

Normative understanding and 'theory of mind'
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What's the relation between having a 'theory of mind' and normative understanding?

Does ToM make NU possible?

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Are they mutually dependent?

Reasons in the standard normative sense:

A consideration that counts in favour of someone's doing something.

Starting point:

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Objective reason: given that the chocolate is in the cupboard, Maxi should go to the cupboard.

Rationality: Maxi's belief that the chocolate is in the drawer makes it rational for him to go to the drawer.

Teleology:

Young children predict and explain human conduct in terms of objective reasons rather than in terms of rationalizing mental states.

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Two dimensions of evaluating actions:

- Rational vs irrational (consistent vs inconsistent with the agent's own view of he/she has reason to do)
- Appropriate vs inappropriate (given what the agent has reason to do)

Q 1: *Reasons and Desires*

- Role of desires in young children's conception of what it makes sense for people to do?
- Is there a conceptual link between A's having a reason to do x and A having a desire (a 'subjective motivational set') that make it rational for A to do x?

Q 2: *Teleology and joint action*

Classical philosophical problem:

Intentions are commitments. How is it possible to form *joint* intentions ('we'-intentions), given that one can only commit *oneself*?

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Intentions are commitments. How is it possible to form *joint* intentions ('we'-intentions), given that one can only commit *oneself*?

- Why are people rushing to the seminar room? The meeting is about to start.
- The piano needs to be moved, we are the only ones around, so we should move it.

Aim 3: Teleology in Rationalizing Explanation

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- Role of knowledge in causal explanation (cf Williamson, Hornsby)

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- Role of knowledge in causal explanation (cf Williamson, Hornsby)
- Understanding the explanatory link between beliefs/desires and actions: teleology in perspective.

Toddlers in philosophy: Mele (2003)

1. 'It's unlikely that toddlers have the concept of a reason for action (or of something's counting in favour of a course of action).'
2. 'Presumably even if the concept of a reason for action were to have no conceptual ties to the concepts of belief and desire, it would be sufficiently sophisticated to be out of reach of children too young to have proper concepts of belief and desire.'
3. 'Even so, such children act intentionally and for reasons.'

Teleology

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- Do young children think of reasons as provided (in part) by desires?
- Do young children think of reasons as explanatory?
- Does teleological explanation involve *any* psychological concepts?

What's the relation between teleology and belief-desire psychology?

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Elimination rule for Belief

S believes O is at L, and decides to retrieve O.
Therefore S will probably make his/her way to L.

Elimination rule for Drunkenness

Subject S is drunk.

Therefore, S is probably unsteady on his/her feet.

Simulation vs supposition

Simulation (à la Gordon):

Let's do a S-simulation: Imagine being S, and imagine deciding what to do.

'O is at L, and I need O. What should I should do? I should go to L.'

Teleology-in-perspective:

'S needs O. Suppose O is at L. What should S do? He should go to L.

So if O is at L, S should go there.'