

WELFARE AND RATIONAL FIT

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We commonly talk about what is *good for* someone or something. But the expression ‘good for’ has a variety of meanings depending on the context of use. When we say, “X is good for Y,” we may express the proposition that X stands in an instrumental relation to Y, that doing X will keep Y in the condition standard users would want Y to be in, that X is good from the point of view of Y, or that X contributes to what is variously called Y’s *welfare*, *well-being*, *self-interest*, *flourishing*, or *personal good*. My interest herein will lie with ‘good for’ in this latter, welfarist sense, and my aim will be to present and defend a view about the nature of this type of good-for value. I begin by discussing the basic structure of welfarist good-for. I then consider alternative views about how to understand this structure, assessing their relative merits. According to the view that I favor—what I shall call a “rational fit” theory of welfare—*good for* is a reason-giving relation of fit between a welfare object and a welfare subject, where a welfare subject is a valuable being.