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NORMATIVE REASONS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF MOTIVATION

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Abstract

This article defends a claim about the role of reasons in normative reasons for action. According to this claim, an agent has a normative reason for action only if it is psychologically possible for that agent to act for that reason. The claim is Williams's explanatory constraint, drawn from Bernard Williams's work on the topic of practical rationality. A new Williams's explanatory constraint is put forward. First, an agent has a normative reason for action only if that agent has the ability to act for that reason. The second premiss states that an agent has the ability to act for a normative reason only if it is psychologically possible for that reason to motivate the agent to act for a normative reason. It is also a claim from the second premiss that an agent has the ability to act for a normative reason only if it is psychologically possible for that reason to motivate the agent to act for a normative reason. Furthermore, normative reasons can motivate agents by being the objects of psychological states, desires, and intentions. In reply to normative objections to the claim, I contend that normative reasons can be represented as the objects of psychological states.

Key Words

practical rationality; reason for action; normative reasons; internalism; motivation

1. Introduction

This article defends Bernard Williams's claim that a normative reason for action requires the possibility of a rational response. This claim, Williams's explanatory constraint, Williams affirms has explanatory consequences, but he never argued for it. I intend to show that Williams is right that it is a strong consideration in favor of the unity of practical rationality.

Below we review the distinction between explanatory and normative reasons (section 2). I provide an exposition of Williams's explanatory constraint. The work in which Williams, and it is hardly in his argument for internalism (section 3) as the argument for the explanatory constraint (sections 4 through 6) to this argument, and cannot have a normative reason for an action if the ability to act for any normative reason. Moreover, the ability to act for any normative reason is an agent's motivation. That normative reasons motivate action is the objects of agents' psychological states, intentions, and desires. Finally, in section 7, an agent has a normative reason for an action if a reason must be a reason for an agent's intentions, desires, or intentions.

2. Reason and Action

contributing to its (quasi-rational) decision. One may have a normative reason. Even if he or she does not fail to do what they ought to do in the literature, reasons for action are not reasons. One thing to suggest that Smith takes on his turn is that the rain, not whether or not it is a matter of fact, would be a good reason, among other things, beliefs about the coming rain were founded. Suppose Smith's reliable thermometer indicated a 90% chance of rain. It might be a Smith's reason to take his umbrella without an umbrella, and he might catch a cold. The reason justifies whether or not it is actually preventing N. Drenched is a mistake, but Smith ought to take the umbrella. Smith, even if he does not in fact do so.

Philosophers disagree whether normative reasons are to psychologists. Some philosophers, normative reasons are concerned with psychological states, and others, such as Bratton, holds that an agent has a normative reason only if the relevant desires of the agent are in the cognitive psychology. Desires are determined by normative beliefs and logic (Blizard, 1979). Other thinkers, such as Dancy (2000), argue that normative reasons are psychological. In this view, normative reasons are reduced to inter-psychological states, and they are related to states among such states accordingly. Dancy is a naturalist.

&normative reasons are in general nothing like psycho-
agent. The sorts of thing that are normative reasons are
other is suffering, the wrong I will be doing her if I p
the world can for certain responses (Dancy, 2006, p. 106).

As Dancy emphasizes, there are reasons and facts about certain responses from an agent that have with Dancy psychological effects on the agent.

I shall remain agnostic as to whether these normative considerations are reducible to psychological ones. Here I state primarily a (EW) philosophical claim, namely that a normative reason requires the being of a rationality that act by reason. Eventually, I argue that having a normative reason is a condition for the possibility of representing reason as an object of one's psychological states. Both these claims are consistent with the view that the normative reasons are not psychological states of reasoning. Furthermore, none of the common arguments for these claims are inconsistent with the view that normative reasons are not psychological in some sense.

Having defined the concept of *practical rationality* means being able to pin down practical rationality in terms of criteria by which actions are evaluated and justified. A practically rational agent is one whose actions are in accordance with his or her best normative reasons. In a given situation, a practically rational agent

favoring all things considered, a given will is a practical reason, inference, or deliberation an agent's process of thinking what he or she is doing, practical process, thinking one's way to action

3. William's explanatory constraint

A central debate in the philosophical theory of practical reason is the relationship between explanatory and normative reasons. This is a philosophical where as propositional reasons are internalist and the existence of normative reasons either the actual or possible agent's reasons that reason. Prominent internalists include (1979, 1995, 2001), Richard (1979), Christine Korsgaard (1996) and Williams in particular defends a version of reasons internalism by to appeal to his explanatory constraint (abbreviated EW):

(EW) If any agent has a normative reason for an action it is psychologically possible for that agent to be

An action, motivation, mental state, or psychological property is possible if it is permitted by the laws of psychology. In other words, it is psychologically possible if it is possible for a person to be in that state or to act in that way.

normative Reason motivate a ~~fact~~ ~~fact~~ only if it is consistent with
of psychology ~~by~~ ~~motivate~~

Some things are psychologically impossible for anyone
the chess playing computer that defeated Gary Kasparov and
capable of examining 200,000,000 possible chess moves per
psychology, such as making impossible moves in brains to perform the
calculation. Consequently, (that no human agent can have
reason to consider millions of possible chess moves in one second
according to the human agent would have a normative reason to
moves as Deep Blue does, because no such reason would
statement about conditions under which particular agents have
normative reasons to claim about the conditions under which
normative reasons exist at all.

In the above formulation, I mean to supplement the
phrase "The success reason" with the phrase "The agent succeeds
what she is motivated to do by the thing that is psychologically
possible that a normative reason motivates her to do, but it is not
what I mean by "Rmotivates". Rather, "Rmotivates" is intended to mean
that "Rmotivates" and successfully performed. This, is not
psychologically possible that a reason motivates the student

³ Ideally, the set of psychological facts would be those articulated in a true and complete psychology. Short of that, we shall suppose that the principles which are currently most empirically adequate.

I attribute (to) Williams basis of writing these Williams
 as a necessary relation between reasons and explanations. In
 his classic essay and Externalism, Williams emphasizes that every
 dimension of normal action (Williams 1979: 227) here Williams writes:

If there are reasons for action, it must be that people
 reasons, and if they do, their reasons must figure in
 of their action (Williams 1979:

Williams restates the same idea in subsequent works and the
 Obscurity of (1995) argues as follows

It must be a mistake simply to separate explanatory and
 is true that A has a reason possible that must hold A
 that reason; and if he does act for that reason, then the
 explanation of his acting (Williams 1995:

Furthermore, in a postscript to Externalism, Williams writes
 once again:

Some writers make a distinction between explanatory
 reasons, but this does not seem to me to be helpful, but

explanatory considerations are closely intertwined with
in the normative. And as the speaker must envisage
the possibility of that reason, in which case the re
in the explanatory (Williams 1990: 101):

Williams employs motivation to refer to an explanatory reason
action. For instance, nothing can explain an agent's (inter-
actions except something that is (Williams 1979: 9)
will follow Wayne A. Davis that cognitive reasons explain
actions by fitting them in an appropriate (Davis

Also apparent in Williams' work is the claim that the existence
reason requires psychological states that are informative on the
action justified. Evidence that Williams' view can be founded on
External Reasons is the most thorough argument for reasons
internalism briefly summarized by the link Williams
draws between reasons and the possibility of motivation.

According to the version of the internalism
agent has a normal reason to reach the conclusion that he has
on the basis of deliberation about actual motivation (Williams
1995: 35; Williams 2001: deliberative process of deliberation
corrected for errors of fact (Williams 1979; Williams 1995:
36 Williams 1991-92). Furthermore, Williams' actual motivational

self an agent he has a set of desires, evaluations, attitudes, projects, and intentions. The agent actually prior to judgment deliberation has a normative reason to do something (Williams 1993: 79).

Williams distinguishes between internal and external reasons. I refer to the external reasons view as reasons externalism. Williams writes of [an agent] A that he has a reason to Φ even though A has no motivation in his motivational set that would lead him to Φ (Williams 1993: 79). Williams clearly thinks that the externalist picture of normative reasons externalism holds that any claim ascribing to A a normative reason to Φ is roughly equivalent to the claim that if A were rationalized by whatever motivations he originally had, he would come to Φ (Williams 1993: 79). Others who interpret a claim of the form

(RE) A has a normative reason to Φ

to be roughly equivalent to the claim that

(R'E) If A deliberated rationally, he would come to the conclusion that he should Φ and would thereby be motivated to Φ whatever motivations he had prior to deliberating.

However, Williams insists that this is so on the basis of basic points in Book II of *Treatise of Human Nature*. Hume famously claims that reason alone can never be a motive for action (Hume, 1739/1901, p. 10). & Norton (2005), Williams (1979). Williams concludes that externalism is false on the grounds that it is inconsistent for the agent to deliberate about this new motive (Williams, 1979: 149).

Williams' appeal to Hume suggests that externalism is false. Externalism (EM), together with psychological thesis about the motivational efficacy of practical reasons (E), is inconsistent. If any normative reasons can then there must be consistent laws of psychology for normative reasons to motivate. Externalism holds that normative reasons generate motivation in a rational agent purely through practical reasons independently of any motivations the agent had before being rational. However, Williams joins Hume in denying that practical reasons generate motivational force from this psychological thesis (E). If EM is true, there cannot be any normative reasons which underdetermine action. Therefore, EM is false, since the externalist account of normative reasons is inconsistent with psychological mechanisms through which normative reasons generate motivation.

What this philosophical conclusion (E) entails is that EM is false. This constitutes a premise in an argument for reasons internalism, which is a philosophical debate about EM. It is an important philosophical debate about EM.

implications in its would imply, for instance, that agents for whom it is not psychologically possible to be motivated by such agents have no reasons to act morally. How this implication would be depends on the nature of what is psychologically possible for them. There are certainly some moralists who themselves with no doubt whether or not the moral concerns differ. At the same time, as long as the psychological mechanism is compatible with the laws of psychology, moral conduct can be attributed to them. It is allowed that even most students have a normative reason to act morally. Relevant mechanisms should controversially include persuasion, education, and language, but perhaps more controversially, they conform to some basic human nature.

On the other hand, researchers have argued that and cognitive impairment is a prerequisite for moral deficit (Blair & Kochanska, 2004; Cima et al., 2010). Psychopaths show a serious immoral behavior, ranging from lying, bullying, stealing, fraud, rape, and serial murder. Psychopaths display little to no capacity for sympathy, guilt, or areas of the brain responsible for regulating these emotions, the orbital cortex, are shrunken or there is a lesion in the psychopaths. These findings suggest that psychopaths have an impaired capacity for moral judgment, or ability to be able to make moral judgments (Cima et al., 2010). Perhaps there is a psychological law (or set of laws) according to which

(E2) If A has the ability, then it is psychologically impossible that A do A.

Therefore,

(EW) If any agent has a normative reason, then it is psychologically possible that it act for that reason.

I will offer an exposition of each premise in turn. It is not clear that this argument is one that Williams himself would endorse. Rather, it is based on presenting a case in favor of an idea which has a central role in Williams's reasons internalism, and serve as a foundation for a more detailed defense of internalism.

5. Acting for reasons

Premise (E1) claims that the ability to reason is necessary for an agent to have the ability to act for reasons. (E1), identify minimal conditions that must be satisfied in order to evaluate an action as rational in respect to its reasons. When we analyze the action of a machine compared to human action, the action of a machine is typically in terms of their goals and their causal mechanisms leading to conclusions whether or not they are capable of rational action, because we would like to focus on

overestimating psychological complexity not dramatically out
 that some animal behavior is as good as simpler than
 those that explain human behavior is rational. To investigate
 whether this is so, philosophers and psychologists have
 comparative studies of animals (Bernstein 2003; Kacelnik 2000;
 Hurley & Nudd 2000). The objective is an analysis of
 normative reasons from observations of animal behavior
 this inquiry.

José Luis Bermúdez's conception of rationality as
 to evaluating the behavior of humans and other animals w
 abilities (e.g., apes, cetaceans, etc.) is a conception
 rationality (Bernstein 2003: 231-28). According to Bernstein
 (henceforth rationality) is a set of normative criteria with two
 application. First, it applies to the normative assessment
 instances of behavior as opposed to behavioral types of behavior
 second, rationality applies to the normative assessment of practical reasoning
 Agents that are rational-rationality is a set of normative criteria by a
 decision-making process which is, at a given time, is a by consequ
 of alternative behaviors (Bernstein 2003:

For instance, rationality can apply to the normative assess
 behaviors (Bernstein 2003: 227-30). Wild chimpanzees select sticks of
 varying length and flexibility, which they then fashion into wand

Bermúdez notes that ability to act for normative reasons distinguishes creatures - rational from the irrational. Bermúdez (2003: 12) rational agents select for the reason the action selected is likely to produce some particular consequence rather than another. Acting for of token actions is a selective process. Acting for normative reasons is acting from motives of practical reason. Only humans and a few other species exhibit rational level 2 sense.

I will now argue that (P1) is implied by the level 2 rationality. It suggests that only L2 agents act for normative reasons, and therefore, only L2 agents possess normative reasons. It tells us that the ability to act for a normative reason is a necessary condition for normative reasons. Following Bermúdez, acting for normative reasons is acting for a selective process of practical reasoning. First, not every token action is for a normative reason. Only some alternative which the agent could have performed instead. (ii) The agent is capable of finding alternatives. Regarding (i), it would be absurd to say that reason to inhabit the present moment, rather than transport myself into the past, since I cannot. Similarly, I have no reason to see objects around me by sheer force, opposed to letting them be as they are. I do not have the power of telekinesis.

⁴For a comprehensive review of philosophical and empirical investigation of human animals, see the online *Handbook of Moral Psychology* and Nudds (2006).

these examples, it follows that an agent who lacks a normative reason favoring a particular action regarding (ii), an agent who cannot deliberate about alternative actions cannot have normative reasons to take whatever normative reasons are objectively deliberable. As initially Searle has aptly observed, we tend to be confused with reasons (Searle 1984). Normative reasons considerations in practical deliberation about what one is to do in the face of normative reasons is in section 7. But if an agent is unable to deliberate about potential alternatives, it may be a consideration which guides the agent, the behavior. For there can be normative reasons for action.

Notice that acting for normative reasons consists in having considered (i) selected from a set of alternatives, and (ii) selected from a set of reasons. In a practical reasoning, the agent deliberates about alternative actions. Thus, if an agent is incapable of acting for normative reasons, either cannot select token actions from a set of alternatives or cannot deliberate about alternative actions. In either case, the agent cannot have normative reasons for action. Thus, if an agent cannot act for normative reasons, it follows by contraposition.

As an illustration, consider the behavior of the Spheg (Campbell 2004: 212). The wasp stings a cricket, paralyzes it, then places it in a burrow with its eggs to provide a food source for its young. When the mother Spheg captures a cricket, it is a part of the process.

burrow. It then leaves the cricket at the entrance and goes apparently to check for intruders. But when an experimenter moves the cricket from the burrow's entrance while the wasp is inside, the wasp repeats the sequence of behaviors: drag the cricket to the entrance, leave it, go back, and so on. By repeatedly moving the cricket back, an experimenter can make the wasp repeat this sequence an indefinite number of times.

The rigid and automatic nature of the Sphex wasp's checking behavior suggests it is not generated by a simple decision procedure. Instead, the Sphex's behavior is better explained as an automatic behavioral program which evolved through natural selection in the past generation. So, if the Sphex is apparently incapable of normative reasons, the Sphex cannot decide whether or not to check the burrow. It cannot have normative reasons which favor checking the burrow rather than not checking it. Additionally, since the Sphex cannot deliberate about whether or not to check the burrow, it cannot have normative reasons for its action.

The Sphex wasp is a good illustration of a creature that cannot have normative reasons for action. It cannot act on the basis of normative reasons. On the other hand, the Sphex may provide grounds for thinking that a creature cannot check the burrow for normative reasons. If the Sphex cannot check the burrow for normative reasons, it would not be able to achieve the goal of avoiding intruders. In this case, the Sphex would be a counterexample to (E1)?

Admittedly, it is something intelligible that the spider ought to check the burrow before dragging in its prey by its side. It wouldn't be as reproductively successful if it didn't, however. Spheco only be construed as having a reason for its preference if it differs from the one relevant subject of this discussion, the theory of practical rationality. That alternative perspective is developed by La0 rationality. Bermudez's classification (1991, 2001, 2003) of rationality (here La0 rationality) is a set of normative criteria with only one domain of behavior. Under La0 rationality, criteria specifically apply neither to behavior tokens nor to decisions. Instead, La0 rationality applies to types of behavior that can be explained as automatic responses to environmental stimuli. According to Bermudez, these behaviors such as those produced by innate mechanisms such as imprinting mechanisms, and conditioned responses (Bermudez 2003). Spheco wasp's checking behavior would qualify as La0 rationality. It is not the product of a decision, one hand, nor the program disposes it to manifest its behavior in any way checking a burrow before dragging in one's prey.

La0 rationality is a set of normative criteria grounded in function (Millikan 1989). If an organism has some effect at which explains why the organism exists, then it has proper function. For instance: the proper function of a automatic

program to check burrows because Sphex's ancestors had, and the
 effect of these programs is avoidance of deadly intruders in the
 reproductive of the species and the transmission of information is a
 normative one. As Ruth Millikan has said, an item with a proper function
 evaluated with respect to its success or failure in performing that
 function (Millikan 1989: 204-206) item with a proper function in a
 that function in the specific sense that an item which does not
 function properly is defective. We can say, for instance, that under no
 circumstances Sphex's behavior of going to the insect check
 burrow, because the proper function of the program is to
 bring about the relevant condition of safety in the burrow, as it is
 intelligible to suggest that the behavior is for a normative reason, the
 relevant reason would be that it ought to check its burrows, if it
 and reproduce in its environment.

Unlike Bermúdez, I am unwilling to classify the quality as a kind of
 practical rationality. Suppose that Sphex failed to check its burrow before
 dragging in, and it is eaten by a lurking tiger. This is indeed a failure in
 some normative sense, but it would describe with the sentence
 insect as a defect in its behavior, instead of a natural description of
 Sphex's failure to check its burrow as a defect in its proper function
 its automatic behavior. Given the availability of an alternative
 concept, the concept of proper function is the failure of the Sphex

think it unnecessary to also describe this failure in terms of rationality. When the concept of rationality is applied to the domain of rational action, it is not parsimonious to refer to the associated behaviors as rational actions motivated by conscious processes making decisions. When we speak of rational action, we should speak narrowly about rational action in the narrow sense of rationality. Moreover, rational action should be understood in terms of rationality.

However, before we can conclude that (E1) is true, we must appreciate how strong (E1) is. A normative reason for an action must have the ability to be a condition that would land a rational agent in that particular agent cannot do that particular action. For example, to show that this condition holds, consider an experiment conducted with a New Caledonian crow (Kacelnick 2006: 102). In preliminary trials, Betty had been provided with a straight wire and the other hooked. With the hooked wire, Betty was able to retrieve a basket of food sitting at the bottom of a plastic well. Then, in test trials, Betty was provided with a straight wire only. After repeated attempts, Betty could eventually learn to bend the wire into a hook, and the biologist Alex Kacelnick describes Betty's wire-bending behavior (Kacelnick 2006: 102):

After failing to lift the basket with the straight wire, she turned to a nearby plastic tray, wedged the tip of the wire under the rim on the proximal side, bending the wire until it formed a hook with which to pull the well, retrieved the basket and ate the food.

Betty's responses to the problem are clearly functions of a process of practical reasoning. Her way of acting is not a hypothesis might be that Betty's behavior in these experiments was not a product of reasoning, but rather a spontaneous behavior evolved as a disposition in members of her species. As Peckham argues that Betty's behavior is much more of a learned, automatic routine. Although Newbold and Boman (1966) found that crows, like Betty, can use tools, their natural environments do not have access to pliable material that can be used to make a hook. Indeed, the ability to alter an unlearned response is a learned behavior observed in any other animal. Therefore, the most plausible hypothesis is the one which explains Betty's behavior as a consequence of practical reasoning. If so, Betty would have formed the belief that bending the wire would help her. This belief participates in a practical inference which motivates Betty to try to achieve her goal. A goal-directed practical inference such as this would more adequately explain Betty's behavior since the ability

to make practical inferences and act upon them would enable her to cope with novel circumstances.

We should also not be misled by the fact that Betty's behavior is controlled by cognitive processes making the situation process of making a tool as a means to getting the other reason. Furthermore, Betty's normative reasons in her behavior is controlled by cognitive processes making the situation process of making a tool as a means to getting the other reason. Betty's normative reasons in her behavior is controlled by cognitive processes making the situation process of making a tool as a means to getting the other reason.

Now we are ready to assess whether the condition for (1) that an agent has a normative reason for that particular reason. Imagine that the experiment carried out with Betty is different species which has similar capabilities, but lacks the cognitive capacity to do this. In New Zealand, the kea would be a suitable subject. Birds do not use tools in the wild, but in settings they have been observed to use tools and as a result (Auersperg 2011). However, as noted above, the New Caledonian crow is able to fashion tools from artificial materials in the wild. Evidence of bending a wire into a hook would be beyond the kea. It follows that the kea lacks the ability to bend the wire that it could be used to. The kea cannot bend the wire for this it cannot carry out the process of making a tool as a means to getting the other reason. More evidence is needed to figure out

bend the wire by a procedure as soon as she bends the wire. The contrast between a kea and Betty does not distinguish between (E) holds if an agent's action is rational, then she must have the ability to for that particular reason

The preceding discussion of Betty should not suggest that Betty has any concept of a normative reason for action. Betty is just a creature that can contemplate her situation and anything analogous to the thought that it is good for her to bend this wire in order to get the food. Still, Betty's experimental task demonstrates that she is capable of acting on a normative reason even if she cannot judge for herself that she has a normative reason. Betty could not have been able to carry out such a task unless she had an ability to control her actions through a procedure that is sensitive to normative reasons for action.

On the other hand, some commentators hold that having normative reasons for action requires not only having normative reasons in her practical deliberations, but also understanding herself as having normative reasons. This latter understanding is a higher-order representation (cf. Hare 1999 & Nudds 2006, 46; Bermúdez 2008: 466) with the capacity to meta-represent normative reasons. If this is the correct concept of understanding, then Betty could not possess it, since she lacks the concept of

normative reasons, which we use that -metarepresentation is necessary for having normative reasons. This view is shared, by Robert Audi, who pointed out that young children seem clearly to have normative reasons, even if they acquire conceptual reasoning (cf. Audi 1988) 6 even if it were true that there are normative reasons only if there are such reasons, this would actually support (E1) rather than undermining it. An agent can possess normative reasons only if she is capable of acting on those reasons on the basis of a process of practical reasoning. The representation of just a sort of sophisticated practical reasoning in the form of practical reasoning is the agent's reflexive understanding of herself as a being who can act on normative reasons. So, if there are normative reasons, then metarepresentation is necessary for having normative reasons.

6. Normative reasons as causal motivation

Premise 2 of the argument states that an agent has the ability to act on normative reasons if and only if it is psychologically possible that the agent can act on those reasons. To establish (E2), I offer the following argument.

Subsidiary Argument for (E2)

For any agent A and any normative reason R, if A is motivated by R to perform some intentional action, then A has the ability to act on R. (E-2) If A has the ability to act on R, then A is psychologically able to act on R.

A can act on R through a process of practical reasoning.

(E-2i) If it is psychologically possible for A to reason through a process of practical reasoning, then it is psychologically possible for A to reason through psychological states.

Therefore,

(E2) If A has the ability, then it is psychologically possible for A to reason through psychological states.

The first premise is derived from the analysis of for reasons offered in the previous section. A reason is a process of practical reasoning, which is a psychological process among intentional states. For instance, a form of practical reasoning, instrumental reasoning, can be represented as follows:

A desires that the case.

A believes that if ϕ , then ψ .

∴ A either desires or intends to

∴ A ψ .

The practical reasoning depicted is an operation among the agent's intentional states, and is an intentional state. The inference generated is that the desire or intention

turn, the new interpretation of the terminal act of being is, in this way, explained by the fact that the states of individual psychology, or practical reasoning, produce changes in psychological states, or other processes of practical reasoning. But if, somehow, it were not psychology that effected the changes in psychological states involved in any practical reasoning, then that agent could not be said to have the ability to act for that agent would not have the ability to act for

Next, consider the changes in psychological states that take place as a result of practical reasoning, in the agent's action, motivated by understand motivations to be psychological states causing intentional action appropriate to a way an agent is motivated to do something, then the psychological state is a state that is caused by doing immediately, however, at a theoretical level, normative reasons motivate intentional action. This question must, since addressed consequently, that a normative reason can motivate action if an agent's psychological state is put, is that normative reasons motivate being of thought. As Wayne Davis has argued, explain a person's action by saying that certain normative reasons motivate he or she (Davis 2005: summarize Davis's argument in the remainder of this section). The following is a summary of Davis's argument, an objection from Jonathan Dancy

Davis's position rests on (D-i) intention and actions are motivated by beliefs and (D-e) normative reasons can be beliefs about desires. Davis's beliefs and desires are directed at their objects. The first premise (D-i) is grounded in a theory. Under this theory, intentional actions are caused (i.e., motivated) by beliefs and desires (Davis 2005: 57-59). Davis goes beyond the scope of this article to present a rationale for the causal theory, but the theory has been exhausted by a number of philosophers including Davis, Alfred Mele, and Donald Davidson (1963). In short, he claims that all the properties featured in the best known story of causation are predicted by the relationship between agents. On the one hand, and that agents' beliefs and desires (Davis 2005: 81). In particular, Davis points to observable correlations among actions and intentions. The correlation between the intention of A's acting tends to be directly related to how much A's reason is related to how much A wants to do A's reason (Davis 2005: 82).

In defense of the second premise (D-e), Davis allows that intentions can indirectly cause intentions. He argues that beliefs and desires can indirectly cause intentions. This is because beliefs and desires, as normative reasons, can cause intentions. The object of a person's belief is what that person believes, and the object of a person's desire is what that person desires. To use Davis's example, suppose that

my son, now one year old, since the day he was born for saving: namely, while I need money for my son's education. According to a causal theory of action, an intentional act of saving money is caused by the belief that my son will need money for college, along with my desire that he should go to college. However, that the normative reason for which is represented as the object of my belief is brought to state that my son will need money for college, and this is also the case.

Finally, the third passage emphasizes that beliefs and desires can be identified and distinguished from one another (2005). For instance, for example the

(M) I believe that Muhammad Ali beat George Foreman in 1974.

(C) I believe that Cassius Clay beat George Foreman in 1974.

Cassius Clay is the same as Muhammad Ali. But suppose that a subject, unaware of this fact, believes that Ali beat Foreman in 1974. In this case, the subject doesn't believe that Clay beat Foreman in 1974. (M) and (C) are different beliefs. As beliefs, (C) is not true. It follows that the beliefs described by (M) and (C) differ. They are different, because they refer to different objects. The subject believes that Muhammad Ali beat George Foreman in 1974. The subject doesn't believe that Cassius Clay beat Foreman in 1974.

monelyn this way, normative reasons can explain intentional
them. This is a causal theory of rationality.

7. Normative reasons are objects

There is a serious difficulty with the view that normative reasons can be objects. The difficulty is that normative reasons are motivating by virtue of being the objects of beliefs and desires. But beliefs and desires are psychological states like theiefs and desires are capable of being propositions: if normative reasons were objects must be the sort of thing that can be believed and not believed both truly and falsely (Dancy 2000: 14). Propositions are the kind of thing believed and not believed truly or falsely. But, Dancy insists reasons are propositions:

& intuitively it seems to be not so much propositions as our good [i.e., normative] reasons. It is a ~~sort of~~ being ill send for the doctor, and this is a state of affairs, some world, not a proposition (Dancy 2000: 15).

In sum, Dancy thinks that normative reasons are not reducible to the psychological states of a person. Dancy argues that his normative reasons are not reducible to the psychological states of a person. He then asserts that there is no way to make account, propositions could be considered as reasons, is not in February. Dancy's first account of propositions, proposition expressed by the sentence is the class of possible worlds in which true. On the second proposition, the expression is an abstract object whose constituent parts are already in the world the constituents of the proposition (Dancy 2000). But Dancy thinks it obvious propositions, on either construal, cannot be reasons for a putative wrong sort of behavior.

& a class of worlds is hardly the right sort of thing to right. And an abstract object with a structure that mirrors seems no better off (Dancy 2000).

Dancy is aware of this challenge, and has explicitly responded (Davis 2005, 259). In fact, Dancy has normative reasons are non-psychological states. He suggests that normative reasons are non-psychological objects of beliefs and desires. Whatever the

merits of Davis's Dilemma to pursue a different line of thought and at least some normative propositions. In addition, I will argue that normative reasons never themselves capable of being objects of psychological states.

Agents can have *prima facie* reasons to act by virtue of false justified belief. The object of such a belief is false, but rather a false proposition that justifiably believe. Suppose Smith has peacefully walked his route to work every day for many years. On this basis, Smith has the proposition that, "If I walk my route to work today, I will reach my office safely." But today, an unwelcome misfortune is on his way. Smith will be mauled by a tiger that he had heard about. Let us assume that there is no information that Smith could have accessed to provide an evidentiary basis for anticipating this. Smith, therefore, has a false proposition that he will reach work safely. Although false, that proposition is still justifiably believed, given the chances of being mauled by a tiger on an otherwise safe walking route are so slim. This is not the case, and hence it is not that a tiger will befall Smith on his way to work. Smith has a reason to work. That reason is a proposition that Smith falsely, but justifiably believes.

One might object that the Smith's belief is justified by the fact that the fact that zoo animals hardly ever escape their cages.

⁵ Among other things, we may assume that the author is not aware of the fact that zoo animals hardly ever escape their cages.

Smith's route has proven to be useful in the past, and proposition justifiably believed by Smith, good reason to work today? Alan H. Goldman has shown never based on justified, but on the facts which justify belief Goldman (2003). That cannot be overruled, there are cases where an agent's action cannot adequately be described to what she believes would completely suggest that Smith has a reason to go to work by virtue of that fact as animals hardly ever err and that Smith's route to work is fixed. The past alone does not suffice to establish on why Smith ought to a tiger mauling. They do not suffice what Smith believes is part of the explanation of why Smith's reason to believe doing that will put him in harm's way is justified in believing the proposition reach work safely, since this proposition is backed by experience. It becomes clear that Smith has a good reason to work only when we appreciate that the justification he reaches work safely, and what he perceives after the fact is an inaccessible presence in his good reason to work because he has a good reason to believe that he believes is false. And what Smith believes is not a fact justifiably believed on reasons can be propositions.

Although the foregoing concerns normative reasons and propositions, it does not follow that all normative reasons are psychological states. Some normative reasons might even be identical to psychological states, but others might not. It is unnecessary to show that (EW) does all for an informal claim about reasons:

(NRR) If any agent has a normative reason, then it is psychologically possible that an object of that reason is represented.

(NRR) claims that all normative reasons are objects of a mental representation. This is not to say that all normative reasons are represented. (NRR) contributes to my argument for (EW) (E presupposes that normative reasons are mental objects). Further, (NRR) is not a claim about the rationality of agents. (cf. section 6), I suggest that (NRR) is motivated by being the object of a particular, beliefs and desires. (NRR) would be false in the case of a reason that is not an object of the relevant agent's psychological states. It follows that normative reasons are mental objects, and it is so that normative reasons are mental objects. (NRR) is a claim about the rationality of agents. (cf. section 6) characterizes the mechanism by which normative reasons are mental objects.

by demonstration rather than reasons, what is not possible, objects of psychological states.

According to the representational theory of mental states, psychological states with semantic properties like content, intension (Pett). Examples of mental representations include and thought intentional states such as beliefs, desires, and intentions. Attitudes one could take towards the world are a mental representation whose object is the proposition that it is raining on Tuesday. And, through various intentional states, I could have various representations. By believing that I arrive to the meeting on time, I arrive to the meeting on time, by intending to arrive to the meeting on time, I can speak of beliefs and intentions as mental representations, although strictly speaking they are not representations.

Mental representations can have the object of mental representations include abstract objects, properties, relations, notably, propositions. Mental representations may have as their objects though this depends on the ontology of facts. The proposal in this classically put forward by Frege (Frege 1973, 663). If this proposal is correct, then facts can be mental as true propositions can be mental only if they are not propositions, they may still be objects of mental representations about mental representations. McDowell

(1986), and that objects of mental representation are *de se* and *de dicto* such mind-independent objects may include *de se* (Pitt 2008, §7).⁵ If so, it is possible that these proposals will be mistaken, and that facts of objects of mental representation in that case, (NRR) would carry the implications of normative reasons reducible to the psychological. Since the other considerations I am about to put forward in favor of (NRR) have this implication as a *consequence*.

Briefly, we should appreciate what (NRR) allows, and not say that normative reasons are represented in the (NRR) that normative reasons are, it is psychologically possible for objects of psychological states reasons might be propositionally psychological states, a sort of thing capable of being mental representation.

Also, (NRR) claims that normative reasons must be represented by the age 5 child. As we saw in the previous section, to mentally represent normative reasons is to understand oneself as having reasons. However, it was also suggested in the previous section that animals and young children and adult animals lack the capacity for representing normative reasons with (NRR), provided that arguments for the presence of normative reasons are not correct.⁶ If instances of normative reasons are

⁶I am grateful to an anonymous referee for pressing me on this issue.

facts not reducible to psychological facts that the ability to mentally represent normative reasons is normative. This is a way that satisfies (NRR), that he can state that relevant facts. Such an agent would just present himself as having normative reasons. Thus, if Betty the crow can mentally represent the fact that in order to reach the food base, she must bend the wire, then Betty can have a normative reason to bend the wire. (NRR) Betty can have this normative reason, even though she cannot represent the fact that bending a wire would be harmful in itself. Similar comments apply in the case that some normative reasons are propositional, or psychological states.

Now I turn to a more interesting case: unpredictable future events. Examples of things that mental representation cannot represent are often stories about people dying. A fire broke out in a building, and it collapsed on a person carrying a whole family. The lifting apparatus on a garbage truck fell out a shard of metal that was riding underneath it. There was no way that the victims of these disasters could anticipate what was going to happen. Hence, unpredictable events are facts that cannot be objects of representation, and they are not facts.

⁷ Glock (2009) says that even animals such as chimpanzees mentally represent and deliberate about facts. But chimpanzees surely don't conceive of them as reasons.

Being representable is a necessary condition for being a normative reason. Searle says that normative reasons must be able to play a role in practical reasoning. This means that a normative reason must be able to make a difference to the practical inferences that follow from it. But if there is no psychologically possible way that a normative reason could be able to make such a difference, then it cannot be a normative reason. Unpredictable facts about the future can dramatically affect what we do. But because they are not mental representations, they cannot be normative reasons. Deliberation about what we do in the future is a psychological process. If there is no psychologically possible way that people about to die in accidents could consider the possibility of their dying, then such facts cannot be normative reasons. Therefore, only facts that are psychologically possible can be normative reasons.

Indeed, this points to a general principle: normative reasons are the sort of things that can be considered and deliberated about. In order for an agent to deliberate about a normative reason, the reason must be the object of mental representations. And, since mental representations are psychological states, a normative reason must be a psychological state. This is why normative reasons are, in the foreground, normative reasons are, the sort of things that are capable of being objects of mental representation.

8. Conclusion

Williams's explanatory (EW) constraint and its far-reaching implications for the theory of practical rationality suggest that an agent cannot have a normative reason if there is no psychologically possible way for that agent to act. The question of whether or not psychologically possible can only be an empirically difficult question at that. Dependence on the empirical discovery could generate the implicit intuition that violations of the paths have no global moral relevance. However, I think that implication should be rejected. It is not the case that whenever there is an intuitive reason for a normative action, a person ought to do something, also a psychological possibility exists that that person is acting that way. In this scenario, I would not threaten intuition. But if empirical discoveries about the space of psychological possibility should bite the EW, then that is what should happen.

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