

**Phil 290–2, October 9, 2006**  
**Some notes on Jay’s paper**

*To be explained:*

*Means-End:* I am rationally required (if I intend to X and believe that it is possible that I X only if I intend to Y, then I intend to Y)

Note: “only if I *intend* to Y” not “only if I Y.” Jay makes this point in his comments on Broome. See also Searle.

*Materials:*

*Believes Possible:* If I intend to X, then I believe that it is possible that I X.

*Self-consciousness:* I am rationally required (I believe that I do not intend to X iff I do not intend to X).

Note: What is defended in the text (p. 22–3) is the somewhat different, and perhaps slightly more plausible, principle: I am rationally required (I believe that I intend to X iff I intend to X). But it isn’t clear that this is what the argument needs.

*Closure:* I am rationally required (if I believe P and I believe if P then Q, then I believe Q.)

*Consistency:* I am rationally required (if I believe P, then I do not believe not P).

Argument: If I violate Means-End, then I violate one of Self-Consciousness, Closure, and Consistency, and so I am irrational.

1. I intend to X.
2. I believe that it is possible that I X. (Believes Possible)
3. I believe that if I do not intend to Y, then it is not possible that I X.
4. I do not intend to Y.
5. I believe that I do not intend to Y. (Self-Consciousness)
6. I believe that it is not possible that I X. (Closure)
7. I violate Consistency.

Replace Believes Possible with

*Doesn’t Believe Impossible:* If I intend to X, then I do not believe that it is not possible that I X?

This seems less controversial, and it streamlines the argument.

Argument: If I violate Means-End, then I violate either Self-Consciousness or Closure, and so I am irrational.

1. I intend to X.
2. I do not believe that it is not possible that I X. (Doesn’t Believe Impossible)
3. I believe that if I do not intend to Y, then it is not possible that I X.
4. I do not intend to Y.
5. I believe that I do not intend to Y. (Self-Consciousness)
6. I violate Closure.

*How are we to understand the processes by which the agent's attitudes change?*

*Dropping the end:*

1. I do not intend to Y.
2. I believe that I do not intend to Y. (1 to 2: immediate self-awareness)
3. I believe that if I do not intend to Y, then it is not possible that I X.
4. I believe that it is not possible that I X. (2 and 3 to 4: theoretical reasoning)
5. I no longer intend to X. (4 to 5: constitutively brought about)

*Intending the means:*

1. I do not intend to Y.
2. I believe that I do not intend to Y. (1 to 2: immediate self-awareness)
3. I believe that if I do not intend to Y, then it is not possible that I X.
4. Now I intend to Y. (Is this brought about by any reasoning from 2 and 3?)
5. I no longer believe that I do not intend to Y (4 to 5: immediate self-awareness)
6. I do not conclude that it is not possible that I X. (Perhaps this is something like reasoning: I don't conclude something that I don't see grounds for.)
7. I continue to intend to X (6 to 7: constitutively enabled.)

When we intend the means, is this the conclusion of reasoning from something involved in the means-end incoherence itself? (Granted, it can be the conclusion of reasoning from the content of a belief that we have good reason to intend the means, because it will help us achieve a worthwhile end.) Intending Y *stops* a certain course of reasoning, but is it *itself* the result of reasoning?

A third way of conforming to Means-End is *revising the means-end belief*. It is again not clear how we can reason from the beliefs that we intend to X and that we do not intend to Y to revising the means-end belief that we will X only if we intend to Y.