

Notes

1. This formulation ignores a qualification I have discussed elsewhere. See David Copp, Morality, Normativity, and Society (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), chapter 9; David Copp, “Rationality, Autonomy, and Basic Needs,” in Neil Roughley, ed., Being Humans, (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 334-55.
2. Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, James W. Ellington, trans., (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981). See p. 50 (Ak 448). In references to the Groundwork, I refer first to the pagination of the Ellington translation and then to the pagination of the Prussian Academy Edition (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1902 -).
3. Christine Korsgaard has recently suggested that “the normativity” of the principle of instrumental rationality “must be traced to the agent’s self-government, specifically to his capacity to be motivated to shape his character in accordance with an ideal of virtue.” See Christine Korsgaard, “The Normativity of Instrumental Reason,” in Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut, eds., Ethics and Practical Reason (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 220, note 13. My account does not invoke a moralized conception of autonomy.
4. In speaking of “serving” a value I mean to cover both cases of taking means that are

instrumental to fulfilling or realizing something one values and cases of doing what is constitutive of fulfilling or realizing a value. For this usage, see Gavin Lawrence, "The Rationality of Morality," in Rosalind Hursthouse, Gavin Lawrence, and Warren Quinn, eds., Virtues and Reasons (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 90.

5. The example is based on an event described in Jon Krakauer, Into Thin Air: A Personal Account of the Mount Everest Disaster, (New York: Anchor, 1998).
6. Kant, Groundwork, 50-51 (Ak 447-449).
7. Philippa Foot rejects reasons pluralism in "Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives," in Philippa Foot, Virtues and Vices (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 161 and 168, note 8. Yet she appears to agree with me that moral considerations are not a source of reasons of a kind that any rational person would take into account in deliberation, if she were aware of them, just in virtue of being rational.
8. David Copp, "The Ring of Gyges: Overridingness and the Unity of Reason," Social Philosophy and Policy, 14 (1997): 86-106.
9. There is risk of terminological confusion. Some writers think that the English expression "ought" refers, when unqualified, to what I would say "ought rationally" to be done. For example, where Gavin Lawrence speaks of "what the agent ought unsubscripted (that is qua rational) to do," I speak of what an agent "ought rationally" to do. See Lawrence, "The Rationality of Morality," 120. I think there is no answer to the question of what the climbers ought to do simpliciter, but I do think that, in the example as I understand it, they ought rationally to continue the climb.
10. See Donald C. Hubin, "The Groundless Normativity of Instrumental Rationality," The

Journal of Philosophy, 98 (2001): 445-68.

11. There are different conceptions of normativity. I discuss some of the varieties in David Copp, “Moral Naturalism and Three Grades of Normativity,” in Peter Schaber, ed., Normativity and Naturalism (Frankfurt: Ontos-Verlag, 2005), 7-45.
12. Korsgaard, “The Normativity of Instrumental Reason,” 218, also 249.
13. David Velleman proposes that “self-understanding” is the “constitutive aim” of action – in something like the way in which “truth” is the “constitutive aim ”of belief. David Velleman, The Possibility of Practical Reason (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 16-24, see 22. My account does not require postulating a “constitutive aim” of action. A thorough discussion of Velleman’s proposal is beyond the scope of this essay.
14. Our values are shaped by the values of our family and culture, but such influences do not undermine our autonomy. Were it not for such influences, we might not be capable of the kind of planning required for autonomy. See Will Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), chapter 5, esp. 82-84. See also Marina Oshana, “Personal Autonomy and Society”, Journal of Social Philosophy, 29 (1998).
15. Michael Bratman, Intentions, Plans, and Practical Reason (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987).
16. Korsgaard has suggested that “willing an end just is committing yourself to realizing the end.” (Korsgaard, “The Normativity of Instrumental Reason,” 245.) She understands such commitment normatively, as analogous to “making a promise.” (Ibid., 245, note 60.) In my view, to will an end is to form a kind of intention, which is not essentially a

normative matter. Korsgaard's view is disputed in R. Jay Wallace, "Normativity, Commitment, and Instrumental Reason," Philosophers' Imprint, 1 (2001): 3-10. The internet address for this article is <www.philosophersimprint.org/001003>.

17. John Searle, Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 84-85.
18. Gideon Yaffe pressed me to explain the sense in which policies are general.
19. For a valuable discussion of the agential control of action, see John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza, S.J., Responsibility and Control: A Theory of Moral Responsibility (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
20. Bratman stresses the ability we have to decide whether to take the object of a desire to be an end. See his "Identification, Decision, and Treating as a Reason," Philosophical Topics, 24 (1996): 1-18. Bratman cites Rachel Cohon, "Internalism about Reasons for Action," Pacific Philosophical Quarterly 74 (1993): 265-88.
21. Bratman presents his account in a series of papers. A useful overview is in Michael Bratman, "Planning Agency, Autonomous Agency," in James Stacey Taylor, ed., Personal Autonomy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 33-57.
22. Ibid, 35-36.
23. Ibid, 43.
24. Ibid, 41-42. Bratman refers to Derek Parfit, Reasons and Persons (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 206-208, for a contemporary discussion of a Lockean view of personal identity.
25. Bratman, "Planning Agency, Autonomous Agency," 42.

26. Michael Bratman, “Reflection, Planning, and Temporally Extended Agency,” Philosophical Review: 59-60 and 49-50. Also Bratman, “Planning Agency, Autonomous Agency,” 44, 38-39.
27. Bratman, “Planning Agency, Autonomous Agency,” 44.
28. Ibid.
29. Bratman urged this point in a helpful correspondence about my criticisms of his view. See also Michael Bratman, “Autonomy and Hierarchy,” Social Philosophy and Policy, (2003): 160-63.
30. Her other obsessions may conflict with it, but they typically would not be self-governing policies (or quasi-policies). An obsession with her hair, for example, would be first-order, so it would not be a self-governing policy or quasi-policy, and it might not affect her deliberation, for her obsession not to give weight in deliberation to her obsessions stands in its way. If so, it would not impede the Lockean role of the latter. On Bratman’s account, she counts as satisfied with the latter provided that no self-governing policy or quasi-policy undermines its Lockean role. See above, note 26.
31. Philippa Foot, “Moral Beliefs,” in her Virtues and Vices (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 113-114. Foot’s dictum would need to be reformulated to deal with cases in which pride takes a propositional object, for a proposition is not viewed as “a man’s own.” A person may be proud of a painting, or proud that she made the painting. Following Foot, we could perhaps say, in cases of the latter kind, that the object of a man’s pride is a proposition about an actual or possible state of affairs involving the man – where, she would add, the obtaining of that state of affairs is viewed as some sort

of achievement or advantage.

32. I develop this suggestion in detail in David Copp, “Social Unity and the Identity of Persons”, The Journal of Political Philosophy (2002): 365-91.
33. The 1933 edition of The Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933) does not give an entry for “identity” with anything like the relevant meaning. In the 1976 Supplement to the O.E.D., however, the term "identity crisis" is given, with the first cited usage being 1954. Perhaps, then, we should speak of the “baby boomer conception of identity.”
34. See Christine Korsgaard, The Sources of Normativity, Onora O’Neill, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 101. Korsgaard speaks of our “practical identity”.
35. K. Anthony Appiah, “Identity, Authenticity, Survival: Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction,” in Charles Taylor et al., Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition, Amy Gutman, ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 150-51.
36. In this and the following six paragraphs I follow the argument in David Copp, “Social Unity and the Identity of Persons.”
37. Gabriele Taylor speaks of, “emotions of self-assessment”, in “Shame, Integrity, and Self-Respect”, in Robin S. Dillon, ed., Dignity, Character, and Self-Respect (New York: Routledge, 1995), 168. Taylor holds that self-esteem is primarily to be understood in terms of pride and humiliation (p. 173). See also John Deigh, “Shame and Self-Esteem,” in Dillon, ed., ibid. Deigh relates self-esteem to a range of emotions of the kind I mention (pp. 135-39). He links the idea of having disgraced oneself and the idea of shame with the idea of who one is, and he links the ideas of disgrace and shame to self-

esteem.

38. For this purpose we consider the closest possible world in which the person has the beliefs in question. I am assuming the account of counter-factuals in David Lewis, Counterfactuals (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973).
39. Nomy Arpaly helped me with this kind of example.
40. This paragraph is taken with some modifications from my “Social Unity and the Identity of Persons”.
41. Aristotle suggests that our character is revealed in our feelings. See Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book 2, chapter 3, 1104b3ff. I owe this reference to Elaine Sternberg.
42. We presumably have a policy of speaking grammatically, but we could not formulate the rules of grammar and might not follow the policy self-consciously. The policy is “implicit” in this sense. Frank Jackson describes grammar as an “implicitly understood theory”. See Frank Jackson, “Cognitivism, A Priori Deduction, and Moore,” Ethics, 113 (2003): 569.
43. Jay Wallace speaks of beliefs that are not “explicitly and articulately present to the consciousness of the agent” but that “are implicit in the agent’s understanding of their situation.” Wallace, “Normativity, Commitment, and Instrumental Reason,” 21, note 52.
44. Ibid., 22.
45. T.M. Scanlon, What We Owe To Each Other (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 88.
46. Here I am influenced by Bratman’s views about self-governing policies, in his “Planning

Agency, Autonomous Agency,” 41-45.

47. Kadri Vihvelin suggested that a person can be alienated from her own values.
48. Compare Scanlon, What We Owe To Each Other, 79.
49. In Morality, Normativity, and Society I explained valuing in a slightly different way, in terms of subscribing to a standard, but there is a close connection between subscribing to a standard and having a policy. See 177-78, 84, 87-88. I proposed a different kind of account in “Reason and Needs”. It was criticized in Gilbert Harman, “Desired Desires”, in R.G. Frey and Christopher Morris, eds., Value, Welfare, and Morality, 138-57.
50. Various people pressed me to discuss examples of this kind.
51. Scanlon, What We Owe To Each Other, 95, see 87-100.
52. This example was suggested to me by Richard Schubert.
53. This idea has been addressed by many writers on the emotions. See Foot’s brief groundbreaking discussion in, “Moral Beliefs,” 113-114.
54. This point needs more discussion. Steven Wall helped me to see the need to mention it.
55. Having such a policy could be understood as a matter, inter alia, of intending to comply with certain relevant standards or norms. This suggestion brings my discussion of valuing into contact with Allan Gibbard’s moral psychology, which postulates the state of norm acceptance, and the psychology I have proposed, which postulates the similar state of subscription to a standard. See Gibbard, Wise Choices, Apt Feelings (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), and Copp, Morality, Normativity, and Society.
56. This formulation ignores some of the caveats I mention in what follows. I need to leave the notion of “serving” one’s values unexplicated. But see above, note 4. Important

complexities lurk under the surface here. Philip Pettit has proposed that “serving” something one values might consist in “promoting” it or in “honoring” or “expressing” it. In some cases, it may seem more appropriate to “honor” something we value than to “promote” it. See Philip Pettit, “Consequentialism,” in Peter Singer, ed., A Companion to Ethics (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 230-240.

57. There are complexities here that I must pass over. Compare John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 143. See Scanlon, What We Owe To Each Other, 121-22.
58. Hence the autonomy conception makes room for both kinds of error that Gavin Lawrence thinks any “proper theory” would accommodate. See Lawrence, “The Rationality of Morality,” p. 121.
59. A person’s “epistemic standards” are norms she accepts that pertain to the rational formation of belief. An example is the rule to believe something only if the evidence or supporting reasons on balance make its truth significantly more likely than its falsity. By a person’s “epistemic situation” – with respect to a given proposition – I mean her situation as it bears on the reasonableness of believing the proposition, given her epistemic standards.
60. I pass over the problem of grounding epistemic standards. It is plausible that epistemic standards are appropriately grounded when, roughly, conformity with them would serve us well, in the typical circumstances in which we human beings actually find ourselves, in attaining true beliefs and avoiding false beliefs. On the account of practical rationality I am proposing, it is possible, even if unlikely, that a person who qualifies as practically

rational might have epistemic standards that are not grounded in this way. For her epistemic standards may be such that conformity with them serves her well in pursuing what she values even though it is not the case that conformity with them would serve human beings well, in typical circumstances, in attaining truth and avoiding falsehood.

See Philip Kitcher, “The Naturalists Return”, The Philosophical Review, 101 (1992): 53-114; e.g. 63. Compare Rawls, A Theory of Justice, 397.

61. Meeting one’s needs is a precondition for an autonomous life, so this qualification fits within the autonomy conception of rationality. I am not certain how the qualification should be worded. It should perhaps be restricted to emergency situations. The idea would be that rationality permits securing one’s needs in emergency situations, even if doing so is contrary to serving one’s values. For example, even if a rescue worker values his work, he may be rational to balk at going into a burning building when the risk to his life is excessive. By an emergency situation, I mean a situation with two key characteristics. First, it is reasonable for the agent to believe that serving her values would undermine or put seriously at risk her ability to sustain her status as an autonomous agent, not in a merely temporary or minor way, such that she could later compensate for neglecting her needs, but in a permanent and decisive way. And second, it is reasonable for her to believe that sustaining her status as autonomous would permit her to carry on in the future to serve at least some of her values. A version of the values standard that is qualified in the relevant way could be called the “needs and values standard.”
62. The locution, “makes sense”, is used in Allan Gibbard, Wise Choices, Apt Feelings.

63. For a related point, see Philip Pettit and Michael Smith, “Backgrounding Desire”, *Philosophical Review*, 99 (1990): 565-92.
64. That is, a rational agent need not use the values standard as a “decision procedure”.
65. I ignore the possibility of situations in which the agent judges that several actions would serve her values equally well. Where S is rationally required to do A because doing so will best serve her values, our assessment of the rationality of S’s performance should be sensitive to, among other things, (1) whether S does A intentionally, (2) whether S does A for the reason that it will best serve her values, and (3) whether S believes that doing A makes the most sense given her values. In ordinary akrasia, the agent satisfies (3) but fails to do A. She may succeed, however, in serving something else that she values or takes as an end. Some cases of this kind will qualify as cases of “cleverness,” as Wallace uses the term in “Normativity, Commitment, and Instrumental Reason,” p. 1. In inverse akrasia, the agent succeeds on count (1), and perhaps also on (2), but believes that something other than A makes the most sense. In another kind of case, the agent succeeds on counts (1) and (3) but acts for the wrong reason. See Nomy Arpaly, “On Acting Rationally Against One’s Best Judgment”, *Ethics*, 110, (2000): 488-513.
66. A similar point is made by Hubin, “The Groundless Normativity of Instrumental Rationality.” David Schmidtz points out that having certain “final ends” can be a means to satisfying certain ends regarding our ends. See David Schmidtz, *Rational Choice and Moral Agency* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 61, 77.
67. Steven Darwall, *Welfare and Rational Care* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 7. See also John Broome, “Normative Requirements,” *Ratio* [new series], 12

(1999): 398-419; Patricia Greenspan, “Conditional Obligations and Hypothetical Imperatives,” Journal of Philosophy, 72 (1975): 259-276; Korsgaard, “The Normativity of Instrumental Reason,” 252. Korsgaard says, “Hypothetical imperatives cannot exist without categorical ones, or anyway without principles which direct us to the pursuit of certain ends, or anyway without something which gives normative status to our ends.” Ibid., 250.

68. I ignore values that are logically impossible to satisfy. For useful discussion, see Donald C. Hubin, “Irrational Desires,” Philosophical Studies, 62 (1991): 23-44, esp. 24-26.
69. I owe this objection to Steven Davis and Melinda Ammann.
70. Gavin Lawrence discusses a view he calls the “end-relative account,” which is similar to the conception of self-grounded reason that I am defending. He says that on this account “there is simply no question of whether an end is good or worth pursuing.” See Lawrence, “The Rationality of Morality,” 115, 128. I am claiming that it is possible to evaluate a person’s values but that this is a different matter from evaluating the rationality of her actions. Korsgaard says that “the instrumental principle,” which is similar to the values standard, cannot stand without “something which gives normative status to our ends.” Yet she concedes that this status may be very thin. She allows that an “heroic existentialist” might endorse his ends for no “further reason”, without thinking his ends are good. See Korsgaard, “The Normativity of Instrumental Reason”, 251 note 74, and 252. I have said that an agent “endorses” her values and the role of her values in governing her actions. But this is not to say that an evaluation of the rationality of an agent’s actions in terms of the values standard requires or involves an evaluation of the

agent's values.

71. Wallace, "Normativity, Commitment, and Instrumental Reason," 1.
72. Bratman pressed this objection in personal correspondence.
73. Scanlon, What We Owe To Each Other, 70. Bratman stresses that once one has formed an intention to A, one is under certain rational constraints with respect to this intention, such as the constraint not to change the intention without reason. But this is not to say that one acquires a new reason to A merely in virtue of forming the intention. See Bratman, Intentions, Plans, and Practical Reason.
74. But would the reason be derived from a reason given me by the whim or urge to smell the rose? There is a temptation to say so. But an urge or whim can instead be viewed as an occurrence that is not in itself reason-giving. A person can decide whether to indulge it or not, and either way, arguably, she makes no mistake, other things being equal. If she forms the intention to indulge it, then, arguably, she thereby acquires a reason to do so. On this view, a person who stops to smell a rose on a whim may be no more responsive to reasons than would have been the case had she not stopped. Yet, of course, in the latter case, we might doubt her wisdom in eschewing an innocent opportunity for enjoyment.
75. Similar suggestions have been made before. Don Hubin has suggested an account of reasons for action based on what a person "intrinsically values", and he suggests that our values are "expressions of our selves." See Donald C. Hubin, "Hypothetical Motivation," Nous, 30 (1996): 47. Korsgaard has said that an adequate account of normativity "must appeal, in a deep way, to our sense of who we are, to our sense of identity." Korsgaard,

The Sources of Normativity, 17-18. For Korsgaard, your “identity” is “a description under which you value yourself.” See Korsgaard, The Sources of Normativity, 101.

76. See the discussion of giving up “an ideal” in Sarah Buss, “The Irrationality of Unhappiness and the Paradox of Despair,” The Journal of Philosophy, 101 (2004): 186-87.
77. Hubin, “The Groundless Normativity of Instrumental Rationality.”
78. Ibid, 467. See 463-68. See H.L.A. Hart, The Concept of Law, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961).
79. Elsewhere, I have proposed a schema according to which a basic normative proposition of kind K is true only if a corresponding K standard or norm has a relevant kind of status or justification. See David Copp, Morality, Normativity, and Society, chapter 2. An account of the grounding of the standard of rationality could be plugged into this schema to yield an account of the truth conditions of claims about rationality. For further discussion of this idea, see David Copp, “Moral Naturalism and Three Grades of Normativity.”
80. Kant says, “Whoever wills the end, wills (so far as reason has decisive influence on his actions) also the means that are indispensably necessary to his [ends] and that lie in his power. This proposition, as far as willing is concerned, is analytic.” Kant, Groundwork, 27, (Ak, 417). However, unless there is a requirement of some sort that we be fully rational, then even if it is analytic that fully rational agents do intend the means to their ends, it does not follow that there is a requirement to intend the means to our ends. Hence, in Kant’s terms, it does not follow that the standard calling on us to intend the

means to our ends is an imperative.

81. Kant, Groundwork, 27, (Ak 417). I discuss some of Kant's arguments in David Copp, "The 'Possibility' of a Categorical Imperative: Kant's Groundwork, Part III," Philosophical Perspectives, 6, Ethics, (1992): 261-84.
82. Valuing something involves having a policy, or a general intention. One who has such an intention has at least a background standing disposition to act appropriately.
83. If this were my view, then the argument would show, at best, that the requirement to comply with the values standard is hypothetical, or conditional on our valuing autonomy. But this is not so. When we are rationally required to do something A, in most cases the requirement is conditional on, roughly, our having values such that doing A best serves those values in the circumstances. But the requirement to comply with the values standard itself is not conditional on our having any values in particular. Whatever our values, in complying with the values standard, we best serve those values.
84. David Velleman argues to the contrary that agency has a "constitutive goal" such that any agent must aim to be in conscious control of her behavior – which he says amounts to the aim to be autonomous. It is in virtue of this fact that agents are subject to reasons. J. David Velleman, "The Possibility of Practical Reason," Ethics (1996): esp. 719. See above, note 14. My account does not require postulating a "constitutive aim" of agency.
85. Korsgaard holds the stronger view that compliance with the "instrumental principle" is constitutive of deliberate action. She says, "if you don't put one foot in front of the other you will not be walking and you will get nowhere ... The instrumental principle is, in this way, a constitutive norm of willing, of deliberate action. If you are going to act at all,

then you must conform to it.” Korsgaard, “The Normativity of Instrumental Reason,” 249. But Korsgaard insists that failures to conform to the instrumental principle must be possible if the principle is normative (*ibid.*, 247-248, 228). And a person who fails to conform to the instrumental principle may well have acted. Agents sometimes perform akratic actions. If the climbers had failed to serve their values in the Everest example, but had instead stopped to help the victims, their helping would have been an action. It therefore seems implausible that conformity with the instrumental principle is constitutive of acting.

86. The idea of a defeasible law-like generalization is discussed in Mark Lance and Margaret Little, “Defeasibility and the Normative Grasp of Content,” *Erkenntnis* (forthcoming).
87. I am grateful to many people for helpful comments and discussion over the many years in which I have been developing the ideas in this paper. With apologies to those whose help escapes my memory, I would like to thank Nomi Arpaly, Sam Black, Michael Bratman, Justin D’Arms, Dan Farrell, Pat Greenspan, Don Hubin, Dan Jacobson, Marina Oshana, Michael Ridge, Michael Robins, David Sobel, Pekka Väyrynen, and David Velleman. I presented early versions of some of the ideas in this paper to audiences in the Departments of Philosophy at the University of Alberta, the University of Maryland at College Park, l’Université de Montréal, the University of Southern California, and the University of Florida, to the 1999 Conference on Moral Theory and its Applications, Le Lavandou, France, and to the 2001 Conference on Reason and Deliberation, Bowling Green State University. The current version of the paper was presented to the 2004 Conference on Personal Identity, hosted by the Social Philosophy and Policy Center,

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