Phil 290–2, September 18, 2006

Some review of last week's discussion

1. Suppose that we have some uninterpreted principle, where q is some obvious consequence of p:
"If you believe p, then you ought to believe q."

Should we interpret this as wide scope:
      W: O (Bp →Bq)
Or narrow scope:
      N: Bp → OBq?
One common line of thought against narrow scope: "The narrow scope interpretation entails that if you fail to believe q, then you violate the principle that we want to interpret, and thus fail to do something that you ought to do. But you might simply drop your belief that p without, intuitively, violating the principle, or failing to do anything that you ought to do."

But recall that, for Broome,
      W: O (Bp →Bq) means: You ought to be such that: if you believe at t p, then you believe at t q.
      N: Bp → OBq means: If you believe at t p, then you ought to be such that you believe at t q

		$B_tp \rightarrow O_{BST} B_tq$	$O_{BST}(B_tp \rightarrow B_tq)$
B_tp	B_tq	You *satisfy* this principle (you are as it says you ought to be), and in some worlds in which these are the case, under some codes that include this principle, you are as you ought to be.	
B_tp	¬ B_tq	You *violate* this principle, and in no worlds in which these are the case, under no codes that include this principle, are you as you ought to be.	
¬ B_tp (but you exist at t)		You neither violate nor satisfy this principle, because it does not say that you ought to be some way, and in some worlds in which these are the case, under some codes that include this principle, you are as you ought to be.	You *satisfy* this principle, and in some worlds in which these are the case, under some codes that include this principle, you are as you ought to be.

It seemed at first that there was an important difference between the wide and narrow scope interpretations. But now it goes missing.

Does the distinction between satisfaction and nonviolation matter? Do we have strong intuitions that one or the other occurs in the case that we are considering?

Perhaps more significant differences appear when W and N conjoined with other principles?
Consider P: $O_{BST} B_tq \rightarrow O_{BST}R$. Then B_tp, B_tq, ¬R violates any code with P and N, but does not violate some codes with P and W.
- Are there principles like P?
- Is it really the same P that we are conjoining with W and with N? Is the condition: If you ought under *this particular* code…? If you ought under *the correct* code…?

- Most importantly, the initial, intuitive difference did not depend on interactions with other principles.

Now replace "be such that" with "see to that," read as (closer to, but still not quite[*]) agentive and so as calling for a response over time.

B_tp and then…		$B_tp \rightarrow O_{STIT}B_{t+}q$	$B_tp \rightarrow O_{STIT}(B_{t+}p \rightarrow B_{t+}q)$
$B_{t+}q$		You satisfy this principle	You satisfy this principle
$B_{t+}p$	$\neg B_{t+}q$	You violate this principle	You violate this principle
$\neg B_{t+}p$	$\neg B_{t+}q$	You *violate* this principle	You *satisfy* this principle

This comes closer to capturing the intuitive difference. It isn't true that if I believe that at t p (in every world in which this is true, under every code that includes the interpreted principle properly interpreted) I ought to believe going forward from t q. What follows is that (in every world…, under every code…) I ought either to believe going forward from t q, or to revise my belief going forward from t p. Some of the futures permitted me (in some world…, under some codes…) are futures in which I do not believe q going forward from t.

2. In "Reasons," Broome observes:
> Suppose you believe the world was made in six days, and you do not believe it was made in less than a week. Whatever evidence you may have one way or another, your beliefs are definitely not as they ought to be.

He argues that this observation cannot be explained by the view that beliefs are pro tanto reasons. Because
> So far as this view is concerned, [your beliefs] might be entirely as they ought to be…

However, it can be explained by
> the general normative principle that you ought to believe the obvious consequences of your beliefs: if q is an obvious consequence of p, you ought (to believe q if you believe p) (50).

There is, however, another explanation. It assumes:
1. that evidential support is transmitted across obvious consequence: that if the evidence is such that you ought to believe that p, then the evidence is such that you ought to believe the obvious consequences of p, and
2. that there are no mere epistemic permissions: either the evidence is such that you ought to believe that p, or the evidence is such that you ought not to believe that p.

From this it follows that, if you believe p, but do not believe q, then "whatever evidence you may have one way or another, your beliefs are definitely not as they ought to be."

Why? Whatever the evidence, either it is such that you ought not believe that p, or it is such that it is not the case that you ought not believe that p.
> Suppose it is the case. Then you ought not believe that p, but you do.
> Suppose that it is not the case that you ought not believe that p.
>> Then, since there are no mere epistemic permissions, you ought to believe that p.
>> Then, since evidential support is transmitted across obvious consequence, you ought to believe that q. But you don't.

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[*] Not quite agentive, because we want to allow for responses, such as beliefs, that are not under one's voluntary control.

In a nutshell, facts about the *transmission of reasons, or the patterns that reasons take,* may account for much of the evidence that Broome takes to support *normative, or rational, requirements.*

Notes on Bratman

Functions of intention

Control:
    1. Guide one's activity toward some end

Stability:
    2. Allow one to preserve the conclusions of deliberation.
    3. Allow others to predict behavior.

Selection:
    4. Allow one to act when reasons underdetermine the options.
    5. Allow one to cut off deliberation.

Coordination:
    6. Positive coordination: Leads one to intend actions *without* which one's intention is less likely to succeed. Rational requirement associated with this regularity: Means-end coherence.
    7. Negative coordination: Leads one to refrain from intending actions *with* which one's intention is less likely succeed. Rational requirement associated with this regularity: Consistency.

The normative dimension of Bratman's account
- The ability to form such intentions ("being a planning agent") helps us to achieve what is worth achieving. What normative consequences does this have?
- Conforming to the associated rational requirements helps us to achieve what is worth achieving. This might seem to have a more direct normative consequence: namely, that we have reason to conform to these requirements.

Is this true? Suppose:
- We can deliberate and form reliable beliefs about the worth of achieving ends ("worth" can be understood in terms of desire satisfaction).
- as well as about whether a "control"—an attitude that plays just the control role—would help up to achieve those ends.
- When we believe at t that a control attitude going forward from t would help us sufficiently to achieve some sufficiently worthwhile end, we normally form that control attitude going forward from t.
- The rational requirement associated with this regularity: Believed Reason.
- Bratman might agree that we have at least this much.

If we have this, then why do we need something that plays the *stability* role?
- Can't we just *remember* the conclusions of our deliberation until t?
- Can't others expect that we will remember?

Perhaps we need something to play the stability role only because we need something to play the *selection* role.
- It is useful to be able to select among ends arbitrarily, when we judge that the reasons underdetermine the choice, and

- to cut off deliberation before we have settled whether the reasons determine the choice, when further deliberation would be too costly.
- In such cases, there is no conclusion of our deliberation to remember.

So we must enrich our control so that we can form it arbitrarily and so that it persists.

Do we need more than this to explain *positive coordination*?
- Suppose that we believe that it would be worthwhile to achieve E and we believe that forming a control for E helps us to achieve E.
- So we form a control for E.
- Suppose, now, that we believe that a control for M is a means to E.
- This is all but to believe that a control for M helps us to achieve something worthwhile.
- So we form a control for M.
- It seems that we do not need to add anything.
- Also more narrowly tailored. Does not lead us to intend means to ends that we intend, but believe (reliably) are not sufficiently worthwhile.

However, a problem would remain in underdetermination cases. Don't we *believe* that we have just as much reason to intend means to the equally good end that we *don't* intend?
- If don't intend the end, then intending the means will be pointless. It won't actually help us to achieve the end.

Do we need more than this to explain *negative coordination*?
- Suppose that we believe that if we F, then we do not E.
- Then, usually, we believe that if it is more likely that we F, then it is less likely that we E.
- So we believe that if a control for F makes it more likely that we F, then it makes it less likely that we E.
- And so we believe that not forming a control for F helps us to achieve something that we have reason to achieve.
- So we don't form a control for F.
- It seems that we do not need to add anything.
- More narrowly tailored…

Does Consistency serve negative coordination?
- Too strong: Even when A is incompatible with B, intending A may not lower the probability that intending to B succeeds *at all*, let along lowering it to such a degree that it no longer makes sense to intend to B.
- Too weak: Even when A is incompatible with B, intending A may lower the chances of success in intending to B to such a degree that it no longer makes sense to intend to B.

Is Consistency a useful rule of thumb?
- Not clear.
- If it is, then the same role can be performed by a policy not to deliberate about certain options.