Introduction

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Policy-makers, researchers, employers, and governments are expressing growing interest in well-being (Diener et al., 2017; see also Chapter 1 by Helliwell, and Chapter 2 by Allin, both in this volume). Scholarly and popular works on the topic are also finding a broad audience (e.g., Gaffney, 2011; Seligman, 2012; Volf, 2015). According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2020) there is "no consensus around a single definition of well-being," but the CDC claims that it generally refers to "judging life positively," "feeling good," and the experience of good physical health. Thus, a sense of well-being is informed by both how individuals feel psychologically as well as by their actual state of physical health and their feelings about that. Religious people also include theological elements in their appraisal of overall well-being. As might be expected, the study and measurement of a concept as broad as well-being remains challenging. This has complicated efforts to track the trends in well-being over time and across cultures, which also affects our ability to understand the antecedents and consequents of well-being. Large national surveys routinely measure health and economic circumstances, but people attach just as much importance to other aspects of their life, including being happy and having a sense of purpose, living well, having good relationships and being connected, and numerous other facets of well-being (VanderWeele, 2017; VanderWeele, McNeely, & Koh, 2019; Lee et al., 2020). Beyond individuals, it is necessary to consider the well-being of groups of people, including organizations, communities, and nations. Antecedents and consequences of well-being at a societal level might differ from those at the individual level and could include such domains as the positive contribution of a group to its members or to flourishing more broadly, the extent to which a climate of mutuality prevails within a group, and a shared sense of collective vision and mission (Phillips & Wong, 2017; VanderWeele, 2019).

This edited volume, *Measuring Well-Being: Interdisciplinary Perspectives from the Social Sciences and the Humanities,* focuses on both conceptual and practical challenges in measuring well-being in the hope of moving the field in the direction of greater integration and perhaps even synthesis while also recognizing that hegemony is undesirable and that diverse voices and perspectives are always valuable. Given such diverse interests related to well-being, it is not surprising that well-being measures—both objective and subjective—have proliferated in recent years. *Subjective well-being* refers to a person's self-reported "global assessment of all aspects" of their life (Diener, 1984), whereas *objective well-being* refers to a set of societal circumstances generally captured by material, tangible, and quantitative indicators. Even when considering just one facet of well-being, subjective well-being, numerous domains have been identified along with related measures, including life satisfaction, positive affect, absence of negative affect, sense of purpose, positive relationships, personal growth, optimism, engagement, mastery, and autonomy. The abundance of subjective well-being measures may arise in part from attempts to capture more specific dimensions or because conceptual definitions also vary widely. In addition, many of these measures focus only on psychological experiences of well-being and do not include other important dimensions of well-being (e.g., physical health) that are also constitutive of well-being broadly defined (CDC, 2020). Another complexity is that an individual might self-report a low level of subjective well-being even in the absence of significant mental health problems such as anxiety or depression. Further complicating this picture, researchers have also identified people who express a high level of subjective well-being but also experience an elevated level of psychopathology (Suldo, 2016).

Some definitions of well-being include material conditions such as income, political conditions like having a voice in governance, and environmental conditions such as the degree of physical safety or the presence of pollution (Stiglitz, Sen, & Fitoussi, 2009). These objective circumstances—sometimes labeled as aspects of "quality of life"—are certainly "fundamental to well-being" (CDC, 2020), but treating them as domains of well-being per se might contribute to conceptual confusion due to the conflation of predictors and outcomes. After all, the overall well-being of some individuals is more sensitive to a reduction in income, while others may be more affected by a diminishment of political voice. This is why the CDC and others advocate the assessment of living conditions separately from psychological appraisals of life satisfaction, happiness, and other aspects of subjective

well-being. This confusion of well-being predictors and outcomes is evident in the definition of well-being used by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress. On the one hand, a variety of objective measures are included in a "multi-dimensional definition" of well-being, but the Report also states that "these dimensions *shape* people's well-being" (Stiglitz et al., 2009, pp. 14–15, emphasis added), implying that they are separate from well-being. Well-being per se is not defined, although the term is frequently used, and the language in the Report sometimes shifts to "quality of life" (p. 15). In another place, "happiness" and "well-being" (p. 10) are mentioned separately, whereas most discussions of subjective well-being would include happiness. As these examples demonstrate, one of the challenges in taking stock of the field of well-being is sorting through the variability in how the concept "well-being" is defined. In sum, with a bewildering array of measures available and ambiguity regarding when and how to measure particular aspects of well-being, knowledge in the field is in danger of becoming scattered, inconsistent, and difficult to reconcile (Hone, Jarden, Schofield, & Duncan, 2014).

Some of the chapters in this volume engage with philosophical and theological traditions on happiness, well-being, and the good life, while others evaluate recent empirical research on well-being and its measurement and consider how measurement requirements may vary by context and purpose. Some chapters draw on the practices and perspectives of the author's home discipline for the purpose of contributing to a conversation across multiple disciplines. Other chapters are truly interdisciplinary as they integrate methods and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. By leveraging insights shared across diverse disciplines, the various chapters explore how research to date can help make sense of the proliferation of different measures and concepts within the field, and also propose new ideas to advance the field (see the exchange in Part 4 of this volume between VanderWeele, Trudel-Fitzgerald, Allin, Farrelly, et al. [Chapter 17, as well as Chapter 19 by VanderWeele, Trudel-Fitzgerald, & Kubzansky] and Ryff, Boylan, & Kirsch [Chapters 18 and 20]).

Contributors represent numerous disciplines including psychology, economics, sociology, statistics, public health, theology, and philosophy. This collected work may be useful not only for researchers primarily focused on well-being, but also for scholars across a range of disciplines who may be considering how well-being interacts with or touches on other problems of interest, including educational reform, the strengthening of democratic

institutions, and economic empowerment. Furthermore, our chapters may provide some practical guidance for public policy, public health, or social science or for clinical practitioners and researchers seeking to measure, monitor, and study well-being or who are interested in well-being but may need an introduction to the conceptual and measurement issues in the field (see especially Part 4 of this volume).

The Goals of the Volume and Its Origins

This volume developed out of the Interdisciplinary Workshop on Happiness, Well-Being, and Measurement held at Harvard University on April 5–6, 2018. With funding from the John Templeton Foundation and the Lee Kum Sheung Center for Health and Happiness, this gathering of active scholars of well-being in the social sciences and humanities was co-organized by Tyler VanderWeele, Laura Kubzansky, and Vish Viswanath and hosted by the Human Flourishing Program at Harvard University, in conjunction with the Lee Kum Sheung Center for Health and Happiness, at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health. Moving beyond the eudaimonic versus hedonic measurement debates of the past, workshop participants focused principally on how to make progress in knowledge despite the uncoordinated proliferation of measures across relatively siloed disciplines. This aspiration is consistent with the trend in many scientific fields toward "convergence research," which "entails integrating knowledge, methods, and expertise from different disciplines and forming novel frameworks to catalyze scientific discovery and innovation" (National Science Foundation, 2019).

We hope that the workshop—and our volume—contributes to the development of a *well-ordered science of well-being*. As Chapter 6 (by Farrelly; p. 195) in this volume puts it, the "ultimate goal" of well-ordered science is its "ability to enable us to flourish." In other words, we aim to provide tools for addressing key questions about well-being that can be used by scholars whose empirical studies inform public policy and public understanding. These tools may prove useful for informing the social and political processes that aim to promote the greatest amount of complete well-being, or flourishing, for the greatest number of people. The theologians and philosophers who contributed to this volume might hasten to point out that this end is not necessarily as universally valued or as utilitarian as this phrasing might make it seem.

The Harvard workshop launched a discussion of these issues and provided a space for participants from a variety of disciplines to share their perspectives on well-being, take stock of the field as a whole, and co-create recommendations to guide future research. The workshop was organized around five questions.

1. What aspects of well-being should governments measure?
2. What aspects of well-being should large multiuse public health and social science cohort studies measure?
3. What should researchers conducting well-being studies measure as a predictor or as an outcome?
4. To what extent is it possible to attain consensus on how to define and measure well-being? To what extent is it necessary?
5. How can knowledge about the distribution, effects, and determinants of well-being expand when we are using so many different measures?

Starting from their own vantage point as scholars who have each made significant contributions within their own disciplines, these psychologists, philosophers, epidemiologists, sociologists, theologians, and others shared their insights and challenged each other to explore possibilities for interdisciplinary integration and synthesis.

The workshop convened both senior and junior scholars across multiple disciplines. It is rare for scholars generally used to speaking to others within their own discipline to open their cherished ideas to cross-examination by representatives from other disciplines, especially those that operate from different epistemic, metaphysical, and ontological foundations. But both the conference and the volume aimed for "hospitality" (Hampson & Boyd-MacMillan, 2008, p. 98; Lee & Yong, 2012) across disciplinary lines, the debate about intractable "epistemic crises" in interdisciplinary communication notwithstanding (MacIntyre, 1984, 1988, 1990). Dissonance was welcome, but a spirit of "the pursuit of truth in the company of friends" prevailed (Palmer, 1998, p. 90). That spirit continues in the volume, which concludes with a convergent set of recommendations offered by nineteen co-authors, a dissenting response by several other workshop participants, a response to the dissent, and a rejoinder. We believe such dialogue is essential to a healthy and well-ordered science.

It is our hope that this volume will strengthen the potential for further interdisciplinary conversation within the research community and in the

domain of public policy and that it will bring together the best insights from this lively discussion. In the first section of our volume, chapters identify key questions about well-being that have been explored by empirical social science. In later chapters, contributors provide discussion of some of the underpinnings of our understanding of well-being from the perspectives of theology and philosophy, as well as discussing the extent to which these views inform social scientific conceptualizations and investigations.

Philosophical and Theological Underpinnings of Well-Being: Toward a Rapprochement with Social Science

A great deal of valuable scholarship has been conducted within a single disciplinary silo, and moreover, we are not suggesting that interdisciplinary synthesis is always possible or desirable. However, there is also enormous insight to be gained by the process of convergence or consilience. Bringing together scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds for a two-day workshop is no guarantee that they will be influenced in a meaningful way by ideas from each other's disciplines. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of any attempt to integrate the social sciences and the humanities is that social science research on well-being often begins with materialist assumptions about human life. On the other hand, scholarship in the humanities often discusses nonmaterialist matters that are difficult, and in some cases impossible, to measure with the methods of empirical science (see also Hood, 2012; Porpora, 2006).

From the vantage point of disciplines in the humanities such as philosophy and theology, complete well-being may be understood as having both *penultimate* and *ultimate* ends (Chapter 10, by Messer, and Chapter 11, by Wynn, both in this volume). Ultimate ends are considered most important, whereas penultimate ends are subordinate. For example, an ultimate end connects well-being in the deepest sense to an "eschatological hope" (Chapter 10, p. 287) in salvation, transcendence, eternal life, or communion with God or Nature, depending on the religious or spiritual tradition. Whereas nonspiritual appraisals of happiness and life satisfaction may constitute ultimate ends from a secular perspective, these ends are considered subordinate from a theological perspective. For example, one empirical study found that people engaged in religiously empowered benevolent service frequently defined well-being "in terms of doing God's will," even if this meant giving up

some amount of the more commonly cited well-being outcomes, including physical health, financial stability, "material success, prestige, or the adoration of other people" (Lee, Poloma, & Post, 2013, p. 97). This is one example of a social science study that focused on an ultimate end, although it is somewhat atypical in the field well-being.

The debate about ultimate and penultimate ends does not simply reflect a disagreement between social science and the humanities. Within a single discipline in the humanities, Kant's (1785/2005) distinction between *perfect* and *imperfect* duties mirrors the ultimate–penultimate end dichotomy and further demonstrates the role that worldviews play in defining the ultimate ends of human life. Kant (1785/2005, p. 40), a disciplined thinker renowned for his steadfast commitment to a routine of long work days, disparaged the idyllic life of the "South Sea islanders," which he saw as devoted "merely to idleness, amusement, and propagation of the species." In Kant's view, fulfillment of such imperfect duties, however competently discharged and conducive to a deep subjective sense of happiness and life satisfaction, represented a neglect of the gifts of reason and self-development consistent with the inherent dignity of a rational being. Such a life of pleasure could not be the appropriate fulfillment of the perfect duty, or the attainment of the ultimate end, of a properly human life. Kant's argument is grounded in reason, not theology, and certainly not in the self-reports that provide the foundation for much empirical research on well-being. This is one of the challenges of interdisciplinary dialogue about well-being: some humanities scholars may focus on what reason or theology suggests to them that people *ought* to value, rather than what social science findings reveal about what people *say* they value. A well-ordered science of well-being might benefit from more consideration of such incommensurate epistemological and conceptual commitments.

Social scientists have also attempted to understand the role of penultimate and ultimate concerns in relation to different experiences of well-being. Maslow (1971, p. 271), for example, understood the former as related to "Deficiency-needs" (D-needs like hunger for food or craving for social status, which derive from a sense of not having enough) and the latter as related to the "realm of Being" (B-needs, which include the classic philosophical staples of truth, goodness, and beauty and understood as originating in wholeness rather than a sense of deficit). People could to some extent realize their potential in relation to D-needs and be described, in Maslow's (1971, p. 271) famous phrase, as "self-actualizers." But this self-actualization was at a relatively low level of human development because it was not rooted in

ultimate ends. Such individuals might not be aware of the limitations of their growth, a claim that is also made by philosophers such as Kierkegaard, as we will discuss.

Something greater than self-actualization is required. For Maslow, what is needed is *self-transcendence*, in the sense of commitment to a Platonic form or a cause greater than the self. This may involve a religious awakening or conversion, or a perception of "the sacred within the secular" (Maslow, 1971, p. 273) that signifies a nonreligious ultimate end in alignment with a secular worldview. Those who orient their lives toward Being-needs like truth and goodness and away from Deficiency-needs such as material comfort and social status "have transcended self-actualization" (Maslow, 1971, p. 272).

From the standpoint of research on well-being, individuals who are "transcenders" according to this definition may actually present as less "happy" or "satisfied" in a conventional sense and more prone to "cosmic sadness" (or "B-sadness," Maslow, 1971, p. 279) over the inherent suffering in the world and the sense that much of this suffering is the preventable result of human ignorance. Transcenders may be more aware of the reality of the suffering of others and their duty to work toward solutions, rather than employing escapist coping mechanisms, than the "'merely-healthy' self-actualizers" featured in Maslow's (1971, pp. 271) much more widely cited early writings (Koltko-Rivera, 2006). Numerous philosophers and scholars in other traditions affirm this position. Maslow and Kant share a similar sense that our understanding of well-being should align with the kind of being that humans are. Reason was an ultimate value for Kant, Maslow promoted B-values, Aristotle emphasized eudaimonia, and theologians have prioritized salvation or doing God's will.

Penultimate ends include hedonic happiness, job satisfaction, physical health, financial stability, satisfying interpersonal relationships, and the like. These ends, which may be considered ingredients of a flourishing life, often drive large-scale patterns of human migration (Clark et al., 2019). Unless constrained by legal or social factors, people tend to "vote with their feet" by moving to communities that offer greater opportunities for these kinds of well-being. More eudaimonic or spiritual goals, such as achieving a meaningful life or responding to a religious calling, can also drive human behavior, even when attaining these goals may mean sacrificing other aspects of well-being, at least for a time (Lee et al., 2013). The 105 Puritans who landed in Plymouth in 1620, to take a classic example, suffered predictably great

material hardships as a result of following their religious aspirations. Nearly half of this group died the first winter (Philbrick, 2006).

In Western societies today, people less frequently have to choose paths that allow them to satisfy penultimate but not ultimate well-being or vice versa. For example, seeking places where religious freedom is possible does not necessarily impose a high cost on other domains of well-being. And, in fact, these different ends are often complementary. For example, increased religious service attendance and spiritual practices predict a variety of other well-being outcomes, including greater happiness, along with lower depression and illegal drug use (Chen & VanderWeele, 2018). Furthermore, social science research has shed light on the types of religious practices that may be most beneficial for well-being (i.e., public religious activity), as well as identifying important group differences in this overall pattern (Maselko & Kubzansky, 2006). But it is also true that well-being for the early Puritan settlers of the United States, as well as for various religious groups today, is grounded in theological presuppositions that may not resonate with dominant trends in the contemporary United States, Canada, and nations of Western Europe. In fact, with regard to defining well-being and scholarly activities around understanding and studying well-being, the general emphasis in these societies since at least the twentieth century has been on material comfort and the self-actualization of the rights-bearing individual—"happiness" as an individual's personal project and disciplined responsibility—rather than on fidelity to religious interdicts or collectivistic norms (Binkley, 2014; Rieff, 2007). Similarly, constructs such as "character" and "virtue," which are highly valued in theological and philosophic perspectives on well-being and considered as important markers of a flourishing life (VanderWeele, 2017; Lee et al., 2020), are instead contested and even sometimes disparaged in some social science perspectives on well-being, particularly within sociology (Sayer, 2019). These disparate underpinnings of how we understand well-being are difficult to reconcile. In the lay population, the contemporary quest for well-being also involves "adaptive preferences" (Elster, 1983/2016) in social systems that more readily encourage the attainment of penultimate rather than ultimate ends (Lee, 2019).

Serious engagement with scholars in the humanities may encourage reevaluating some of the presuppositions of the social scientific study of well-being (see Chapter 19, by Messer, and Chapter 11, by Wynn, both in this volume). For example, although theologians find much value in the work of a psychologist like William James, they also note that "the aesthetic goods that

arise in [religious] conversion cannot be adequately identified using a purely secular vocabulary, since the beauty that is disclosed in such experiences has inherently, from the vantage point of the experiencer, a theological structure" (p. 327). In addressing this issue, Wynn (p. 330) further notes that, at least for James, religious states of being can only serve as an "enablers of well-being," not "constituents" of it. In other words, a conversion experience might promote happiness and life satisfaction (penultimate ends), but, conceived in this reductionistic manner, conversion per se cannot constitute well-being itself. Wynn does point out that psychology and theology are not always in competition; they may in fact work together to promote some aspects of well-being, as we have already seen (e.g., Chen & VanderWeele, 2018). So some degree of rapprochement is possible. In this regard, Wynn's chapter exemplifies interdisciplinary hospitality. And yet more dialogue is needed to sort out the extent to which religious and nonreligious domains of well-being are in fact "diverse and not fully commensurable" (Chapter 10, by Messer, p. 293, in this volume).

Several streams of thought in humanities disciplines and some branches of psychology recognize the need to distinguish experiences of well-being that are truly markers of flourishing from those that might partly derive from self-alienation and unhealthy psychological defense mechanisms (Chapter 15, by Xi & Lee, in this volume). One example is the abuse of drugs to gain temporary pleasure at the expense of long-term well-being, although the subtler forms of maladaptive coping identified by philosophers like Kierkegaard will likely be more contested. In the Western tradition, the fundamental issue is highlighted by the Biblical verse about gaining the whole world but losing one's soul (Matthew 16:25–26). *Self-alienation*, or not understanding what is truly good for the self and acting from this ignorance in ways that are harmful in the long run, often involves fixation on socially sanctioned penultimate ends rather than ultimate ends. Socialization processes may condition people to desire apparent goods that are not in their best interests or that produce unintended consequences, as when the unskillful search for material comfort and security for one's in-group leads to conflict and war with an out-group and eventually ends up harming the self/in-group. In addition to philosophical and theological arguments, as an empirical matter, a deep sense of inner peace may not be consistent with the patterns of excessive striving and material acquisition that characterize some aspects of contemporary Western culture. Socrates recognized this tension more than 2,400 years ago—long before the advent of the media-saturated consumer

society—when he promoted a simple, rather austere society as an ideal setting for peaceful flourishing. His interlocutor in a Platonic dialogue labeled this the "city of pigs" because it was lacking in most of the refinements that we now take for granted as a birthright. Socrates agreed "that many will not be satisfied with the simpler way of life," which would lead them to take "a slice of our neighbor's land. . . . And so we shall go to war" (Plato, 275/2012, pp. 318–319).

For Socrates, this social dynamic produces a city "in the grip of a fever," but it was unlikely that residents would be aware of their fevered strivings and the great suffering such insatiable ambitions inevitably produce. "Fever" implies a kind of delirium that generates compulsive behaviors that appear irrational from a spiritual perspective but quite reasonable to the one in the grip of the fever. Writing from a very different vantage point than Socrates more than two millennia later, the Christian philosopher Kierkegaard (1849/1980, p. 25) also hinted at this fever with these provocative words: "in the most secret hiding place of happiness there dwells also anxiety, which is despair . . . because for despair the most cherished and desirable place to live is in the heart of happiness." Also writing from a Christian perspective, though much earlier than Kierkegaard, Augustine (1950/413–426) argued that a fevered city would not be a place of deepest well-being because it is not "rightly ordered" with regard to penultimate and ultimate ends.

Kierkegaard (1849/1980, p. 43) demonstrated that a happiness that is "completely dominated by the sensate" is not a secure happiness, although a situation of complacency might prevail among people who are not fully aware of their hidden despair or its source in spiritual malaise. A comparative sociological analysis provides support for Kierkegaard's contention by showing that societies in a sensate rather than spiritual phase of development tend to emphasize technological development and shallow, often decadent, forms of happiness rather than ultimate ends (Sorokin, 1937–1941). Jewish philosopher and mystic Martin Buber's (1923/2000, p. 97) classic work *I and Thou* affirms Kierkegaard's notion of "happy" despair by way of a memorable description of privileged people who offer "a superior smile, but death lurks in their hearts." According to Buber, we realize our full humanity in I–Thou relations, in which each person treats the other as a sacred subject and as an end in themselves. In his view, the experience of the "Divine" arises not only in the individual, but in the relation "between the I and Thou," and "love" is properly understood to be "the responsibility of an I for a Thou" (Pfuetze, 1973, pp. 155, 201; see also Buber, 1923/2000, p. 66).

In a mass society characterized by many impersonal, transactional relationships, people may be conditioned to enact the I–It relational form of treating others as objects, merely as means to ends. This pervasive feature of contemporary life may not be at the forefront of consciousness for most people—including many social scientists—which is why it is helpful to distinguish both conceptually and empirically between short-term, superficial types of well-being and more healthy and enduring forms. Interdisciplinary research might help correct inaccurate perceptions of well-being and foster deeper individual and collective experiences or flourishing. The analysis offered by Buber (1923/2000, p. 97), who referred to the central dynamic in sensate societies as the "despotism of the proliferating It," provides an impetus for social science and the humanities to co-develop an enhanced understanding of well-being. From this perspective, despite a level of creature comfort unsurpassed in human history, the complete well-being of people in I–It relations is limited by the depersonalized and desacralized quality of their awareness and interactions: "What has become an It is then taken as an It, experienced and used as an It, employed along with other things for the project of finding one's way in the world, and eventually for the project of 'conquering' the world" (p. 91). In such contexts, Buber argued that love tends to be experienced as a sentimental emotion, which is a pale substitute for the sacred responsibility of an I for a Thou. And absent this sense of sacred stewardship for the world-as-Thou, environmental degradation and pervasive human conflict may coexist with relatively high levels of individual, penultimate, subjective well-being. In some cases, such well-being may take the form of Kierkegaard's despair-hiding-in-happiness.

This raises important questions regarding additional forms of well-being, such as peace, communal well-being, and spiritual well-being, that are explored in this book. We believe future research exploring the associations between current measures of well-being and the new measures presented in our volume, such as the comprehensive measure of meaning (Hanson & VanderWeele, Chapter 12), inner peace (Xi & Lee, Chapter 15), and Christian spiritual well-being (VanderWeele, Long, & Balboni, Chapter 16), will be informative and create a deeper understanding of well-being as discussed earlier. Negative correlations across some of these measures, or at least some domains captured by these measures, are certainly possible. For example, is hedonic happiness positively or negatively related to inner peace or the domains of Christian spiritual well-being? How do such measures relate to "rich and sexy well-being" (Margolis et al., Chapter 13), or community

well-being (VanderWeele, Chapter 14)? How might a consideration of the balance of I–It and I–Thou relationships in an individual's social network, or in a society more broadly, affect these associations across measures? Do the associations hold for both penultimate and ultimate ends? For both Maslow's merely healthy actualizers and his self-transcenders? These are just a few of the fresh questions that arise when an interdisciplinary approach is used.

We have argued in this section that it is helpful if both social scientists and laypersons draw on the humanities to more fully consider the philosophical and theological underpinnings of well-being, and we have highlighted Maslow's later work as an example of moving in this direction, at least to a greater degree than his earlier work. But social science offers something of great value to the humanities as well, as many of the chapters in our volume illustrate. Consider the voluminous humanistic writing across the centuries extolling empathy, altruism, and various forms of selfless benevolence. Psychologist Adam Grant's (2013) empirical work is just one example of an emerging body of social science literature showing that unbridled empathy and altruism can be harmful and unsustainable (see also Bloom, 2016; Oakley, Knafo, Madhavan, & Wilson, 2011). It is much more effective to be an "otherish" giver and express skillful concern for both one's own *and* others' interests, rather than being a selfless (self-sacrificing) giver (Grant, 2013, p. 158). The implications of this empirical work for well-being are clear: "when concern for others is coupled with a healthy dose of concern for the self, givers are less prone to burning out and getting burned—and they're better positioned to flourish" (Grant, 2013, p. 158). This is not to suggest that the humanities were blind to this kind of insight. Indeed, the latest research findings confirm at least some ancient wisdom (Bloom, 2016). The research substantially adds to our understanding of how philosophical or theological ideals are lived out by real people in different social settings (see also Lee et al., 2013). And Grant's research findings are potentially more persuasive in shifting large-scale organizational practices than humanistic scholarship because organizational leaders seek to justify decisions in terms of scientific evidence and validated "best practices." In other words, the social sciences and the humanities are mutually enriching.

And yet, despite the rise of positive psychology; the proliferation of well-being interventions and "wellness" programs in the workplace; and increased scholarly, popular, and policy attention to well-being, social science research has documented that happiness has been consistently falling in the United States (Helliwell, Layard, & Sachs, 2019)—a country that has recently been

described as a "mass addiction society" (Sachs, 2019, p. 124)—and "deaths of despair" are on the rise in both the United States and the United Kingdom (Case & Deaton, 2017; Dwyer-Lindgren et al., 2018; Joyce & Xu, 2019). We may gain a more complete understanding of the challenges to well-being, and possible solutions to these challenges, from integrating the enormous power of the social sciences to document and understand patterns and causal relationships with the deep wisdom of the humanities. In some cases, this synthesis may encourage scholars to focus attention on a smaller number of essential well-being measures in order to make comparisons across populations (see Chapter 17), while in other instances such integration may encourage the development of new measures of neglected aspects of well-being (see Chapters 12 through 16).

One helpful path forward is to draw on the humanities to guide the development of tradition-specific measures of spiritual well-being. A useful example is provided by VanderWeele, Long, and Balboni (Chapter 16 in this volume). Informed by a rich understanding of the theology of a specific group—the authors offer a Christian measure as a template for the development of measures in other traditions—researchers will be better able to use such measures in combination with other measures of well-being to gauge the associations between penultimate and ultimate ends and the common pathways that shape both (VanderWeele, 2017). As noted in Chapter 13, it is instructive that the correlation between a rather superficial measure of well-being ("the Rich and Sexy Well-Being Scale, which measures 'low-brow' lifestyle goods: wealth, sex, beauty, and social status") and eudaimonic well-being is quite high ($r = 0.56$; see Chapter 13, by Margolis, Schwitzgebel, Ozer, & Lyubomirsky, p. 381, in this volume). But this correlation also suggests a large amount of unexplained variance, similar to the empirical association of a happy life and a meaningful life (Baumeister, Vohs, Aaker, & Garbinsky, 2013). As these findings illustrate, more dialogue between social scientists and scholars in the humanities is warranted.

Overview of the Chapters

We have organized the volume into three parts. The first part, "Empirical Research and Reflections on Well-Being Measurement," contains five chapters written by social scientists. This section begins with "Measuring and Using Happiness to Support Public Policies" by John F. Helliwell, an

economist and the lead author of the World Happiness Report. It engages philosophical and empirical arguments in favor using people's evaluations of the quality of their lives in order to guide public policies in support of well-being. Helliwell (Chapter 1, p. 30) argues in favor of using the "data from everyday life, not to isolate different theories of well-being, but to see how these theories cohere or compete in supporting people's judgments about how their lives are going." Armed with this understanding, policy-makers should be better able to promote flourishing. In Chapter 2, Paul Allin offers "Reflections on the Introduction and Use of Official Measures of Subjective Well-Being in the UK" from his vantage point as former Director of the Measuring National Wellbeing Programme in the UK Office for National Statistics. He makes the case for using four subjective well-being questions in the UK's Annual Population Survey in terms of practical utility, and he argues that this criterion should be used to determine how to assess other topics as well. After noting the limited uptake of survey findings beyond academia, he then argues that statisticians must do more to engage with politics, public opinion, and other domains of broader impact in order to make a meaningful difference in the quality and quantity of well-being in the world. Psychologists Louis Tay, Andrew T. Jebb, and Victoria S. Scotney contributed Chapter 3, "Assessments of Societal Subjective Well-Being: Ten Methodological Issues for Consideration." They discuss the appropriate units of analysis, concerns about translation across cultural contexts (e.g., measurement equivalence), domain-specific versus general measures of well-being, and other important methodological issues which have not been given adequate attention in previous research. If followed, their well-reasoned recommendations—including the use of curvilinear methods when appropriate—might lead to more consistent and valid empirical findings.

Psychologists Carol D. Ryff, Jennifer Morozink Boylan, and Julie A. Kirsch provided Chapter 4: "Linking Eudaimonic and Hedonic Well-Being to Health: An Integrative Approach." They offer a detailed review of these two types of well-being, including reflections on ancient Greek philosophy and more recent psychological understandings. They explore how these well-being types are related to various aspects of physical health and call for an integrative approach to research on well-being. Their review further discusses "challenged thriving" (p. 97), or experiencing well-being in the midst of illness and life challenges. As a follow-up to the review of multiple aspects of health presented in Chapter 4, the next chapter, Chapter 5, offers a more specific focus on whether and how psychological well-being

influences longevity and selects the most rigorous studies as a means to ad-
vance the field. Titled, "A Review of Psychological Well-Being and Mortality
Risk: Are All Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being Equal?" this chapter
was written by Claudia Trudel-Fitzgerald, Laura D. Kubzansky, and Tyler
J. VanderWeele, with collective expertise in epidemiology, health psy-
chology, social psychology, statistics, and related fields. Their review reveals
how distinct dimensions of psychological well-being may differentially im-
pact mortality as well as the biobehavioral pathways involved. Purpose in
life and optimism appear to have the strongest associations with mortality,
while happiness appears less strongly related, and research on other aspects
of well-being is currently inconclusive. They offer twelve recommendations
for further research, including the incorporation of more than one psycho-
logical well-being dimension in research designs, administering repeated
measures of these dimensions, and evaluating if these relationships vary by
sociodemographic characteristics.

The second section of the volume, "Conceptual Reflections on Well-Being
Measurement," contains six chapters written primarily from the perspective
of the humanities, especially philosophy and theology, along with an inter-
disciplinary chapter grounded in biology. The first chapter in this section
is Chapter 6, by Colin Farrelly, a political scientist/philosopher: "'Positive
Biology' and Well-Ordered Science." Synthesizing across philosophy,
geroscience, and positive psychology, the author builds a strong case for a
"positive biology" that focuses on successful aging and promotion of hap-
piness. He argues that including "the positive" in our scholarly endeavors,
rather than simply focusing on disease and deficits contributes to a well-
ordered science. Whereas a disordered science is characterized by epistemic
vices that make it more difficult to "secure the desired aims of health, peace
and economic prosperity" (p. 195), a well-ordered science facilitates these
desired aims, thereby promoting the ability to flourish. He notes the imbal-
ance between lavish research funding to support the study of disease (neg-
ative biology) compared to much more limited support for research on
exceptional health and flourishing. A positive biology would "celebrate a
curiosity-driven mindset" (p. 213) as a basis for improved scientific investi-
gation that would assist the attainment of desired outcomes rather than just
the avoidance of negative ones.

Chapter 7, "Philosophy of Well-Being for the Social Sciences: A Primer,"
was contributed by the philosopher Guy Fletcher. As a primer, this chapter
is especially helpful for social scientists interested in an overview of how

philosophers approach the study of well-being, especially how they "preserve a common subject matter for debate, even in the presence of radical disagreement," how they understand theories that make use of the crucial distinction between intrinsic and instrumental goods, the methods they employ (e.g., thought experiments), and some current disagreements between psychology and philosophy. The chapter notes that a "rapprochement" between social science and the humanities is problematized by current philosophical thinking about "genuine conceptual pluralism," a "radical kind of pluralism" in which words like "well-being" refer to incommensurate underlying constructs (p. 225). One constructive pathway out of this situation might be for philosophers to develop theories of specific types of well-being (penultimate vs. ultimate types, for example) and then, in light of this conceptual clarity, social scientists might proceed with appropriately delimited empirical study.

Chapter 8, by William A. Lauinger, also a philosopher, is "Defending a Hybrid of Objective-List and Desire Theories of Well-Being." Lauinger (p. 230) proceeds from the premise that there are two primary and distinct "visions of what human beings are." The first is Aristotelian and conceives of humans as having capacities that both enhance functioning and reflect the "kinds of things they are, that is, as human beings" (p. 230). "Objective-list" theories of well-being proceed from this perspective and include such "basic goods" as friendship, accomplishment, and knowledge (p. 232). The other vision, informed by Jacques Lacan, views human beings "as unique individuals with different sets of intrinsic desires" and advances a more subjective theory of well-being built around sets of desires that vary across people. The author defends a hybrid of these two theories to build a more coherent account of well-being. Next in order is Chapter 9, "The Challenge of Measuring Well-Being as Philosophers Conceive of It," by philosopher Anne Baril. This interdisciplinary chapter explores the congruence between philosophical understandings of well-being and a psychological measure of well-being developed by Carol Ryff and used in more than 750 empirical studies. Baril argues that there is some congruence with regard to the measurement of friendship, although less so for the other domains of the psychological well-being scale. And yet, despite the congruence on even this single domain, she argues that the measure will not "enable us to identify, with perfect accuracy, who among respondents has realized the basic good of friendship and who has not" (p. 277). Still, she concludes by promoting "interdisciplinary deference" and ends on an optimistic note that "meaningful collaboration" is indeed possible (pp. 278–279).

The final two chapters in this section were written by theologians. Chapter 10, by Neil G. Messer, is titled, "Human Flourishing: A Christian Theological Perspective." This chapter develops an understanding of flourishing in terms of the ultimate ends of human beings as created by God: "the fulfilment of God's good purposes" (p. 285). These purposes include relationship with God and with others, living an integrated life (in which mental and physical aspects combine into a well-functioning whole), and living out a vocation. This vision of well-being contrasts with the focus of many social scientific studies, which Messer (p. 299) argues should "encourage a critical self-awareness" among researchers. Furthermore, this theological account of well-being could serve as an alternative model to the two dominant approaches of social science research: the hedonic and eudaimonic accounts. A measure related to the theological account is provided in Chapter 16 by VanderWeele, Long, and Balboni. The final chapter in this section (Chapter 11) is "Comparing Empirical and Theological Perspectives on the Relationship Between Hope and Aesthetic Experience: An Approach to the Nature of Spiritual Well-Being" by Mark Wynn. This chapter offers reflections on the relationships between hope, beauty, and spiritual experience (which involves "a sense of oneness, or being united with the universe, or a love of the entire world," as well as "a conception of the fundamental nature of things") and spiritual well-being. In Wynn's (p. 306) understanding, spiritual well-being refers to "living successfully" in terms of this fundamental nature. To explore more concretely what this might mean, he brings the psychological work of William James into conversation with the theology of Thomas Aquinas. He notes some fundamental differences but also some possible points of convergence, including the possibility of a more "hopeful engagement with the world" (p. 333). As with the previous chapter, this theological account of well-being aims at ultimate ends.

The third section of the volume, "Advancing the Conversation about Measurement," continues the interdisciplinary approach of the book. These five chapters introduce new measures of selected aspects of well-being, with initial psychometric testing provided in two of them. One of these chapters also explores empirical relationships among different types of well-being. In the section's first chapter (Chapter 12), philosopher Jeffrey Hanson and epidemiologist Tyler J. VanderWeele contribute "The Comprehensive Measure of Meaning: Psychological and Philosophical Foundations." The authors rely on philosophical scholarship to enrich "an emerging consensus" in psychology with regard to a tripartite structure of meaning consisting of

"cognitive coherence, affective significance, and motivational direction" (p. 339). This enables the elaboration of dimensions within this three-part framework and ultimately to the selection of twenty-one survey items to form a comprehensive measure of meaning. They suggest that their measure may overcome significant conceptual limitations in other measures and demonstrate the value of bringing social science and the humanities into dialogue. Further work will be needed in terms of psychometric evaluation of the measure.

The psychologists Seth Margolis, Eric Schwitzgebel, Daniel J. Ozer, and Sonja Lyubomirsky co-authored Chapter 13, titled, "Empirical Relationships Among Five Types of Well-Being." This chapter explores the relationships among the five main conceptualizations of well-being found in the literature— hedonic well-being, life satisfaction, desire fulfillment, eudaimonia, and non-eudaimonic objective-list well-being—along with other measures of well-being, including a new measure of "desire fulfillment." The associations are moderately strong and suggest some overlap, but the authors ultimately conclude that that "empirical findings based on one type of well-being measure may not generalize to all types of well-being" (p. 377). In addition, associations with Big Five personality traits varied across types of well-being. Consistent with a theme that runs throughout the volume, they argue for greater attention to the "philosophical value commitments" (p. 403) and, we would suggest, to the philosophical/theological underpinnings that are involved in the selection of some measures of well-being and not others.

The next two chapters propose new measures of well-being concepts that have not been previously subjected to empirical study. Chapter 14, "Measures of Community Well-Being: A Template," by Tyler J. VanderWeele, offers a new measure of community well-being with six domains: flourishing individuals, good relationships, proficient leadership, healthy practices, satisfying community, and strong mission. The measure can be adapted to accommodate different units of analysis from families, to schools, to religious communities, to neighborhoods, and to nations. This is important because well-being at the community level is distinct from, but is also inclusive of, the well-being of individuals. Integrating the well-being of individuals and communities leads to a more complete assessment of flourishing. Psychometric evaluation is still needed. In Chapter 15, sociologists Juan Xi and Matthew T. Lee offer "Inner Peace as a Contribution to Human Flourishing: A New Scale Developed from Ancient Wisdom." Here the authors develop a new measure of inner peace and provide an initial psychometric evaluation based

on five empirical studies. Results suggest that inner peace is comprised of three dimensions: acceptance of loss, transcendence of hedonism and materialism, and inner balance and calmness. Given that philosophers and theologians have emphasized the centrality of inner peace for the good life, the authors hope that their three-dimensional construct will inform future research on human flourishing.

Chapter 16 is "Tradition-Specific Measures of Spiritual Well-Being," by Tyler J. VanderWeele, public health researcher Katelyn N. Long, and theologian and clinical researcher Michael J. Balboni. Although the overwhelming majority of the world's population identifies with a religious tradition, research on well-being often overlooks religious or spiritual components of complete flourishing. The authors argue in favor of tradition-specific measures of spiritual well-being rather than a generic measure, and they propose a new measure of Christian spiritual well-being as a template for the development of measures for other traditions. This measure contains thirty items across six domains: beliefs, practices, service, communion with God, Christian character, and relationships. By integrating feedback provided by Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox theologians, pastors, priests, spiritual directors, and laity, the authors sought to develop a measure that would be appropriate for all three of these foundational traditions within Christianity. However, the measure still requires psychometric testing.

Finally, we conclude the fourth and final part of the volume ("Scholarly Dialogue on the Science of Well-Being"), with a lively dialogue starting with "Current Recommendations on the Selection of Measures for Well-Being," Chapter 17, co-authored by nineteen of the scholars invited to the Harvard well-being conference that launched this book. Led by Tyler J. VanderWeele, Claudia Trudel-Fitzgerald, and Laura D. Kubzansky, this group attempted to bring coherence to the measurement arena, partly in response to a common concern expressed by other investigators that clear guidance regarding measurement is lacking, in part due to the proliferation of measures and inconsistent conceptualization. In developing provisional guidance, they considered the number of items that might be included in different kinds of surveys, as well as the distinct purposes of the research, as this might differ for government, multiuse cohort, or psychological well-being surveys. The recommendations were intended to provide guidance about practical decisions that must be made under certain constraints. Carol D. Ryff, Jennifer Morozink Boylan, and Julie A. Kirsch advanced this dialogue by offering a critique of these recommendations in their Chapter 18, "Advancing the Science

of Well-Being: A Dissenting View on Measurement Recommendations."
The three principal authors of the recommendations chapter, Tyler
J. VanderWeele, Claudia Trudel-Fitzgerald, and Laura D. Kubzansky, offered
their "Response to 'Advancing the Science of Well-Being: A Dissenting View
on Measurement Recommendations'" (Chapter 19). To close the conversa-
tion (at least for now), Carol D. Ryff, Jennifer Morozink Boylan, and Julie
A. Kirsch provided a rejoinder (titled "Response to Response: Growing the
Field of Well-Being," Chapter 20). We then offer a short concluding chapter
that draws together the central themes of the entire volume.

Conclusion

The twenty chapters offered in this volume reflect the perspectives of leading
representatives of a variety of social science and humanities disciplines.
Some of the insights offered by the contributors are more readily assimilated
than others. The consideration of both objective and subjective aspects of
well-being, representing a hybrid model of their interrelationships, seems
rather uncontroversial. Some of the theological interests in ultimate ends are
less likely to be wholly represented in the work of social scientists who may
be more grounded in materialist presuppositions. But we believe the field
will advance if scholars begin to acknowledge that subjective well-being is
not complete well-being and that it may be valuable to also consider spiritual
well-being, for example, in relation to other forms of well-being, given its im-
portance for so much of the world's population. With a broader spectrum of
measures to consider, it may be possible to assess how these different forms
of well-being relate to each other.

There are some limitations to the work presented in this book. First, many
of the new measures that have been proposed have not been subjected to psy-
chometric testing. Some of this testing is now in progress, but results were not
available when the volume went to press. Second, the engagement with non-
Western cultures was quite limited as most of the discussion of well-being
related to Western contexts and philosophical and theological traditions. But
many of the contributions could inform research on non-Western traditions;
the new measure of tradition-specific Christian spiritual well-being was
offered as an example with the hope of encouraging the development of other
tradition-specific measures by content experts. Finally, not all of the chapters
involved deep interdisciplinary engagement, and, when this did occur, it

generally involved two disciplines, often philosophy and psychology. But for many contributors, the interdisciplinary dialogue enriched the discussion notably. We hope bringing these different perspectives together in a single volume will both provide useful tools for future research and scholarship and inspire further hospitality across disciplines.

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