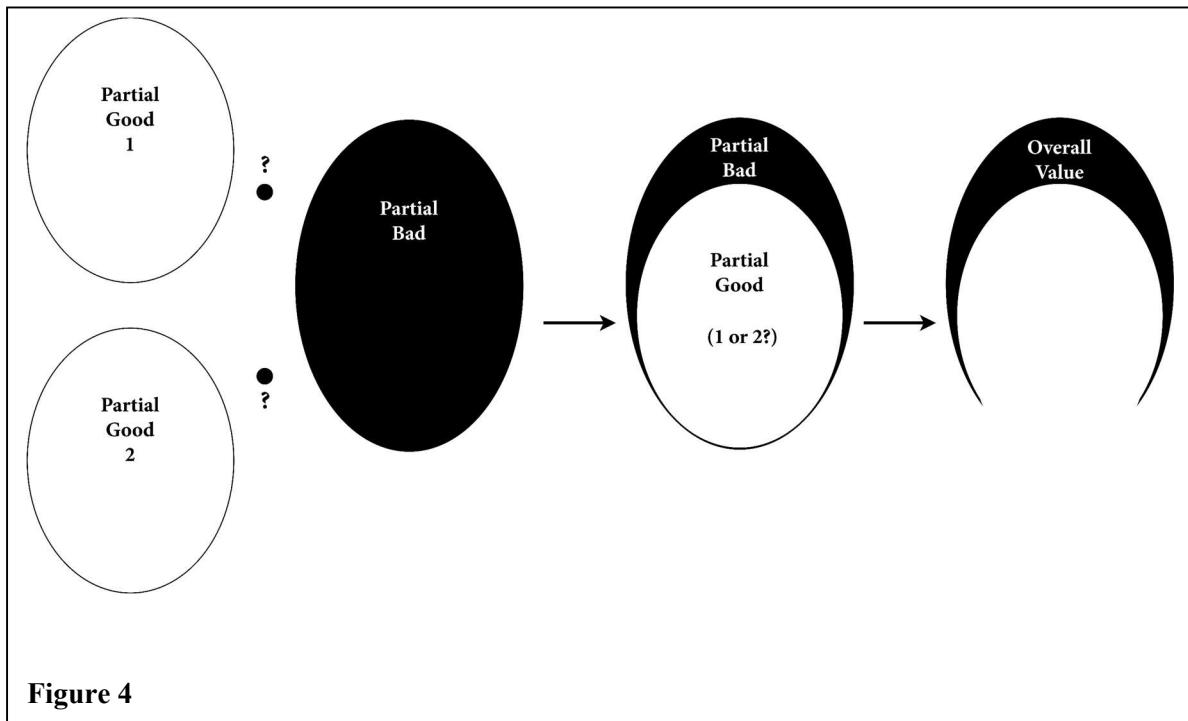
[3] The problem can't be resolved by claiming that amounts of value lack individual identities, so that they are not individuated to start. This seems patently false. The quality of a person's life is separately affected each time they receive value, and the value is a property of the value bearer or a relation between the value bearer and the person, and so is individuated in that way.

There is also a third problem of identifying *which sub-portions* of value are annihilated. Considering just +3 and -7, if we understand cancellation as annihilation of *portions* of value, then we must be able to identify sub-portions of partial good as entities in their own right. Thus, there would have to be an existing sub-portion of the -7 that is annihilated by the +3, namely that sub-portion that is not the -4 sub-portion that remains after. Yet it seems wrong to think of the partial value of a basic value bearer, such as the value of the smallest unit of pleasure or that of a most basic achievement, as divisible into separately existing sub-portions of value. And even if there were such sub-portions that could be so divided, there would be no way to privilege a given portion as combining with portions from other instances of partial value. So you would have an analog of the second problem, as shown in Figure 5. The -7 has at least two portions worth -3, and there would be no way to non-arbitrarily privilege *this* -3 sub-portion as opposed to *that* -3 sub-portion that upon the -7 being combined with the +3 is annihilated.

Figure 5
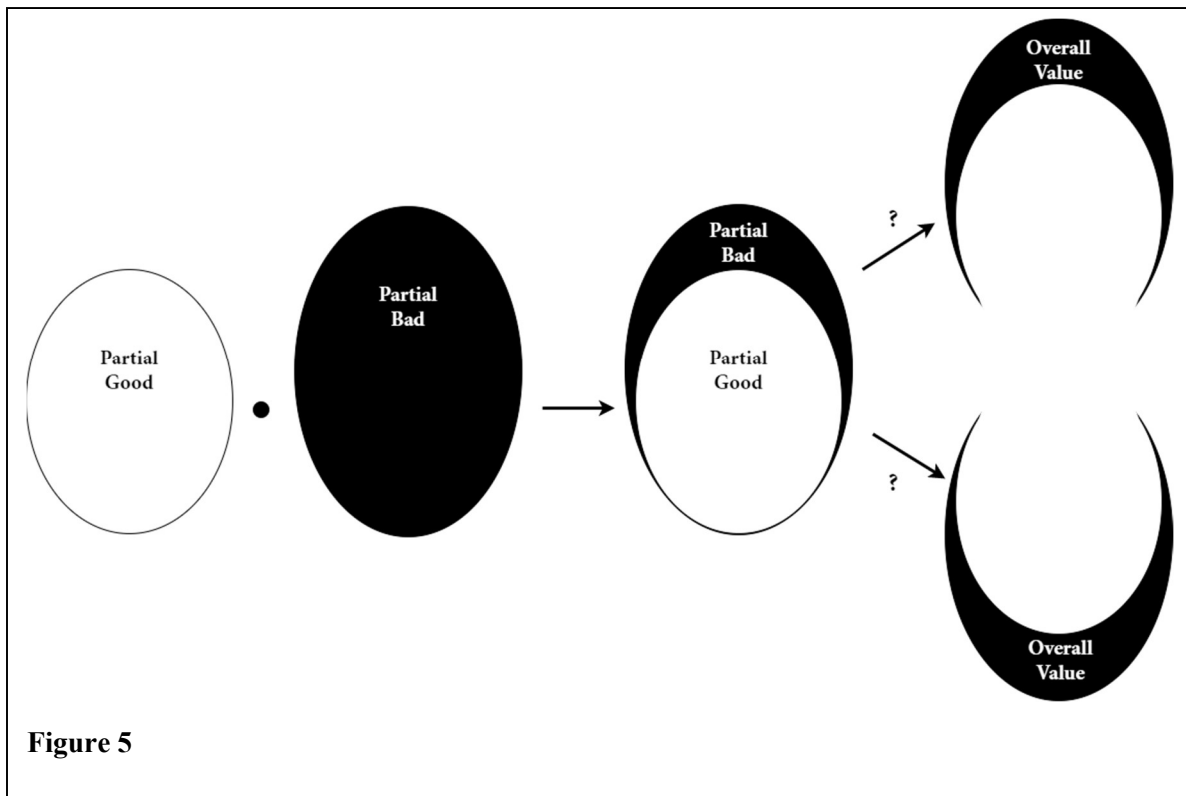
So the puzzle stands. Partial good and bad combine to form overall value such that they cancel each other out and yet remain fully intact. A natural way of understanding cancellation is on the model of deletion, but this is incompatible with their remaining intact. A natural way to understand remaining intact is to deny that they cancel, but this gets the wrong results for overall value. Is there a way to resolve the puzzle? Yes, but doing so requires rethinking aggregation.

2. Rejecting Aggregation

An operating assumption behind the smushing model is that overall value is 'just more' partial value – overall value is simply the gathering together of partial value into a quasi-mereological collection. Certainly, this is a natural thought, since someone's overall value is in some way made up of the collection of goods and bads that happen to them. It might then seem that overall value simply consists in those goods and bads forming a collection. But, as the puzzle brings out, aggregate value can't be a mere collection of partial value, since good and bad cancel out. Thus, I hold that aggregate value is not 'more partial value'. Instead, aggregate value is a distinct type of personal value.

But why must partial and aggregate value be taken to be distinct kinds of value? Why can't we deny that aggregate value is 'just more' partial value without taking them to be two types of personal value? I can see only one way to do so, which is to hold that, strictly speaking, there is no aggregate value at all. A view of this sort would resolve the puzzle, since there would be no aggregate value and so good and bad would never combine at all.

At one extreme, such a view would hold that there is simply personal value from occurrences within life. There is good from a given pleasure and bad from a given failure. But there is no value of multiple goods or bads taken together. I reject this view for the simple reason that we do seem to make legitimate assessments of the overall quality of various phases of our life. Someone's morning went well or poorly. Their life as a whole is going well or poorly.

At another extreme would be a view that holds that the only type of personal value is just personal value of the life as a whole. The only bearer of personal value is the entire life (Bramble 2018). Nothing that occurs within a life has value – rather they constitute the nature of the whole life, which is what has value. Yet, this proposal is implausible as well, since we make legitimate overall assessments of phases of our life that are shorter than the entire span. Not just a whole life goes well or poorly, but mornings do as well. There is nothing privileged about lifetime value. It's not fundamental, but rather produced by the occurrences with that life – and there is nothing to stop subsets of those occurrences producing value as well (Bradley 2021).

The best view that denies that there is aggregate value replaces it with a proxy. There is both personal value of various occurrences within the life and also personal value of the entire life. But this value of the whole life is not aggregated from the value of various occurrences, but rather is the personal value of the whole life taken as a value bearer directly. Perhaps the value of a stretch of life is given by narrative relations (Velleman 1991/2015). Then, these stretches would have value due to their narrative structure, but it would not be aggregated from the value of what occurred within those stretches. Rather, it would be the personal value of the narrative arc directly. Such a view avoids the implausible implication of the first proposal that there is no way to make overall assessments, since overall assessment would track the direct personal value of stretches of life. And it would also avoid the implausible implication of the second proposal by allowing things that

aren't the entire life to have personal value. However, this view faces serious problems of its own. If we take the narrative arc implementation, then there may simply be no narrative arc for the corresponding chunk of life. A moment that has multiple valuable occurrences has an overall value, but there is no meaningful narrative arc that serves as the bearer of value. Rather, the overall quality of the sipping moment comes from the bad of the pain and the good of the tastiness without an interposed narrative.

A more general complaint is that any view that denies that personal value aggregates makes a muck of central normative practices. Consider choosing to suffer a smaller bad for a greater good, exemplified by delayed gratification. Such a choice presumes aggregation. It makes sense to accept a smaller bad now for a greater good later because, overall, this will produce net good from those two pockets of value taken together. If it were just a smaller bad followed by a greater good, but no sort of overall value from the two taken together, then it would not make sense to suffer the bad for the sake of getting the good. Without their producing overall value, there would be no evaluative way to subsume the two together such that the package of the two is overall good, and hence provides a prudential reason for someone to acquire it. Delayed gratification often works by balancing value of two distinct pockets of partial value, not by somehow positing an aggregate value bearer that has value directly. When someone suffers the bad of tedious coffee prep for the good of tasty coffee, they do so on the basis of balancing the bad of the tedium with the good of the tastiness. Not because there is some value bearer *prep-then-coffee* that has positive value directly.

The need for aggregation is even clearer when the delay is taken out of delayed gratification, so that someone submits to a smaller bad to receive a greater good simultaneously. Let's say they our morning person waits a few moments for the coffee to cool, though it's still quite hot. They know the coffee is too hot but also tasty, but they drink it because overall it will be good for them. The value of the sip comes from the good of the tastiness and the bad of the – now slightly less painful – burn. To posit the sipping moment as having mere partial value would be a sleight of hand, for patently its value comes from the pain and the tastiness. Moreover, we can systematically compare such aggregations involving distinct value bearers of the same magnitude. The sip is as valuable as getting up in the morning, because the bad of the burn is the same as the bad of the grogginess and the good of the tastiness is as good as the good of the achievement of getting out of bed. Doing away with aggregation would remove the ability to make such comparisons.

Likewise, without aggregation, there would be no way to rationalize many choices we make as to which outcome is prudentially better given mixtures of multiple goods and bads. Without aggregation, at best someone could choose to receive a good instead of suffering a bad. But they could not choose between packages of goods and bads. Yet often a larger good with a small bad is worth having in lieu of a small enough good by itself. Schematically, +9 combined with -2 is worth having in lieu of just +4. Yet a large enough bad makes even a large good not worth having, if a smaller good would come with a smaller bad. So -7 combined with +6 is not worth having over +3

and -1. But there is no way to make sense of this if we simply have pair-wise comparisons between the individual value bearers, since +9 is better than +4, but -2 is worse than +4, and +6 is better than each of +3 and -1 but -7 is worse than each. Indeed, without aggregation, I could not even choose between packages of goods with goods or choose between packages of bads with bads. So +4 is better than +2 and it's also better than +3, but, usually at least, we think +2 combined with +3 is better than +4. And -4 is worse than both -2 and -3 taken in isolation, but, usually, we think that -4 is not as bad as -2 and -3 taken together. And, as above, none of these various goods and bads need to form an appropriate complex value bearer. They needn't, say, have any significant narrative relations to one another. It could just be highly contingent and mundane constraints, like someone has to pick one of the randomly assembled box of goodies and baddies to take.[4]

In light of these problems for denying aggregation, I want to explore a different way of resolving the puzzle: partial and aggregate value are distinct types of value.

3. Solving the Puzzle

The puzzle arose because partial good and bad remain after being combined, even though some of their normative impact cancels out. The key to resolving the puzzle is to treat cancellation not as removal from existence but as a balancing out in the net result. Partial good and bad remain in full but their normative effects nullify one another. How so? The approach I defend is to hold that partial and aggregate value are distinct types of value. Partial value helps to produce overall value, but overall value is not 'more' partial value. Instead, pockets of partial value come together to produce a new form of value.

As an analogy, consider the distinction between personal value and impersonal value. If there's such a thing as impersonal value, then some of it is formed by aggregating the personal value of different individual's lives.[5] But it's not somehow the personal value of the entire population, treated as if it were some super-subject. Rather, it is a new form of *im*-personal value that is produced by the coming together of various pockets of aggregate lifetime personal value. Personal value would ground impersonal value, but impersonal value is a distinct sort of magnitude. Even if the magnitude of impersonal value were taken to be the mere summation of the magnitudes of personal value of people's lives, it still would be a different sort of value. It would not be value *for* any subject.

In a roughly similar way, aggregate personal value is a new type of value above and beyond non-aggregative partial value. While partial value grounds aggregate value, it does so by producing

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[4] I hold that shape considerations are often important (Frugé forthcoming), so set those considerations aside and assume that the choices wouldn't affect shape in an important way.
[5] I thank Christine Tappolet for discussion here.

a new form of value that is a distinct sort of magnitude. Even if the magnitude of aggregate value were taken to be the mere summation of the magnitudes of partial value, it still would be a different sort of value. It would not be value for the subject of *value bearers*, rather it would be value for the subject of *instances of value*. Consider, by analogy, financial debts – money we owe – and financial credits – money we are owed. Our overall financial health is partly constituted by the combination of our debts and credits, but it is distinct from being a debt or being a credit itself. While credits and debits sum together to form the overall amount that we owe or that is owed to us, this overall amount is something different than an individual credit or debit. Our overall financial state is not itself owed to someone nor is it owed to us. We cannot sue someone to retrieve the overall amount owed to us, rather we must sue individual debtors.[6] And it's not necessary that credits and debits need to combine summatively – just take certain forms of bankruptcy, where an otherwise negative balance moves to zero. For another analogy, take the relation between points and scores in basketball. A score is a distinct type of thing from a point. Points attach to made baskets, whereas scores are combinations of points – given standard rules, it would combine summatively, but other rules could make it combine in other ways, such as how rock climbing takes points to multiply. My suggestion is to take the relation between partial value and aggregate value to be akin to the relation between points and scores. They are distinct types of value. While both are kinds of value-for, they are different species of this genus.

What does it mean to say this? It means that they have a different prudential significance. Even if they are both evaluative, aggregate and partial value are tied to different forms of assessment. Aggregate value goes with holistic appraisal of entire lives or periods of time – even if just of a single moment. But partial value is tied to the nature of the value bearer and its relation to the subject. These values can even clash with one another, such as when a partial bad brings about the right sort of overall pattern of value to make someone's life go better – perhaps, say, by serving as the low point from which a steadily improving quality of life commences. This value bearer is indeed bad, with no admixture of good, but it is integral in making the subject's life go better. Given their different ties to evaluative assessment, aggregate and partial value underwrite different prudential activity. Say that someone faces a choice such that necessarily any option they take contains some partial bad. Then, one such option may be choice worthy – and indeed may rationalize choice without reservation – but nevertheless rationally mandate a certain amount of regret in that it contains partial bad, even if this option is clearly preferable to any other. Or say that overall someone has ill-being but there are pockets of good in their life. Then, their life is not worth living, even though they rightly takes some satisfaction in it. Choice goes with aggregate value, but other attitudes go with partial value.[7]

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[6] I thank Mauro Rossi for the example.

[7] I thank Mauro Rossi for pushing me to clarify the difference in type between partial and aggregate value.

Treating partial and aggregate value as different types of value solves the puzzle of cancelation. Partial good and bad can cancel each other out in terms of the resulting product of overall value without either that partial good or that partial bad removing the other, since they balance not by annihilation but by producing a distinct type of value of a certain magnitude. Since the value produced by cancellation is distinct, partial good and bad can cancel one another in terms of how they are reflected in the resulting product without removing each other from existence. This is akin to how impersonal value would be produced by someone with positive wellbeing and another with negative illbeing, where these magnitudes would cancel each other out and yet each person's quality of life would remain intact. Likewise, it's analogous to a possible version of basketball where goaltends produce negative points for the defense instead of positive points for the offense, so that positive points from baskets cancel out negative points from goaltends in the overall score while nevertheless remaining points tied to those particular plays. Therefore, when a given valuable occurrence obtains, the subject receives two types of value. They receive partial value – an isolated instance of value. But they also receive an altered amount of aggregate value due to its combining with other instances of partial value.

At the same time as resolving the puzzle, the distinct types of value view avoids the problems that plagued other attempted resolutions. The initial version of the smushing view held that partial good and bad combine without cancelling, and instead make a larger 'lump' of value. This faced the problem that there is too much value. It also faced the problem that the larger lump doesn't have either a positive or negative valence when good combines with bad. The distinct types of value view avoids both these problems. Partial good and bad cancel one another in the sense that each nullifies some of the normative effects of the other upon producing overall value. Moreover, overall value can be positive or negative turning on the way it is produced from partial value. A modified version of the lump view held that cancellation consists in removing 'portions' of lumps from existence. This faced the problem that it removes partial value from valuable things. It also faced problems when it came to identifying which lumps and which sub-portions of those lumps were removed from existence. According to the distinct types of value view, however, partial good and bad remain in existence upon combining with one another. Hence, they still retain their value upon combination, and there is no need to identify which instances or which 'portions' of those instances are deleted. The extreme view that there is no aggregate value at all faced the problem that aggregation is deeply embedded in our normative practices. The distinct types of value view avoids this problem simply because it upholds aggregation.

Taking partial and aggregate value to be of distinct types opens up new theoretical space. By moving beyond a conception of overall value as mere agglomeration, it makes room for thinking about more complex ways in which aggregate value might depend on partial value. While the view doesn't *entail* that magnitudes of partial value don't aggregate additively, it is consistent with such conceptions, thus allowing for exploration of such possibilities. Aggregate value comes

from combining pockets of partial value, and this aggregation could be sensitive to interrelations between those pockets of partial value. Perhaps there is diminishing return to the size of individual magnitudes of good and bad, or perhaps greater numbers of pockets of value reduce the impact of each pocket.

Indeed, once aggregate and partial value are sharply distinguished, this invites the question of *why* partial value aggregates at all and why it aggregates *in that way*. Elsewhere I have argued that aggregation is subjective in that whether and how personal value aggregates depends on the manner of aggregation valued by the subject (Frugé forthcoming). I defended this view on the basis of the resonance of aggregate value with the subject's cares and concerns as well as general considerations of naturalism. While not decisive in itself, taking partial and aggregate value to be distinct gives additional support to the view. But even objectivists about aggregation should see a wider array of aggregative possibilities reveal themselves once aggregation is taken to be decided by the *connection* between the distinct partial value and aggregate value, where this connection needn't be quasi-mereological.

Thus, the distinct types of value view provides a metaphysical underpinning for substantive claims about aggregation that take into consideration factors besides the mere magnitudes of instances of partial value. In general, a factor that plays a role in determining overall quality of life needn't itself be a bearer of partial value, but could instead play a role in how collections of partial value get aggregated. Thus, if narrative arcs are important for a person's overall quality of life, it might be that narrative arcs aren't in themselves valuable but rather shape how value is aggregated. It's not that narrativity is good but that it boosts the good of goods. Other factors that go beyond magnitudes of partial value could get a similar treatment. So the distinct types of value view allows for there to be value relevant factors that increase or decrease value without themselves being valuable.

Take the popular view that temporal shape matters, such that an inclining quality of life is better than a flat or declining quality even if all the component bits of value are good (Kamm 2003; Glasgow 2013). Insofar as shape is important, then it's not another bit of partial value to be included in the aggregation. That way lies regress, since the distribution of partial value with the value of shape included as more partial would itself have a shape. Unless that shape were completely evaluatively neutral, then the added bit of partial value would change the shape, and the partial value of this new shape would then have to be included in the aggregation. Thus, the importance of shape is not due to its being more partial value, but rather in how it influences the aggregation of partial into overall value. But this can only be so if partial and aggregate value are distinct forms of normative valence such that the connection between them is sensitive to the shape of partial value. Then shape considerations matter, but not because they are valuable. Rather, they mold the movement from partial value to a new type of value that is aggregate value. To put the point generally, for considerations of shape to matter, then aggregate value must be a distinct type

of value compared to its partial counterpart. For shape itself is not valuable but nevertheless directly affects value.

An implication of taking aggregate and partial value to be distinct is that it creates the possibility of a unique kind of prudential conflict. Given that aggregate value is not the mere agglomeration of the magnitudes of partial value, then partial good needn't always increase overall good – say if inclining quality matters, and a partial good is so small that it wrecks the otherwise inclining quality of someone's life. This partial good is still good for them, but it lowers the overall quality of their life. So, then, there is a conflict between the prudential reason stemming from the partial value, which says to seek that good, and the prudential reason stemming from the aggregate value, which says to avoid it. But these conflicting directives stem from the same generic requirement to seek the good. Likewise, a partial bad may overall produce more good than its absence – say if inclines matter and it enables the start of a sharp incline. Then from the perspective of partial value, the partial bad should be avoided, but from the perspective of aggregate value it should be acquired. Thus, in both cases, the partial value is good for you in one respect but bad for you in another. So practical reason even at the level of prudential rationality is in conflict. Perhaps the conflict can be resolved, if we should privilege what's best from the perspective of aggregate value. This would be to privilege the perspective of a unified subject, not just over time but at a time as well. Even so, however, the unified subject is made of parts – and some of these parts experience unadulterated good and bad. So overall choice could bring with it the necessity of regret.

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