

Cambridge University Press
052145722X - Interpersonal Comparisons Well-Being
Edited by Jon Elster and John E. Roemer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

INTERPERSONAL COMPARISONS OF WELL-BEING

Cambridge University Press
052145722X - Interpersonal Comparisons Well-Being
Edited by Jon Elster and John E. Roemer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

STUDIES IN RATIONALITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Editors: Jon Elster and Michael S. McPherson

Editorial Board:

Fredrik Barth
Amartya Sen
Arthur Stinchcombe
Amos Tversky
Bernard Williams

JON ELSTER Explaining technical change
JON ELSTER & AANUND HYLLAND (EDS.) Foundations of social
choice theory
JON ELSTER (ED.) The multiple self
JAMES S. COLEMAN Individual interests and collective action
ARTHUR STINCHCOMBE Stratification and organization
DIEGO GAMBETTA Were they pushed or did they jump?
MICHAEL TAYLOR The possibility of cooperation
JON ELSTER & RUNE SLAGSTAD (EDS.) Constitutionalism and
democracy
JON ELSTER The cement of society: A study of social order

Cambridge University Press
052145722X - Interpersonal Comparisons Well-Being
Edited by Jon Elster and John E. Roemer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Edited by Jon Elster and John E. Roemer

INTERPERSONAL
COMPARISONS OF
WELL-BEING



Published in collaboration with Maison des Sciences de
l'Homme, Paris

Cambridge University Press
 052145722X - Interpersonal Comparisons Well-Being
 Edited by Jon Elster and John E. Roemer
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP
 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
 10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

© Cambridge University Press 1991

First published 1991
 First paperback edition 1993

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Interpersonal comparisons of well-being / edited by Jon Elster
 and John E. Roemer.

p. cm. – (Studies in rationality and social change)

"Published in collaboration with Maison des sciences de l'homme,
 Paris."

Includes index.

ISBN 0-521-39274-8 (hardback)

1. Social justice. 2. Social ethics. 3. Utilitarianism.

I. Elster, Jon 1940- . II. Roemer, John E. III. Maison des
 sciences de l'homme (Paris, France) IV. Series.

HM216.167 1991

303.372-dc20

90-26400

CIP

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Interpersonal comparisons of well-being. – (Studies in
 rationality and social change).

1. Ethics

I. Elster, Jon 1940- . II. Roemer, John E. III. Series

171

ISBN 0-521-39274-8 hardback

ISBN 0-521-45722X paperback

Transferred to digital printing 2003

Contents

<i>List of contributors</i>	page vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction <i>Jon Elster and John E. Roemer</i>	1
1 The moral basis of interpersonal comparisons <i>Thomas M. Scanlon</i>	17
2 Against the taste model <i>James Griffin</i>	45
3 Utilitarian metaphysics? <i>John Broome</i>	70
4 Local justice and interpersonal comparisons <i>Jon Elster</i>	98
5 Notes on the psychology of utility <i>Daniel Kahneman and Carol Varey</i>	127
6 Adult-equivalence scales, interpersonal comparisons of well-being, and applied welfare economics <i>Charles Blackorby and David Donaldson</i>	164
7 Interpersonal comparisons of utility: Why and how they are and should be made <i>Peter J. Hammond</i>	200
8 A reconsideration of the Harsanyi–Sen debate on utilitarianism <i>John A. Weymark</i>	255
9 Deducing interpersonal comparisons from local expertise <i>Ignacio Ortuño-Ortín and John E. Roemer</i>	321
10 Subjective interpersonal comparison <i>Aanund Hylland</i>	337
11 Utilitarian fundamentalism and limited information <i>C. d'Aspremont and L.A. Gérard-Varet</i>	371
<i>Index</i>	387

Contributors

C. d'Aspremont
CORE
Université Catholique de Louvain
Louvain, Belgium

Charles Blackorby and David
Donaldson
Department of Economics
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

John Broome
Department of Economics
University of Bristol
Bristol, England

Jon Elster
Department of Political Science
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

L.A. Gérard-Varet
Ecoles des hautes études
en sciences sociales
Marseille, France

James Griffin
Keeble College
Oxford, England

Peter J. Hammond
Department of Economics
European University Institute
San Domenico di Fiesole (FI),
Italy

Aanund Hylland
Department of Economics
University of Oslo
Oslo, Norway

Daniel Kahneman and Carol
Varey
Department of Psychology
University of California
Berkeley, California

Ignacio Ortuño-Ortín
Department of Economics
University of Alicante
Alicante, Spain

John E. Roemer
Department of Economics
University of California
Davis, California

Cambridge University Press
052145722X - Interpersonal Comparisons Well-Being
Edited by Jon Elster and John E. Roemer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii CONTRIBUTORS

Thomas M. Scanlon
Department of Philosophy
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

John A. Weymark
Department of Economics
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Cambridge University Press
052145722X - Interpersonal Comparisons Well-Being
Edited by Jon Elster and John E. Roemer
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

The conferences on which this book is based were funded by a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. We received assistance as well from the Institute for Governmental Affairs at the University of California at Davis and the Center for Ethics, Rationality and Society at the University of Chicago. We thank all three organizations.

Jon Elster and John E. Roemer