**The total view and the repugnant conclusion**

Population axiology is riddled with “paradoxes” and impossibility theorems. Every suggestion about how to rank populations in terms of value seems to have strongly counterintuitive implications. According to the “total view”, a population is better than another just in case it contains a greater total amount of welfare. Although the total view is simple and has obvious intuitive appeal, it is often rejected because it is believed to imply the “repugnant conclusion”: For any population containing only people with very good lives, there is a better populationcontaining no people with lives more than barely worth living. However, the total view implies the repugnant conclusion only under a certain assumption about the ordering of welfare levels. Roughly, it must be possible to go from a life barely worth living to a very good life by a finite number of arbitrarily small increases in welfare. If we reject this “Archimedean” assumption, we can accept the total view and still avoid the repugnant conclusion. Since the repugnant conclusion appears to be the most serious problem for the total view, and since alternative views tend to imply even more unattractive conclusions, non-Archimedean versions of the total view may be worth serious consideration.