24.120 Moral Psychology
Spring 2009

IV Bratman on Intention

Functional Benefits of Intention

(I) Deliberation curtailment
Two aspects: don't spend too much time; control when you deliberate. Do you need to form an intention to obtain these benefits? Why not just a judgment?

(II) Interpersonal and intrapersonal coordination
Do one's intentions need to be *known* to achieve these benefits? Does one need to know that they will be successful?

(III) Self-knowledge (Velleman)

(IV) Resolving indifference and incommensurability
How do these differ? John Broome's Abraham example.

(V) Resisting temptation

Features needed to achieve (at least the first two of) these results

Control
Stability
Consistency
Means-Ends Coherence

Why aren't they desires?

Consistency requirement; volitional control

Why aren't they beliefs?

Motivating; volitional control; determinacy in cases of indifference and incommensurability. Do they, however, entail beliefs?

Intentional Action and Acting with an Intention

The video game example (from 'Two Faces of Intention'): I play a game in which the goal is to hit either of two targets with either of two guns. I am ambidextrous, and so can simultaneously shoot with each hand. If both targets are about to be hit simultaneously, the game shuts down. But I consider that it is worth risking this slight risk in order to increase my chance of hitting one of the targets. Do I intend to hit both targets? Bratman argues that I don't. Do I intend to hit one rather than the other? But which? So I have no intention, though I do *endeavour* to hit them both. But, Bratman argues, if I did hit one of the targets, I would intentionally hit it. Other examples: the doctrine of double effect. Are endeavourings really distinct from intentions?

Intention and Belief

If they are not identical to beliefs, do intentions at least bring beliefs with them? The fallen tree example; the library example. Believing not *v.* Not believing. All-out belief. What happens if we work with credences? What becomes of the video game example?

What has become of the Humean Theory of Motivation?

Modest revision: all intentions must result from desires. More radical revision: they need not. Couldn't we just start out with intentions? What is the status of the claim that we *must* start with desires?