

things to be. In spite of certain formal similarities, belief is really radically unlike desire in both its logical and its phenomenological features.

For these reasons, it is misleading to think of theoretical reason as reasoning about what to believe in the way that we think of practical reason as reasoning about what to do. What one should believe is dependent on what is the case. Theoretical reasoning, therefore, is only derivatively about what to believe. It is primarily about what is the case—what must be the case given certain premises. Furthermore, we can now see that it is misleading to think even that there is a “logic” of theoretical reason. There is just logic—which deals with logical relations between, for example, propositions. Logic tells us more about the rational structure of theoretical reason than it does about the rational structure of practical reason, because there is a close connection between the rational constraints on belief and the logical relations between propositions. This connection derives from the fact that, to repeat, beliefs are meant to be true. But there is no such close connection between the structure of desire and the structure of logic. Because of the upward direction of fit of desires, I both can and do have conflicting desires even after all the facts are in.

V Some Special Features of Intentions

I have been concentrating on desires, but intentions are in important respects different from desires. Like desires, intentions have the upward direction of fit, but unlike desires, they are always about the agent as subject matter and they are causally self-referential. My intention is carried out only if I act by way of carrying out the intention. For this reason intentions have a logical constraint

quite unlike desire. It is logically inconsistent to have inconsistent intentions in a way that it is not logically inconsistent to have inconsistent desires. Intentions are designed to cause actions, and for that reason they cannot function if they are inconsistent. This prohibition against inconsistency is shared by other causally self-referential motivators, such as orders and promises, even though they also have the world-to-mind direction of fit. It's okay—up to a point—for a speaker to say reflectively “I both wish you would go and wish you would stay.” But he is irrational if he says simultaneously “Go!” and “Stay!” and you are equally irrational if you form the simultaneous intentions to go and to stay, or make simultaneous promises both to go and to stay. One cannot consistently have inconsistent intentions or make inconsistent promises and issue inconsistent orders, because intentions, orders, and promises are designed to cause actions, and there cannot be inconsistent actions. For the same reason intentions, orders, and promises commit the agent to the belief that the action is possible, but it is not possible to carry out both of two inconsistent actions. Desires and obligations in general have no such condition. One can hold inconsistent desires and be under inconsistent obligations.

Does this feature give us the possibility of a principle of detachment for intentions? If I intend that p and I believe that if p then q , am I committed to intending that q ? I think not; however, the question is trickier than it might appear at first sight, and because it ties in with Kant's famous principle, I now turn to a discussion of Kant.

VI “He Who Wills the End Wills the Means”

No discussion of the logic of practical reason would be complete without at least some mention of Kant's famous

doctrine that he who wills the end wills the means. Does this give us a deductive logical principle of practical reason? That is to say, does the statement "I will end E " logically commit me to "I will means M " at least in cases where M is a necessary condition of achieving E ? Is it analogous to the way "I believe p " commits me to "I believe q ," in cases where q is a logical consequence of p ?

Well, it all depends on what we mean by "will." On a perfectly natural interpretation the doctrine is just false, for reasons that I have stated earlier. If willing is a matter of having a very strong desire or pro-attitude toward some future course of action that I am capable of engaging in, then it is simply not the case that when I will the end I am logically committed to willing the means. As I suggested earlier, it may be the case that the means are out of the question for one reason or another. I very much want to eliminate my flu symptoms, but the only way to eliminate the symptoms is to commit suicide, there being no known cure, but all the same, I am not committed to willing suicide.

So if we interpret "will" as desire, Kant's principle comes out false. But suppose we interpret it as intention, both prior intention and intention-in-action. Suppose I have a prior intention to do E and I believe that doing M is a necessary condition of doing E . Am I committed to the intention to do M ? It seems to me we need to distinguish between having a commitment to doing something that I know will involve doing M and having a commitment to doing M intentionally. Trivially it follows from the fact that I intend to do E and I know that doing E necessarily involves doing M that I have a commitment to doing something intentionally that will involve M . But I need not thereby have any commitment at all to doing M

intentionally. Thus consider our earlier example of my intention to fix your tooth. We have as premises:

Intend (I fix your tooth).

Bel (If I fix your tooth I cause you pain).

But I am not thereby committed to the conclusion

Intend (I cause you pain).

An intention commits me to a course of action, but it does not commit me to doing all of the things that I know are involved in carrying out the original intention. So the fact that I have an intention to bring it about that p and I have a belief that if p then q does not commit me to having the intention to bring it about that q . The argument for this claim, using the above example, is that when I cause you pain, I do not do so intentionally, but only as a by-product of my intentional action. And the argument for that point, in turn, is that causing you pain is not part of the conditions of satisfaction of my intention, nor is it implied by the conditions of satisfaction of my intention, because if I fail to cause you pain, I do not fail in what I was trying to do. When I fix your tooth I may have a firm belief to the effect that fixing your tooth will cause you pain, but I am not thereby committed to the intention to cause you pain. And the conclusive proof is given if we ask what counts as succeeding or failing. If I fail to cause you pain, it is not my original intention that has failed; rather one of my beliefs has turned out to be false. So it is simply not the case in general that anybody who wills the end (in the sense of having an intention to achieve that end) thereby wills everything that occurs as a known part of carrying out that intention.

However, there is a type of case in which Kant's principle is true. Suppose I have the intention-in-action to fix your tooth, and suppose that I also have the belief that the necessary condition of fixing your tooth is that I *intentionally* drill your tooth. This case differs from the previous case because drilling your tooth is not a collateral part of fixing your tooth in the way that causing you pain is a collateral part of fixing your tooth. Rather, it is a *means* that must be intended in order that the original intention can be carried out. So, there is a natural interpretation of Kant's principle where it turns out to be correct, and that interpretation is as follows:

If I intend an end *E*, and I know that in order to achieve *E* I must intentionally do *M*, then I am committed to intending to do *M*. In that sense it does seem to me that "he who wills the end" is committed to willing the means.

VII Conclusion

The moral of this discussion can be stated quite briefly. Deductive logic deals with logical relations between propositions, predicates, sets, etc. In the strict sense there is no such thing as a deductive logic of practical reason, but then in the strict sense there is no such thing as a deductive logic of theoretical reason. Because of the combination of commitment and direction of fit of beliefs, it is possible to get a mapping of the logical relations occurring in theoretical reason onto deductive logic of a sort that is not possible for practical reason. Why the difference? In two important respects desire is unlike belief. Desire has the upward direction of fit, and a person with a desire is not committed to the satisfaction of that desire in the way

that a person who holds a belief is committed to the truth of the belief. This allows for the two features of desire we noted earlier, the necessity of inconsistency and the non-detachability of desire. Intentions are a bit more like belief because they do involve a commitment to the satisfaction of the intention. Nonetheless, the person who has an intention is not committed to intending to achieve all of the consequences of the achievement of his intention. He is committed only to those means that are necessarily intended in order to achieve his ends. For these reasons there will not be a "deductive logic of practical reason" even in the limited sense in which we found that it is possible to have a deductive logic of theoretical reason.