

REASONS AND CAUSES

by

JENNIFER JOAN HILDITCH

M.A., University of St. Andrews, 1970

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

Philosophy

ACCEPTED
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

DEAN

DATE

11 May/73

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

© JENNIFER JOAN HILDITCH, 1972

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

September 1972

ABSTRACT

Supervisor: Dr. Kenneth W. Rankin

It is my concern in this thesis to consider the question whether the reasons for action in terms of the agent's wants, beliefs and motives constitute causally necessary and sufficient conditions for his intention to act, and subsequent action.

I begin by outlining the contributions of various philosophers towards an analysis of the various concepts involved, - my aim being to suggest where some of the boundaries between the concepts lie. I indicate that explanations in terms of motives, the intention with which an action is performed, and the agent's reasons, can be restated in terms of the agent's wants and corresponding beliefs; and hence whether the former attribute causal conditions depends on whether the wants and corresponding beliefs are causes.

I also suggest at this point that the criterion for intentional action is that the agent has the intention of performing the action, rather than that he has an intention in performing it, or an intention with which he performs it.

In the second chapter, I survey some prominent arguments presented by philosophers both for and against the claim that reasons for action are causes, and conclude that the arguments proposed against the causal hypothesis are untenable. They do indicate the various other explanatory roles of explanations in terms of reasons for action, - redescribing, justifying, etc., but none of these roles eliminates

the possibility of the antecedents to the action referred to in the explanations, the agent's wants and beliefs, being causal conditions of the action. I also support the arguments in favour of the 'realist' interpretation of dispositions, - and hence maintain that dispositional explanations may be causal explanations.

In the subsequent chapters, I consider various characteristics of 'wants'. I take 'want' in the widest sense to cover any pro-attitude towards the action, as opposed to the restricted sense in which it is sometimes used in contrast to e.g. 'obligation'. In the wide sense of 'want' 'he intends to X' logically entails 'he wants to X' i.e. 'he has some pro-attitude towards doing X'.

I suggest that there is a lack of parity between various causal models and the relationship of wants to the intention and fulfilling action. Wants are unlike dispositional causes in certain respects relating to conflicting wants. They are nevertheless like dispositions in that they are tendencies, but their characteristics are more appropriately described by an indeterministic model.

I argue that 'He wants to X' logically entails 'If he believes (without a doubt) that he has the opportunity and capacity and no conflicting wants, he is rational about these beliefs and he does not change his mind, he intends to X'. It could be claimed that although this is a logical entailment, it may nevertheless also describe a causal connection. At this juncture I suggest that what is implied by the want is not a hypothetical proposition like e.g. a dispositional statement; but rather, the provisional intention 'he intends (to X if he has the opportunity, and capacity, and no conflicting wants)'. An agent cannot consistently want to X, and deny that he intends to X if

the appropriate conditions prevail. But the belief implicit in the first person expression of the want, 'If conditions a, b and c prevail, I am going to X' cannot be simply a prediction of a future intention. In order to convey what is expressed by a want, it must be a present provisional intention.

I then argue that certain peculiarities would result if the provisional intention were a causal condition of the categorical intention. I illustrate first of all the similarities and distinctions between the proviso of provisional intentions and the conditional of non-intentional quasi-self-fulfilling conditional anticipations. It emerges that the recognition of the self-fulfilling character of the provisional intention must be incorporated into the 'if-clause' in order for it to qualify as an intention, and be self-fulfilling. Given this necessary implicit awareness of its self-fulfilling character, the provisional intention would be irrational if causally self-fulfilling. The fulfillment of the categorical intention is the same as the fulfillment of the provisional intention from which it is inferred when the agent believes the conditions of the proviso to obtain. Hence if the provisional intention caused the categorical intention it would be causally self-fulfilling and thus irrational. On the presupposition that provisional intentions are not irrational, I suggest that the provisional intention does not cause the categorical intention.

After illustrating more fully the relationship between motive explanations and wants, I conclude by indicating that, although I have been concerned with elucidating the characteristics of the reasons for action in terms of the agent's wants and beliefs, an analysis of the intention, - the intention of acting -, is required for a full account

of the nature of the antecedents to action - although to give the intention of is not to give one of the reasons why he did it. I suggest also that it is open to the physicalist to claim that although wants and beliefs exhibit this indeterminacy in the characteristics pertaining to conflicting wants, on the conceptual level, there may be an explanation giving causally necessary and sufficient conditions in physical terms.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I. EXPLANATIONS OF ACTION 1

 Intentions

 Motives

 His Reason, The Reasons For, The Reasons Why

II. TYPES OF EXPLANATION 22

 Teleological Explanations

 Dispositional Explanations

 Redescription and Interpretation

 Justifications

III. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF WANTS. 41

 Wanting and Wishing

IV. SOME PECULIARITIES OF A DISPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS OF WANTS. . . 52

 Conflicting Wants

 Internal and External Conditions

V. THE LOGICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN 'WANTING' AND 'INTENDING' . . 66

VI. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROVISIONAL INTENTION
 AND THE CATEGORICAL INTENTION. 80

VII. MOTIVES AND EMOTIONS 98

 Motives, Moods and Character-Traits

CONCLUSION 114

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank Dr. Kenneth W. Rankin very sincerely for much time spent in patient guidance and instruction, and for his many helpful suggestions and criticisms, throughout the preparation of this thesis.

I would also like to thank Dr. Charles B. Daniels for his constructive criticism during the latter stages of its preparation.

CHAPTER I

EXPLANATIONS OF ACTION

A number of concepts fall into the category of explanations for action. These include wants, beliefs, intentions, motives, and reasons.

Before I embark on my main task of elucidating some of their conceptual characteristics, I shall take some preliminary steps to indicate certain distinctions which can be drawn between the individual members of the class.

Some philosophers wish to maintain that only one member of the class of explanations for action qualifies as 'reasons'. Rachels¹ presents a clear account of the distinction he feels should be drawn between the agent's reasons on the one hand, and his wants and beliefs on the other. He disputes Davidson's² claim that wants, or a pro-attitude on the part of the agent, plus the agent's beliefs, constitute the primary reasons for the action. Rachels argues that a reason is a particular fact with regard to which an agent acts. If the agent is aware of this fact, and consideration of it is taken into his reasoning about how to act, it constitutes a reason for him. Rachels illustrates the distinction by means of an example of a man fleeing from a burning theater. His reason for running out is that the theater is on fire, his want, or pro-attitude is to avoid being burnt - but this is not his reason. Nor is his belief a reason for acting, unless it is that particular fact about himself, that he has

the belief which disturbs him, and with regard to which he will act; e.g. his belief that he is Napoleon may be his reason for visiting the psychiatrist.

It seems that on Rachels' terms, the agent's reason is the particular fact which the agent believes makes a certain action appropriate to the fulfilling of his want.

The following examples will emphasize the distinctions:

- (a) that the theater is on fire is a particular fact which makes running out of the theater an appropriate way of avoiding being burnt, where the agent wants to avoid being burnt.
- (b) that he believes he is Napoleon is a particular fact about himself which makes a visit to a psychiatrist an appropriate means to a cure, where the agent wants a cure for his disorder.
- (c) that he wants drink (to excess) is a particular fact about himself which makes contacting 'Alcoholics Anonymous' an appropriate means to a cure, where the agent wants to be cured.

It may be noted here that a current 'intention' cannot be a reason in the way that a 'want' can in the above type of case. For example, that he intends to commit suicide, where a current intention is being referred to, cannot be his reason for visiting a psychiatrist, because if he visits a psychiatrist it would be inaccurate to say that he currently intends to commit suicide. This would involve two incompatible intentions - to commit suicide, and to find a means of refraining from committing suicide - which an agent could not rationally hold - assuming he is to that extent rational. It is more accurate to say he has a desire to commit suicide. This would be his reason for contacting a psychiatrist as in example (c) above. The

same argument applies to 'belief' in (b) above. Rachels points out that the agent must be self-conscious of himself as having the belief, in order for it to be his reason for visiting the psychiatrist, but it is also the case here that the agent cannot be entertaining a current belief that he is Napoleon, if his belief is to be a reason for his visiting the psychiatrist.

The alternative type of case, where two current intentions are not incompatible is treated in (f) below.

In contrast to (a) to (c) above:

- (d) that he believes it is raining is not the particular fact which makes carrying an umbrella an appropriate means of keeping dry, where the agent wants to keep dry.
- (e) that he wants to save money is not the particular fact which makes depositing money in the bank an appropriate means of saving money.
- (f) that he intends to leave the country today is not the particular fact which makes packing his bags an appropriate preliminary to leaving the country.

In this last example, if the agent were asked for his reason for packing his bags, he might well reply "because I intend to leave the country today". However here his reasons are stated elliptically. By giving the intention, his reasons for packing his bags are obvious (that is, that clothes are required on journeys, and that clothes travel easily in bags etc.)

However if asked "Why are you swallowing pills?", it would not be such an informative reply to say, "because I intend to leave the country today", because in this case my reasons (i.e. that I suffer

from travel sickness, and pills help to relieve the sickness etc.) are not obvious from a statement of the intention.

There is a strong indication in the previous examples however that we are not as scrupulous as Rachels would require in our every day use of the term 'reasons'. He has nevertheless indicated an important distinction.

Arguments against reasons being causes, in this sense of reasons, are fairly conclusive. For example, a future event cannot cause a past action. That it is Christmas on December 25th cannot be a cause of my buying presents on December 6th; or in another situation, my reason for acting may be ill-founded. I may falsely believe that it is Christmas on December 24th; but a non-existent event cannot cause a present action.

A further distinction, which will be amplified in the last section of this chapter, must be noted here, between the agent's reasons for an action, and the reasons why the action is performed. The reasons why the action is performed may be that the agent wants X and that he believes Y, whereas the content of the belief would constitute the agent's reason. This is where Rachels seems to go astray, in that he speaks of the agent having no reason if he is entertaining a false belief. But of course he has a reason, which if requested he will give. His reason is what he believes. But this does not make his belief his reason, which Rachels would rightly oppose on the basis of the previous mentioned arguments, it is what he believes that is his reason; the content of this belief. 'The reasons' why the action is performed is synonymous with 'the explanations' of the action, in terms of the agent's wants, beliefs, intentions, and motives. Rachels'

dispute with Davidson, therefore, seems to be misdirected in that Davidson is referring to the reasons why the agent performed the action.

Rachels argues further that although the agent's reason - the putative fact with regard to which he acts - cannot be a cause, the agent's thought of the reason may be the cause. This seems to be the same sort of claim which Goldman³ makes to the effect that an 'occurrent' belief, along with the 'occurrent' wants, may be causes of the action. Goldman refers to a belief or want as occurrent when the agent's want, or the thought of what he believes 'occurs to him, occupies his attention, fills his consciousness'⁴, as opposed to dispositional standing wants or beliefs.

These claims will be considered when I come to consider the characteristics of occurrent wants and the corresponding beliefs, in Chapter VI. My main concern at the moment is to clarify certain of the boundaries between the various concepts relevant to my subject-matter.

Intentions:

Anscombe⁵ separates three senses of 'intention'. The distinctions can be illustrated by the following example:

- (1) I intend to touch my toes ten times - i.e. I have the intention of touching my toes ten times.
- (2) My intention in touching my toes ten times is to exercise.
- (3) The intention with which I am touching my toes ten times is to help my waist-line.

Anscombe treats (2) as the primary sense of 'intention' and delimits intentional actions accordingly. In her water-pump example⁶,

she concludes that on this criterion for intentional action, if the man's intention in pumping the water to the house is simply to do his job, then even if he knows the water to be poisoned, he does not intentionally poison the inhabitants.

She says⁷,

In that case, although he knows concerning an intentional action of his - for it, namely replenishing the house water-supply is intentional by our criteria - that it is also an act of replenishing the house water-supply with poisoned water, it would be incorrect by our criteria, to say that his act of replenishing the house supply with poisoned water was intentional. And I do not doubt the correctness of our conclusion; it seems to show that our criteria are rather good.

It seems on the contrary that Anscombe's criteria are rather odd. For example, if I aim a ball through a loop in your clothes-line, knowing full well that it will continue on its course straight through your greenhouse window, but where my intention in throwing the ball is simply to see if I can aim it through the loop, I doubt if you would accept my plea that I smashed your greenhouse window quite unintentionally! - because my intention in throwing the ball was not to smash your greenhouse window, but to aim it through the loop. This is an attractive proposition, but I think that it is nevertheless wrong.

If a man knows that his action falls under a number of descriptions, and he also knows what these descriptions are, and if he intends - i.e. has the intention of doing that action, then, I shall argue, his action is intentional under any of the descriptions he knows it to fall under. Intention of is the central use - I shall argue that an action is intentional if I intended to do it, i.e. if I had the intention of doing it.

Anscombe, in arguing that intention in, or intention with which, is the criterion for intentional action, seems to be taking intentional to mean something like 'purposeful', 'purposed' or 'done with a purpose' or even 'meaningful' - although all of these terms smack of the same ambiguities as 'intentional'. The mistake can be better revealed by considering 'unintentional' - 'unintentional' does not mean 'without intent or purpose', or 'purposeless.'

Touching my toes ten times is an intentional action because I intended to do it. Exercising is an intentional action because I intended to exercise - had the intention of exercising - not because my intention in touching my toes was to exercise.

To say 'my intention in doing X is to do Y' is to give an appropriate description of my action in the light of the purpose. Thus if my purpose in touching my toes is to help my waistline, my action is appropriately described as exercising. If my purpose were to mock my companion, my action might be appropriately described as bowing. My intention in touching my toes would then be to bow mockingly. If I intend to do X, which is also a case for me of doing Y, then under either description, the action is intentional. If the intention in doing X served as our criterion for an intentional action, then if I just intend to touch my toes, and have no intention in doing so - it just occurs to me to do it, and I do so - my action would not be an intentional action. But it is intentional of course, which suggests that this criterion is wrong. It is intentional because I had the intention of doing so. Thus intention of seems to be the criterion for intentional action.

It is no help to say, - well here the intention in doing X is simply to do X, the intention in touching my toes is simply to touch my toes - the two telescope together, - because this begins to blur the threefold distinction between intention in and intention with which, and intention of.

In any case, if it is said that if I have the intention of doing X, where there is no further description which is my intention in doing X, then my intention in doing X must be simply to do X, and here my action is intentional, - then whether there is any intention in doing X depends on whether I have the intention of doing X, and hence intention of becomes the criterion for intention in, and thus is the criterion for intentional action.

I would maintain in any case that it is perfectly acceptable to speak of an action which I have the intention of doing, but where I have no intention in doing it, or intention with which I do it - in other words I do it with no particular purpose in mind. But this is still undoubtedly an intentional action.

Having argued that intention of is the criterion for intentional action, I shall tackle the second aspect of the dispute with Anscombe. Anscombe is claiming in the quoted passage, that if we intend to do X and our sole intention in doing X is to do Y, then if doing X is also a case of doing Z, and even if we know that doing X is also a case of doing Z, we do not do Z intentionally.

However, if we take having the intention of as the criterion for intentional action, then if we have the intention of doing X and we know that doing X is also a case of doing Z, then we have the intention of doing Z and thus doing Z is intentional. This would seem

to be more satisfactory.

If we know that we are going to do Z and we believe without a doubt that it is possible for us to intend not to do Z - to intend to refrain from doing Z - then we must intend to do Z. If we intend to do X then we must believe without a doubt that we can intend not to do X which means that we must also believe without a doubt that we can intend not to do Z, if we know that doing X is a case of doing Z, or if doing X results in Z.

In Anscombe's example,

- (1) "I am going to poison those people, but I don't have the intention of doing so," ('I don't intend to' is less cumbersome but it carries too many of the implications of intention in and intention with which) sounds decidedly odd.
- (2) "I am going to faint, but I don't have the intention of doing so" sounds less odd. The respect in which it does sound odd is in that the last clause can imply "but I intend not to", which would be odd - but I wish it to be taken in the sense 'but not because I intend to'.

The reason why (1) is more decidedly odd than (2) is that in (2) it is not possible to intend not to, and hence it makes perfectly good sense to simply predict that I am going to, without this entailing that I have the intention of doing so. In (1) however, it is possible for me to intend not to poison the people, because I can intend not to pump the water. Hence if I believe that I am going to, and also believe that I can intend not to, then I have the intention of doing so.

If however I come to realise that I am going to do Z, when this is already being accomplished, then I do not have the intention of doing Z unless I can halt the process. For example, in the greenhouse incident, if I only come to realise that the ball will smash the window after I have thrown it, then I did not have the intention of smashing it. I did not realise that I was going to, until it was impossible for me to intend not to. I can not intend not to do what has already been irreversibly set in progress.

In Anscombe's example; if he came to know that the water was poisoned after the water-supply had been sufficiently replenished, by his pumping, to poison the people; where the people have not necessarily been poisoned yet, but where it is too late for him to do anything, then it would not be true to say that he was going to poison them intentionally - because he did not know that he was going to poison them until it was impossible to intend not to. It is possible for him to intend not to pump any longer, but refraining from pumping now would not stop the poisoning. However if he continued pumping after acquiring this knowledge, it would be true to say that he was continuing to poison the people intentionally.

To summarize: having the intention of doing X is the criterion of doing X intentionally.

To give the intention with which an agent does X, is usually to assign a goal or aim external to the action.

To give his intention in doing X is to give an appropriate description of his action in the light of his goal or aim.

Sometimes the latter two are indistinguishable - the intention in doing X is also the intention with which X is done - where the

action is an end in itself, and not a means to an end.

To give the intention in any of the above senses is not to give his 'reason' in the sense previously outlined. It is not a fact, or what the agent believes to be a fact, with regard to which the agent acts. But the intention in doing X, or the intention with which he does X, may be one of the reasons why he has the intention of doing X, and Xes.

Motives

Melden⁸ speaks indiscriminately of intentions and motives. He seems to recognize no distinction between them. However, although it is largely the context which determines which of the two terms we use, there are some differences which must be noted.

Some members of the class of motives are equivalent to the intention with which an action is performed, where it assigns a goal or aim of the agent external to the action. Not all requests for the intention with which an action is done would be put in the linguistic form "What is his motive?" This is largely due to certain nuances in the use of the term 'motive'. It is usually employed if there is something untoward about the circumstances of the action. One would say "What is his motive?" rather than "With what intention did he do that?" if the goal or aim seems to be unusual, or abnormal for that type of action, or if the action itself seems to deviate from the normal conventional rule - following behaviour, or if the action is not characteristic of that agent. R.S. Peters⁹ adequately illustrates this peculiarity of the term motive.

For example if a man goes into a shop and buys a book, we are not likely to ask "What was his motive for buying that book?" This

smacks of the sinister. But we may quite well ask "With what intention did he buy that book?" On the other hand we may ask of a man "What was his motive for hijacking that plane?", the suggestion here being that the action is abnormal, - or was, -, and that it must have been performed for some unusual purpose which cannot be fulfilled by the normal procedure of catching a plane to his proposed destination. It also may further suggest that this was not the behaviour to be expected of that particular agent. If he was a recognized militant for instance, we may simply ask for the intention rather than put our request in the form "What was his motive?", because to ask for the motive seems to suggest that there is something puzzling about the action. For example, if, on the other hand he was a quiet, subdued, timid man who normally kept to his own business, with no record of antisocial behaviour, then we would probably ask "What was his motive?" In the former case however the action itself may not be puzzling performed by that agent - but we still may want to know what he plans to achieve by this act.

It still remains that no matter which term is used, the request for a motive in instances where it assigns a goal or aim is equivalent to a request for the intention with which the action is performed, which term is used depending on the degree of normality of the circumstance of the action.

Only some members of the class of motives are of this purely goal-assigning variety e.g. ambition, revenge, greed. Peter's mistake lies in taking all motives to be of this type. He claims, for example¹⁰

To ask for his motive on the other hand is only to ask for the end

which explains his behaviour

They (motives) involve the postulation of a type of goal towards which his behaviour was actually directed

We just want to know the goal which explains the sequence of his acts and the various moves he is making

He criticizes other theories for regarding a 'motive' as embracing not only the goal or aim, but also some initiating inner state or emotion.

He says,¹¹

But it would seem odd when a question of motive is raised in a court of law to ferret around for answers to questions about the emotions of the man whose conduct was being assessed. Evidence would be collected about what he was aiming at. But surely there would be little speculation about what initiated his purposeful behaviour.

I think Peters is wrong here. This analysis in terms purely of goals or aims fits some, but not all motives. For example it is difficult to see how grief, fear, or jealousy fit into this pattern, and the latter is just the kind of motive which frequently arises in court proceedings.

A motive explanation assigning a goal or aim would not be an explanation unless it implied that the agent desired that goal, and believed the action to be a means to attaining that goal. Assigning a motive must be to assign a want to the agent, if it is to explain action on the part of the agent. I shall elucidate more fully the type of wants involved, and the way in which I believe they are involved in Chapter VII on 'Motives and the Emotions'.

The point to be made here is that wants associated with certain motives e.g. ambition, or revenge, are wants to achieve certain goals - e.g. to pay back one's malefactor; but the wants intricately bound up with the type of motives which seem to fall under the category of emotions - e.g. grief, despair, anger, fear, love, hatred, etc. - are not necessarily wants to achieve certain goals. To want to do something is not necessarily to want to achieve a goal or fulfill a purpose. We may want to do something quite purposeless - wander aimlessly out of grief, kick the pebbles in anger. If it is claimed that anything which is the object of a want is a purpose or goal of the agent then in that sense all motives do assign a goal or purpose. But this seems to blur the distinction, which seems a valid one, between wanting to do something for its own sake, or simply because it occurs to one to do it, - actions like flicking a branch with one's hand or, quite simply, singing in the bath; - and wanting to do something with a specific purpose in mind - like diving into water in order to save a life.

In any case, even if this distinction were permitted to be slurred, I shall later show (Chapter VI) that the types of motives which are emotions are not purely wants, as Peter's analysis would demand.

Lawrence¹² presents arguments assessing what counts as a motive, similar to Rachels' arguments pertaining to the agent's reason. Lawrence maintains that a motive is a particular fact or circumstance in the light of which the agent acts. He quotes passages using the term motive in three different ways; (1) where it names an external circumstance; (2) where it names an external circumstance and a

corresponding internal emotion; and (3) where it names an internal emotion. He claims that understanding of its use in the last case demands that a motive be seen as naming an external circumstance (1) and not vice versa as often supposed.

He claims of the role of e.g. 'ambition', in motive explanations,¹³

that a motive term of this sort rather serves to put one in mind of the particular feature of the situation which could have served as a reason for the action taken in that very situation

I would argue however that the motive if it were simply a feature of the situation could not in any way explain the action in the way that a motive does, nor does it indicate what could serve as a reason. It does explain the action and it does indicate what could serve as a reason in that the motive implies certain wants of the agent - which a circumstance does not do - the wants would have to be known or assumed before the circumstance could explain. To say that ambition is the motive is to say that the agent wanted to gain, not that a feature of the circumstance was such that it provided the opportunity for success - this fact alone would not explain as a motive. That feature may be present, but if the agent has no want to succeed there is no motive for an action on his part present. Also this feature may be present, and the agent perform the action but not because he wants to succeed, but for some other want, in which case ambition is not the motive for the action. If 'ambition' named the kind of circumstance, then the motive would be ambition regardless of the kinds of wants.

The passage Lawrence quotes as an example of the use of

'motive' in the sense he claims as primary, is as follows, in part;¹⁴

.....the former was himself secretly married ... while the latter though as a layman without any such personal motive was disposed to relax the strictness of the rules of celibacy.

Lawrence says that here what is attributed as a motive is 'a civil condition of being a priest and married'. But in this type of context, the nature of the motive - namely a desire to have his marriage condoned - is insinuated by mention of these facts, it is not the facts themselves.

The circumstance explains why a man should have these wants in that situation, but his having the wants explains why he should so act -i.e. his having the motive. The circumstance affords the motive, affords the arousal of these wants, but the motive names the kind of wants involved.

Lawrence claims, consistently, that one can have a motive without knowing that one has. He says,¹⁵

To give someone a motive to act is to create or embody a condition assignable to him as a reason so to act. I make you such a gift when say I deceive you. You come into possession of a certain motive when I deceive you. This is so whether or not you find me out or have the wit to wonder.

I would disagree here. A circumstance offers a motive for an action in that in the light of that fact, there are certain things the agent may then want to do. But it is only a motive for him if the agent wants to do these things. The presenting of a situation may arouse certain wants in the agent. These wants are his motive; but if none are aroused then he has no motive in the light of that situation.

If, however, these circumstances arouse certain wants in others then they have motives in the light of this situation.

Offering a motive is not like offering a parcel - where if the parcel is refused, there is still a parcel - a rejected parcel. Offering a motive is like offering an incentive - if refused there is no incentive not a rejected incentive; - or, if incentive is too close to motive, offering a motive is like offering an alliance - if refused then there is no alliance, - similarly if a motive is refused then there is no motive, for him.

In Lawrence's example, my deceiving you gives a justification for an action on your part, and it offers a motive - but if my deceit would not bother you in the least - it would not arouse any wants, then it is not a motive for you.

A detective may forage for the various facts about people which afford possible motives for the crime, and works on the assumption that those concerned had certain wants in the light of these circumstances. E.g. X is in debt. - Assuming X wants to get out of debt, he has a motive; but if it is shown that it is to X's great advantage to remain in debt, and he knows and welcomes this; in other words it is shown that he does not want to get out of debt, then it would be concluded that he does not have a motive after all, - at least with regard to being in debt. Several people may have a motive for the crime, but if they did not commit the crime, then it is not the motive for the crime. The motive is the operative motive.

It could be claimed that the above objections should similarly be advanced against Rachels' account of reasons, - that a reason could not explain the action if it did not imply certain wants on the part of

the agent - but this does not mean that his reasons are his wants. True, but the difference between 'his reasons', and on the other hand 'motives' can be seen when we consider the expressions often employed to assign motives: - ambition, jealousy, pride, vanity, sympathy. These do not seem to name features of situations, but rather certain kinds of wants. We may be right about her reason - that the action would further her husband's career - but wrong about her motive - love? or ambition? The external circumstances are the same, but the nature of the motive depends on the nature of the wants involved. Also one may have a reason for a motive. The reason for X's hatred of Y may be that Y was responsible for his father's death - or so he believes -, and he may then torment Y out of hatred.

His Reason, The Reasons For, and The Reasons Why

Lawrence claims, apropos of the previous arguments, that Peters is wrong in saying,¹⁵

We can ask of a reason for an action 'Was that his motive?' but we cannot ask of a motive without in some way repeating ourselves 'Was that the reason why he did it?'

Lawrence's complaint is that someone may have a motive without knowing that he has it, and hence act from a different reason - not from the motive. I would disagree here for the reasons stated in the last section.

There is an important distinction to be made however, which both Peters and Lawrence are guilty of overlooking; - the distinction drawn by Bond¹⁷ between motivating and justifying reasons, - motivating reasons being the actual reasons why the agent intends to do the action, and a justifying reason being a fact about the situation which would

justify such an action in that situation.

Lawrence claims that a man may have a reason for doing X

- (a) without knowing that he has
- (b) without doing it for that reason
- (c) without doing X at all, and
- (d) he may think he has a reason when what he believes is false and therefore is not in fact a reason.

All these points apply to justifying reasons. - There may be a fact which would justify the action which is a justifying reason for him when (a) - (c) is true of the agent and (d) the agent may believe there is such a fact - when the fact does not obtain, - hence there is no justifying reason, although he thinks there is.

But in the case of (d) there is a motivating reason, and the following is true of a motivating reason.

- (a) It is a reason which he must know he has
- (b) he must intend to do X for that reason
- (c) he must intend to do X, and
- (d) if he believes it is a reason, then it is a motivating reason by virtue of that fact.

The reason why he does it must be a motivating reason, although it may also be a justifying reason. Equally if he does it for a motive the motive must be one of the reasons why he does it. It may not be the reason for such an action - i.e. the justifying reason.

Peters himself however does not distinguish the two kinds of reason. He speaks of motives as offering the justification for an action. He can not however be thinking of the motives as justifying reasons in the sense above described, because, if he claims that

motives are the goals or purposes, they are not a particular fact about the circumstances. - They are not facts which would justify the action.

It will be useful to draw the following distinctions in order to make clear the sense of reasons with which I am concerned.

- (1) 'His reason', may be taken in Rachel's sense, except that I maintain that it is what the agent believes to be the case - the content of his belief, not necessarily a fact in the world.
- (2) The reasons why he has the intention of Xing, and Xes, are the motivating reasons, and these are the agent's wants, beliefs, and motives, and intentions (2) and (3). (p. 5).
- (3) The reasons for such an action, are the justifying reasons which are particular facts, in the world, which justify the action, and which may or may not be also included in the motivating reasons or as his reason.

I am concerned in what follows with whether (2) the reasons why - i.e. the motivating reasons, are causes.

Chapter I. References:

1. J. Rachels. "Reasons for Action", Canadian Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1971), pp. 173-188.
2. Donald Davidson. "Actions, Reasons and Causes", Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 60 (1963), pp. 685-700.
3. A. I. Goldman. "A Theory of Human Action". (New Jersey 1970) Ch. 4.
4. Goldman, op. cit., p. 86.
5. Anscombe. "Intention", (Oxford 1958).
6. Anscombe, op. cit., p. 36.
7. Anscombe, op. cit., p. 42.
8. Melden. "Free Action". (London 1961).
9. R. S. Peters. "The Concept of Motivation". (London 1958), Ch. 2, pp. 27-31.
10. Peters, op. cit., pp. 33 & 34.
11. Peters, op. cit., p. 38.
12. Roy Lawrence. "Motive and Intention". (Evanston 1972), Ch. I.
13. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 19.
14. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 13.
15. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 10.
16. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 10 - quoted from Peters "The Concept of Motivation", p. 28.
17. E. J. Bond. "Reasons, Wants and Values" unpublished paper presented at a symposium of the Canadian Philosophical Association June 1972.

CHAPTER II

TYPES OF EXPLANATION

My main concern in this chapter will be to consider arguments presented by various philosophers which claim to show that explanations of human action in terms of intentions, motives, wants and beliefs are of a radically different kind from causal explanations. I wish to maintain, along with others¹, that the proposed characteristics of these explanations are not such as to eliminate the possibility of a causal explanation being given in terms of the intentions, motives, wants, and beliefs.

I shall take 'causal explanation' in the Humean sense whereby a causal explanation is given in terms of a more or less complex set of particular states or events which by virtue of general laws constitute necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of the event to be explained. A 'cause' may be one of these conditions singled out as distinctive in the particular circumstances. As Hart and Honore² point out, in common usage it is frequently the unusual condition normally absent which is singled out as the cause. For example, a lighted cigarette-end in a waste-paper basket may be singled out as the cause of a fire - the presence of oxygen in the air will not be named the cause although it is one of the necessary conditions. Sometimes the circumstances with which an enquiring observer is unfamiliar may be named the cause in answer to his request for an explanation. For example if he asks why the record broke when it fell to the floor, it

would not help to tell him the cause was the impact with the hard floor - he knows that much, but that it was a brittle 78 rpm record could be named as the cause. However all the causally necessary and sufficient conditions for the event would enter into a fully-fledged causal explanation. Some or all of these conditions may be prior to, or simultaneous with the event caused.

Various philosophers have claimed that because our explanations of human action are of a certain type, or exhibit certain characteristics, they are ipso facto not translatable into an explanation in terms of cause and effect. This is not, however, the case for many of the types of explanation they are considering. These do not exclude the possibility of a causal explanation by virtue of being explanations of a certain type.

Teleological Explanations

Some philosophers³ have argued that because our explanations of human action in terms of intentions and motives are teleological in form, the causal model is inappropriate in these terms for human action.

R. S. Peters⁴ claims that to offer an explanation in terms of motives is to offer a different type of explanation from a causal explanation. Implicit in his arguments is the assumption that if an explanation is teleological, a causal explanation is inappropriate.

He stresses throughout that recognition of the rule-following, purposive nature of human action is essential for our understanding of explanations in terms of motives; and he emphasizes that a request for a causal explanation 'may rule out rule-following, purposive explanations'.

He claims,⁵

To ask what made Jones do something, is at least to suggest that he had no good reason for doing it. Similarly to ascribe a point to his action is ipso facto to deny that it can be sufficiently explained in terms of causes.

He states⁶ that causal explanations are appropriate only where something can be said to have happened to a man, rather than that the man acts. Similar claims are made by Sutherland⁷; but such claims are not justified.

Many goal-directed physical systems have been constructed - e.g. thermostat controls, radar-controlled anti-missiles, homing missiles, etc. - and the explanation for their behaviour is very appropriately given in terms of efficient causes - negative feedback, etc. This indicates that there is nothing perverse in the notion of a restatement of a teleological explanation in terms of sufficient causes. It does not of course suggest that all goal-directed activity can be explained in terms of a causal model, but it simply demonstrates that there is no inherent characteristic of teleological explanations of behaviour which excludes an explanation in terms of sufficient causes for the same behaviour.

This is not to deny that a teleological explanation plays a different role from an explanation in terms of efficient causes. It serves to explain the activity from a different perspective, emphasizing its place and function in a selected complex whole. The type of explanation employed depends on the interests of the observer and the prominent relation of the activities to the particular set of complex wholes he has selected, in the light of these

interests. For example, he may be more concerned with the role of a part of a living organism in maintaining the normal functioning of the organism, and explain its activity in these teleological terms, rather than in terms of the efficient causes of its acting in that way under those conditions. If however he wanted to construct an artificial organ to perform the same function, he would be more interested in an explanation of its activity in terms of efficient causes.

Just as an object can be seen either as a random array of nails and metal sheets, or as an integrated work of art, depending on the interests of the observer; but it is the same object which falls under either description; so a process can be seen either in terms of the necessary and sufficient conditions for its occurrence, or in terms of its role within a complex system, depending on the interests of the observer; - but it is the same process which is being explained, and the one explanation can be restated in terms of the other.

With regard to motive explanations; to say that a person does an action in order to X and that this was his motive is to say (1) that he wanted to achieve that end, and (2) that he believed that action to be productive of the desired end. An explanation in terms of motives can thus be restated in terms of wants and beliefs which precede or accompany the action. A motive explanation assigning an end would not be understood as an explanation if it did not contain the tacit implication that that end was desired by the agent, and that he believed that action to be a means to the end.

Motive explanations are not shown to be non-causal by a demonstration of their teleological character. It can only be shown that they are not causal if it can be shown that explanations in terms

of wants and beliefs are not causal.

Anscombe⁷ emphasizes the teleological character of intentions and similarly assumes that they cannot be causes, but the above arguments apply equally here. It is not quite so obvious that to state an intention assigning an end is to imply that the end is desired. It could be argued that one may sometimes intend to bring about some end which one does not want to bring about.

For example, Mr. X may catch a bus with the intention of visiting the dentist, but he wants not to visit the dentist. However this inadequately describes the situation. There is a sense in which he must want to do what he intends to do, or he simply wouldn't do it. This is apparent if the situation is completely described and the full implications unpacked. He dislikes visiting the dentist, so he wants not to visit the dentist in itself, but he wants to help to preserve his teeth, and the action of visiting the dentist is also the action of helping to preserve his teeth - so he has a pro-attitude towards doing the action in so far as helps to preserve his teeth.⁸

Intentions assigning an end can be restated in terms of wants and beliefs like motives, and thus Anscombe's claims are open to the above objections.

Dispositional Explanations

A further claim to exemption of explanations in terms of motives, wants and beliefs from the realm of causal explanation appeals to their dispositional character.

Many have followed Ryle⁹ in claiming that to give a dispositional explanation is not to give a causal explanation, and that no reference is made in these explanations to 'causal entities' or

entities called 'dispositions'.

Peters¹⁰ says that to give the reason may be to put it under a law-like proposition of a causal kind,

The reason why he did it might be
because he was pushed or assailed
by and attack of giddiness

(- I would note here in passing that this is not strictly speaking an explanation of an action - I take action to mean intentional action;) but he claims that to give the reason is not necessarily to give a causal explanation,

It may be simply insisting that a
different directive disposition
is being exercised

However many would claim that a dispositional explanation, if it is to be an explanation at all, is a causal explanation.

Armstrong¹¹ offers an a priori argument which purports to substantiate the realist position with regard to dispositions, as opposed to the phenomenalist position of Ryle and his followers. Armstrong claims that the phenomenalist is committed to being a total sceptic about dispositions except on occasions when they are actually manifested, because he has no reason to expect that a substance which has exhibited a particular disposition on one occasion will do so under the same circumstances in the future. The realist about dispositions, who identifies a particular categorical state or property of the substance as the basis of the disposition, is perfectly justified in expecting the substance to exhibit the same disposition under the same conditions if this categorical basis - e.g. molecular structure, remains the same. Armstrong claims that the phenomenalist cannot retort that he can expect that if the substance has the same

categorical properties its dispositional properties will also be the same, because he has denied any necessary connection between the two. But the notion of a disposition requires us to be able to form the law-like proposition to the effect that we can expect the substance to react in this way, under these conditions in the future. Thus, Armstrong concludes, we must be realists about dispositions.

It could be claimed that one cannot be sceptical about dispositions in this way, if a phenomenalist, because having a disposition is not like having a head - one cannot wonder if it is still there in that sense. It is, rather, like having a habit. There is a perfectly good sense in which one has a habit right up until a time when it ceases to be displayed under the appropriate conditions, rather than up to the time when it was last displayed. Similarly, it may be claimed, a substance has a disposition until it ceases to manifest it under the appropriate conditions - so one cannot be sceptical about whether it has it at the moment - and it certainly makes no sense, if the phenomenalist view is accepted, to speak of it losing it at some point in between times. There is no thing to lose in between manifestations, or between a manifestation and a non-manifestation.

However Armstrong's point is that to attribute a disposition, like solubility, is to say what the substance will do in the future under certain conditions, and even if a dispositional property is attributed to the substance on the basis of past behaviour, the truth of the statement that it now has the disposition depends on possible future behaviour. But the same scepticism can arise with respect to the realist account. We have no more reason to expect that the categorical basis will behave in the same way on future occasions.

Our expectancy is based on observations of the fact that it has done so in the past, but equally we can claim that we base our expectancy that a substance will manifest a disposition in the future on observation of the manifestations in the past. There are no more grounds for believing that a categorical property will continue to be the basis of a disposition of the object - e.g. to break, and the claim that it is the basis of the object's brittleness is equally tied to the law-like proposition about future behaviour.

It is also possible that all that can be found in the way of a basis of a disposition of a particular substance, is a further disposition of its molecules to behave in a certain way, which in turn have certain dispositions of the atoms as their basis, and so on, until a point is reached where there are just the dispositional properties of ultimate particles.¹²

Meiland¹³ makes the slightly different point from Armstrong that a dispositional statement does not explain at all unless it has an implicit reference to a physical state of the object which is a condition of its acting in that way. He says that to say it is brittle, in response to a request for an explanation of its breaking when dropped is merely to repeat the question - it merely states that it breaks readily when dropped - on Ryle's analysis. But, Meiland points out, these explanations do say more than this. They do so because they contain the implication that brittleness is some state of the object, e.g. molecular structure, which is a condition of its breaking.

Meiland is not completely right here. If I ask, 'Why is that man marching up and down by that box in front of Buckingham Palace?', the reply, 'because he is a sentry' could be claimed to be no

explanation at all, because it merely repeats what is contained in the question. But it does explain his behaviour in the sense that it points out that he is expected to do that, rather than that he is just any man off the street behaving in that manner.

Similarly with 'Why did that dissolve?': The reply 'because it is soluble' if it contained no implication of categorical basis, would still explain in the sense that it states that the behaviour is to be expected of the substance under fairly normal conditions, and that there is therefore no need to look for a peculiar circumstance in the conditions.

Alston produces the most persuasive argument. He maintains that the most plausible criteria for individuating states is the criterion of causal relevance. Hence if, by the appropriate criteria of causal relevance, a particular categorical state of the substance is selected as causally operative in the actualisation of a particular disposition of the substance, it seems appropriate to count the categorical property and the disposition as the same state. Otherwise it leads to an unnecessary proliferation of states of the substance.

To relate this to Armstrong's argument; if there is a categorical state of the object constantly correlated with the manifestation of the disposition, it seems sensible to equate the two, - but it does not follow that there must be such a categorical basis. As Alston points out, it is quite conceivable that some elementary particles have no internal structure and hence nothing which could be a basis of the disposition - their dispositions may be ultimate properties. In this case, a dispositional explanation of the activity

of a particle would explain in the sense outlined above. It would indicate that the behaviour is what is to be expected of a particle of that type in those circumstances, and is not caused by something very unusual in the surroundings.

Alston's arguments strongly support the claim that there is nothing against the proposal that a dispositional explanation may be a causal explanation, in that there is no incompatibility in the ontological claim that A is both a disposition and a physical state or occurrence - the physical state or occurrence being a necessary condition of its e.g. breaking under certain conditions.

Frequently a disposition is not the unusual or abnormal circumstance by virtue of its being a disposition, and thus is not singled out as the cause, e.g. the brittleness of glass would not often be singled out as the cause of its breaking, - but rather the fact that it was hit sharply by a hammer, would be named as the cause. The dryness of the vegetation would not often be singled out as the cause of a forest fire. But the bases of these dispositions are necessary conditions of the event taking place. If the disposition is abnormal, or not recognized by the spectator, it may be named as the cause. For example, if asked why a liquid has disappeared from an open jar, it might be appropriate to reply, 'because it evaporates rapidly at normal temperatures, if not sealed', where the enquirer was ignorant of this fact. Here he is given a disposition as the cause, as opposed to some other condition, e.g. a source of heat in the vicinity.

Hence in order to show that motive explanations, or explanations in terms of wants and beliefs are not causal explanations, it is no help to show that they are dispositional explanations. It

must be shown that they are not dispositional causes.

Redescription and Interpretation

It has been claimed that explanations in terms of reasons for action redescribe the action or interpret it, or place it in a context, and that this characteristic distinguishes these explanations from causal explanations.

Anscombe¹⁵ says,

Motives may explain actions to us, but that is not to say that they 'determine' in the sense of causing actions. We do say "his love of truth caused him to" and similar things, and no doubt such expressions help us to think that a motive must be what produces or brings about a choice. But this means rather, "He did this in that he loved the truth" - it interprets the action'.

Melden¹⁶ claims that to give the man's intention to signal redescribes the action as a case of signalling, as opposed to raising his arm, and thus places it in its context.

This does not seem to distinguish these explanations from causal explanations of the physical world. Indicating a cause can redescribe an effect in a similar way. For example, a loud noise may be interpreted as a clap of thunder. However when the cause is given as 'a plane breaking the sound barrier', the effect falls under a different description; it is given a different interpretation accordingly. The cause serves to redescribe the effect.

Just as 'raising his arm' can be described as a case of 'signalling' or as a case of 'pointing to something' depending on the agent's intention, so a loud clap can be described as 'thunder' or a

'sonic boom' depending on the cause.

Similar claims are developed further by Peters¹⁷. He claims that,

There cannot be a sufficient explanation of action in causal terms because, as Popper has put it, there is a logical gulf between nature and convention

He states that the norms and standards implied in statements giving explanations in terms of motives etc. make it impossible for them to be reducible to causal explanations in terms of bodily movements which have no such normative implications.

He says¹⁸,

The contention that man is a rule-following animal must if taken seriously entail that the transition from nature to convention occurs whenever we try to give a sufficient explanation of human action in causal terms.

However, as Madell¹⁹ points out in connection with similar arguments raised by Strawson²⁰, norms and conventions can enter into our description of purely physical phenomena. This does not debar a causal explanation. For example; fermenting grapes are seen as a case of deterioration or as a case of perfection (wine) depending on the point of view.

Bedford's²¹ arguments (- although making the different point that a dispositional theory of emotions is inadequate) rests on similar claims to Peters' and Strawson's.

He says,

To begin with, statements about emotions cannot be said to describe behaviour; they interpret it,

and later,

These words (emotion words) when used without qualification carry implications not merely about behaviour, but also about its social context.

This argument however is open to the same objections posed by Madell. Dispositional explanations can also carry implications about their context, and can also be causal explanations.

For example, the disposition of organic material to rot can be seen as a disposition to deteriorate or a disposition to improve (manure) depending on the context. The disposition of an acid to corrode can be seen as beneficial or harmful depending on the context.

An argument related to the above arguments is that which claims that because the description of the action is contained within a description of the intention, or want the relationship cannot be one of cause and effect. The effect cannot be described independently of the cause. However, one can refer to the want as e.g. 'the want which occurred to me at such and such a time this afternoon' and this description is independent of a description of the action. If there are grounds for objection to this, then they must be equally applicable to many descriptions of cause and effect in the physical world. A description of the effect cannot be given independently of a description of the cause in many cases - e.g. an earthquake, a 'cut' is caused by cutting, a jolt by jolting, etc. - except for example by referring to the 'cut' as 'the thing at such and such a point on my arm'.

Justification

A further argument related to those above, is offered by Peters²² to support the claim that explanations in terms of motives are

not causal explanations.

He claims that when we are asking for the motive for an action we are asking for a justification of the action, and that to give a justification is to give a totally different kind of explanation from giving a cause, because of the normative elements involved in the former.

He says that²³,

This explains why we often ask for motives when there is a breach of conventional expectation; for it is in just these sorts of contexts that men have to justify their actions.

He further claims, in his criticisms of the psychologists' causal theories²⁴,

What follows the 'because' are different facets of the bed-rock of justification. Psychologists have mistaken this bed-rock of justification for the apex of explanation.

It is a justification masquerading as a high level explanation.

It has already been pointed out in the preceding chapter, that Peters overlooks the distinction between justifying reasons and motivating reasons, and what he says may be appropriate to justifying reasons. But as argued before, motives are not equivalent to justifying reasons, and certainly not on Peters' analysis of motives.

Granted that he is speaking of motives as offering a justification where he does not mean a justifying reason, what then does he mean? Peters seems to be using the term 'justification' in such a way as to eliminate the normative elements which he claims distinguishes it from an explanation of a causal kind. (- Though Madell's arguments would perhaps apply here.)

A motive-explanation is, on Peters' terms, a justification

whether it shows the action to be right or wrong in the circumstances. He allows that a motive can be a 'discreditable reason'. The motive justifies the action, according to Peters, not just when it shows the action to be the right one, which is what is normally meant by justifying it.

He thus seems to be using 'justifies' to mean something like 'accounts for', and this does not exclude the type of explanation involved from the domain of causal explanations. For example, 'The combination of those two particular gases accounts for the violence of the explosion'. 'The dryness of the vegetation accounts for the extent of the forest fire'.

However it seems that nevertheless there is an element lacking in the above explanations which is present in the motive-explanations.

Peters has excluded any normative elements implied by a moral appraisal, in his use of the term 'justifies', but the notion which is present in such explanations, which is lacking in the above examples of explanations of purely physical events, is that of indicating the 'rationale' of the action - it justifies the action in the sense that it indicates the rationality of the behaviour given that the agent had certain goals.

This feature is particularly evident in those circumstances where the behaviour to be explained constitutes 'a breach of conventional expectation'.

The action can only be 'understood' if its rationality is made explicit. In this sense the motive 'explains'. The action is justified, interpreted or appraised in the context of rational agents.

However this distinctive characteristic does not, as Peters

maintains, indicate that the explanation cannot also be a causal explanation.

The action is explained in this way by indicating the agent's wants and beliefs, and showing that his intention to so act, from his point of view, follows logically from his wants and his beliefs, - though his wants may be somewhat irrational. But given that the content of ~~the~~ intention follows logically from the content of his wants and his beliefs, it does not follow that on that account his wants and beliefs, and hence motives and beliefs are not also causal explanations, in the sense that 'that he has that want' and 'that he has that belief' are causal conditions of his so acting.

None of the preceding arguments have shown that his want and his belief are not also causal explanations of the action.

There are two questions to be distinguished.

- (1) Is an agent, or an observer, when giving reasons for the action offering an explanation which fulfills some other role - e.g. justifies the action, interprets it, places it in its context etc. rather than offering a causal explanation?
- (2) Do these antecedents to the acts - the wants, beliefs, etc. which he refers to when giving these explanations constitute causally necessary and sufficient conditions for his intention to act?

An affirmative answer to question (1) does not preclude an affirmative answer to (2). Anscombe, Peters, Melden, etc. are answering the first question, but frequently imply that they are answering the second.

It is question (2) which bears on the question of the determinacy or indeterminacy of rational human action, and it is with

offering an answer to question (2) that I shall be concerned in what follows.

Chapter II. References

1. For example, Donald Davidson. "Action, Reasons and Causes", *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 60 (1963), pp. 685-700.
 B. Goldberg. "Can a Desire be a Cause?" *Analysis* 25 (1965).
 A. Goldman. "A Theory of Human Action", (New Jersey 1970).
 Armstrong. "A Materialist Theory of Mind", (London 1968).
 D. Pears. "Are Reasons for Actions Causes?" in "Epistemology" ed. Aarum Stroll.
2. Hart and Honore. "Causation in the Law", (Oxford 1959).
3. N. S. Sutherland. "Motives as Explanations", *Mind* LXVIII (1959), pp. 145-159.
 R. S. Peters. "The Concept of Motivation", (London 1958).
 Anscombe. "Intention", (Oxford 1958).
4. Peters, op. cit.
5. Peters, op. cit., p. 12.
6. Peters, op. cit., pp. 9 & 10.
7. Anscombe, op. cit.
8. This point is developed more fully in Chapter IV.
9. Ryle. "The Concept of Mind", (1949).
10. Peters, op. cit., p. 9.
11. Armstrong, op. cit., Ch. 6 VI, pp. 85-88.
12. William P. Alston. "Dispositions and Occurrences", *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (December 1971), pp. 125-154.
13. Meiland. "Motives and Ends", *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 13, (1963) pp. 64-71.
14. Alston, op. cit.
15. Anscombe, op. cit., p. 19.
16. Melden, "Free Action", (London 1961).
17. Peters, op. cit., p. 14.
18. Peters, op. cit., p. 14.
19. G. Madell. "Action and Causal Explanation", *Mind*, Vol. 76 (1967) pp. 34-48.

20. Strawson. "Determinism" from the broadcast talks of "Freedom and the Will".
21. Bedford. "Emotions", reprinted in "The Philosophy of Mind", Ed. Chappell.
22. Peters, op. cit., pp. 28-32.
23. Peters, op. cit., p. 29.
24. Peters, op. cit., p. 23 & p. 20.

CHAPTER III

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF WANTS

The most attractive candidates for causes of action are 'wants' - partly because they precede, or occur simultaneously with, the initial moment of execution of the action wanted, - but also because our everyday talk about wants is quite often couched in terms appropriate to a causal model. We speak of having an overriding desire to do X, or talk of the conflict of our desires. Mention of opposing or conflicting wants seems to insinuate something akin to a mechanical causal model.

It is important before discussing the nature of the relationship between wanting, intending, and doing, to distinguish between various senses of the verb 'to want'.

There are several senses in which we commonly use the term want. The following are the most prevalent:

- (1) 'You want to read that book', meaning 'You ought (prudential) to read that book'.
- (2) 'That man wants courage', meaning, 'That man lacks courage'.
- (3) 'He wants to be taught a lesson', meaning either 'He needs to be taught a lesson', or 'He deserves to be taught a lesson'.

These above three senses will not concern us in what follows.

- (4) 'He wants to do X', meaning, 'He has a pro-attitude towards doing X, for the reason that he believes he would find the activity of Xing enjoyable, pleasant, immediately gratifying.'

It is in this sense that we may say, 'He is going to do Y, but he does not want to. He wants to do X' meaning 'he has a pro-attitude towards X because he believes the activity of Xing will be enjoyable, whereas he does not believe he will find Ying enjoyable'. e.g. 'He is going to stay in and work, but he does not want to. He wants to go and see that new film'. I shall call 'wants' in this sense 'immediate wants'. This sense of want may be closest to the way we use the term 'desire'.

(5) 'He wants to do X', meaning, 'He has a pro-attitude towards doing X, an inclination to do X, for some reason, not necessarily because it will give him any immediate gratification, but because it may further some end which he finds attractive - even if only in the long run.'

(6) 'Wants' referring to physical needs - e.g. for food, drink; and also to physical cravings or hankerings. One may want X in this sense where one does not want X in sense (5) above. e.g. He craves, or wants (6), to smoke a cigarette, but he does not want to smoke one. 'He wants to give up smoking.' 'He desperately needs (wants (6)) to stop for a drink, but he does not want to. His pursuers may catch up with him.'

One can want food, cigarettes, drink, etc. in sense (4) also.

(7) 'He wants to have X'; 'he wants an X' meaning 'he has a pro-attitude towards possessing something'.

In some cases 'he wants an X' is elliptical. For example, 'he wants an apple' usually means 'he wants to eat an apple', or 'he wants a prize' is an elliptical way of saying 'he wants to win a prize'. Each of these are examples of wanting to do something, and hence fall under (4) and (5) above. However in some cases 'wanting to have, to own or

possess something' are not cases of wanting to do something, in as much as owning, possessing, etc. are not actions one performs. It could be claimed that even in these cases, if he can truly be said to want, e.g. a car, then there must be certain things that he is prepared to do, and to this extent 'wanting to have' entails action. However it does not seem that this must be so. Certainly when what is wanted is something which it is in the agent's power to acquire, then if he makes no move to obtain it, we would be inclined to say he does not in fact want it. In other words, if he says he wants a car, comes into a sudden large sum of money, and at the same time is offered a friend's beautifully maintained car at a surprisingly low sum and he refuses, then we would be inclined to say either that he does not really want it, or that he must have other opposing wants.

But there are other cases where it makes perfectly good sense to say that he wants something which he cannot hope to have, or which it is completely out of his power to acquire. For example, he may want prolonged peace for the world. Here there is little he can do to fulfill his want, assuming he is not a leader of a world power, and little anyone can do to fulfill the want for indefinitely prolonged peace. However there are still certain actions he must refrain from performing if his claims to want peace are to be acceptable. For example, he must not indulge in any belligerent action, militant activity, etc., or encourage such action on the part of others, unless he can show that he believes that such action is going to lead ultimately to world peace. Otherwise we would simply deny the validity of the claim that he wants peace. Nevertheless, it still makes sense to speak of wanting something - e.g. second sight - where

one knows of no action which will fulfill the want.

It remains, however, that where a 'want to have X' is involved in the explanation of action on the part of the agent who entertains the want, which is the only type of case particularly relevant to my subject matter, then it seems to make no sense to say 'He wants to have X, knows he has no conflicting wants, knows he has every opportunity to acquire X, is not irrational about connecting his wants and beliefs, does not change his mind, and yet he does not intend to perform any action to obtain X'. I think it would then be appropriate to wonder what can be meant by 'He wants to have X'.

Any aspects of (7) which are relevant to the explanation of action, will appear in my discussion of (4) and (5) below - although I shall leave this as understood, and no longer refer to cases of 'wanting to have X'.

To return to cases (4) and (5): One may have a higher order want (5) to do whatever one wants (4) - that is, to do whatever one has a pro-attitude towards doing because one would find it immediately gratifying, pleasurable, enjoyable.

I do not wish to suggest that (5) is a sense of 'wanting' distinct in kind from (4), but rather that wanting in sense (4) is wanting in sense (5) for one particular kind of end - that of enjoyment or immediate gratification. The reason why I have separated the two and distinguished wants for this end, from wants for any other end, is because frequently 'to want' is used as if it only referred to having pro-attitudes towards actions for this type of end. Want is being used as if it referred exclusively to the inclination to pursue an action for the end of enjoyment in such aforementioned claims as:

'He intends to do X, but he doesn't want to. He wants to do Y' - i.e. he would find Y more immediately gratifying than X, or a more pleasant activity than X.

Possibly the reason why so much weight is attached to this sense of 'want', is because of a human tendency towards gratifying more immediate ends more often, rather than long-term goals. It is easier to imagine an event in the near future, than one in the far future, and thus the prospect of a more immediate gratification is often more vivid to the imagination than that of a distant fulfillment. It can often occupy our thoughts more readily - although I do not by any means wish to claim that this is always, or necessarily the case. Thus there is perhaps a tendency to think of a want for this end, as something more 'tangible', more readily detected, than a want for other ends - and thus to take it as the 'true' sense of 'wanting'. This is only a tentative suggestion as to the possible psychology behind the tendency to think of 'wanting' as being only appropriate to describe the inclination to do something for enjoyment, or immediate gratification - and the tendency to think that the test for whether one wants to do something is one's expressions of joy, pleasure or excitement at the prospect.¹

A further possible explanation of the tendency to think of 'wanting' in this sense as primary, is that as young children our only wants are immediate wants, - before we have learnt to pursue long-term policies, and hence we first learn to apply the term to want exclusively in this sense. For example, we are instructed, 'You must learn that you can't always do what you want', implying that what we will choose to do instead, e.g. take others into consideration rather

than gratify our own immediate wants on all occasions, is not what we want to do. In an important sense however it is what we want to do. I would maintain that there is some description of the action under which one must want to do it. There is a perfectly good sense in which one must want to do whatever one does intentionally, otherwise one simply would not do it, and it is this sense of 'wanting' which I am referring to under (5).

I would claim that the inclination to argue otherwise stems from taking 'wanting' only in sense (4) - as immediate wants.

That we do not use 'wanting' exclusively in sense (4) however is seen by the fact that it makes perfectly good sense to say, e.g. 'He wants to see that film, but he knows he won't enjoy it' - where nevertheless he feels it is important for some other reason that he see it, - or 'He wants to do X as his duty but he does not welcome the prospect', or 'he wants to keep his promise by doing X rather than lose a friend, but he is not looking forward in the least to doing X', - one could add, 'He does not want (sense (4)) to do either.'

I have referred to wants (sense (4) and (5)) as 'pro-attitudes'. I wish to make it clear that I do not intend the term 'to have a pro-attitude' in the sense in which it is often used, to mean 'to consider valuable'. I do not mean it in this sense, because I do not consider 'wanting', and 'considering as valuable' (morally or otherwise) as synonymous. One may want something without considering it valuable (morally or otherwise) except in the trivial sense that it is valuable to me for its own sake - in other words because I want it. And one may consider something to be valuable without wanting it. For example, I may judge certain actions to be valuable for the welfare of the

community as a whole, but if I am not remotely interested in the welfare of the community, I will not want to promote those actions.

One may want what is valuable (morally or otherwise) just as one may reject what is valuable (morally or otherwise) but if one wants it, then one wants it because one considers it valuable, it is not that one's considering it valuable is wanting it.

A want need not be explicit. Often we just perform certain actions, particularly habitual actions, without reflection. It only occurs to us that we want to do the action, in the sense that it occurs to us to do the action as opposed to remaining in whatever state we were in. In other words a want need not occur to us in the sense that the thought 'I want to do X' is present in our minds, before doing the action. One might only have this thought, if prevented from doing it, unexpectedly.

A further point I should like to make about 'wanting' at this juncture, is that when we speak of the 'strongest' want producing the action, it does not seem that we can rely very much on introspective evidence as to which is the strongest want, before the action is performed. I may judge that my want to smoke a cigarette at this moment is stronger than my want to give up smoking, where I may in fact succeed in refraining from smoking it in the end.

Wanting and Wishing

It will be useful at this point to draw some distinctions between 'wanting' and 'wishing'. It is appropriate to speak of wanting or wishing to X when we envisage having the ability to X, but it is inappropriate to speak of wanting to X when we are quite certain that

we lack the ability - we can only wish. The difference is that 'I wish' can be followed by the construction 'I could' whereas 'I want' cannot. I may want or wish to walk, but can only wish I could fly.

This claim could be challenged on the grounds that one may want to have something, where one knows it is not in one's power to acquire it, or that it is unattainable. I would agree that the above distinction does not seem to exist in the cases of 'wanting to have' 'wishing to have' which may mean 'would welcome; but I would maintain that it does exist in the cases of 'wanting to do' and 'wishing to do', - and I am only concerned with 'wanting' and 'wishing' with regard to action. From now on I shall be referring to 'wanting' and 'wishing' to do X.

The notion of wishing in the fairy-tale context of 'making a wish' implies that we envisage lacking the ability or opportunity, in contrast to wanting. It would seem pointless in 'making a wish' in the hopes that it would be granted, to wish for something that one does have the ability to do. To say 'I wish I could walk', where one can walk, and then express delight and surprise to find oneself walking, seems a rather pointless exercise. Although even here there would be a difference between wanting and intending to walk and walking, and wishing to walk and 'walking', if the 'walking' seemed to be a result not of one's own efforts, but of some magical powers, - where the 'walking' seemed to be 'not under one's control' - a feeling perhaps something like the feeling when one starts running down hill too fast, and then finds one cannot stop 'running'.

The fairy-tale wish, it may be argued, is not a fair candidate to contrast with wanting. 'Making a wish' in a fairy-tale context is

an action one may perform in order to achieve an end. It is an action which one could perform intentionally. 'To want' and 'to wish' in the normal sense are not actions like this.

I would still hold however that in the normal case it is appropriate to say 'I want to X' only if we believe we have the ability to X, although we may also say 'I wish to X'. If we do not believe we have the ability we say I wish I could do X.

There are some nuances in the use of 'I wish to X' which distinguish it slightly from 'I want to X'.

One can say, 'I do not wish it' meaning 'I do not want it'. 'I wish to go out' meaning simply 'I want to go out', or 'I wish to be left alone' meaning 'I want to be left alone'. However even in these cases, the utterance has the suggestion of a command where one only has the power to bring about what one wants in the sense that one has the authority to command, and hopes the command will be obeyed. These utterances can also have the implication of a plea. Where the person expressing the wish recognizes that he does not have the power to bring about the object of the wish, but is appealing to someone else, who has the power, to 'grant' his wish - to carry out what he wishes.

One can say, 'I wish I could be left alone', where there is a direct implication that it is not in my power to be left alone.

If I did come to believe that I had the ability to do X, I would no longer be said to 'wish I could do X', but rather to 'want to do X'. If on coming to believe that I have the ability and the opportunity, I do not want to do X, then what was being expressed was an 'idle wish' or a 'whim'.

The distinction is not always very explicit in ordinary usage.

It seems more natural to say, 'I wish it would stop raining', rather than 'I want it to stop raining'. The latter has some implication that one thinks one has the ability, to bring about the object of the want. It would sound more appropriate uttered by a small child who thought he could command the rain to stop, - or at least, who has not yet grasped the distinction between those things which can be brought about by his own efforts, and those which cannot.

The distinction is very clear however when the reference is to the past. One says, 'I wish I could have done X', 'I wish I could have been there', 'I wish it had been fine' etc. We never use 'I want' with reference to the past - only to the future immediate or far.

Here it is clear that it is appropriate to use 'I wish' rather than 'I want' when the object wished for is not within one's power to bring about. One cannot alter the past. Whereas 'I want' implies that the object wanted may be in ones power to bring about. In as much as it is still in the future, the capacity and the opportunity may obtain.

We sometimes say, 'I would like to do X'. It seems that this expression can be used to mean either 'I wish I could do X', or 'I want to do X' depending upon whether one envisages having the ability, and the opportunity to do X. It seems to indicate a belief that 'I would enjoy doing X' which may be claimed whether or not I can in fact do X.

In so far as 'I wish I could' indicates a lack of ability, it cannot be logically connected with 'intention' in the way that I shall argue 'I want to do X' is connected with the intention to do X.

Chapter III. References

1. For example: Meiland, "The Nature of Intention", (London 1970)
p. 117.
R. Brandt and J. Kim, "Wants as Explanations of Actions",
Journal of Philosophy LX (1963), pp. 425-434.
2. This is the same distinction as Goldman draws between 'standing
wants' and 'occurrent wants'. "A Theory of Human Action",
Ch. 4.

CHAPTER IV

SOME PECULIARITIES OF A DISPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS OF WANTS

Many philosophers following Ryle's¹ lead have analysed explanations in terms of 'wants' as dispositional explanations. It is open to the realist about dispositions to claim that if wants are dispositions then they may be dispositional causes. If a substance has a certain disposition, this disposition may have a physical basis which is a causally sufficient and necessary condition of its exhibiting that disposition under certain external conditions.

In an important sense, wants are dispositions. Often what we mean by saying 'he is disposed to doing A' is 'he feels inclined to do A', 'he has a bent towards doing A' or in other words, 'he wants to do A'. The terms 'disposed to' and 'inclined to' have their primary use here.

Ryle never clearly distinguishes between the above sense of 'being disposed to' (1) and those senses of 'being disposed to' meaning (2) being in the habit of, and (3) being of the constitution for doing A readily.

If one is 'disposed to', 'tends to' or 'is inclined to' do A, meaning 'is in the habit of doing A,' then one does A frequently. That a substance has a disposition does not mean that it is necessarily in the habit of doing A. A substance may have a physical disposition even although it is never in fact manifested, if the conditions for its

manifestation never in fact obtain e.g. a glass may be brittle even although it never in fact breaks.

He is inclined to forget things, means he frequently forgets things. He may be inclined to do A, when he is not disposed to (1) i.e. does not feel inclined to do A, or does not want to do A. He may want to break a habit.

He may be disposed to do A (sense (3)) i.e. of the constitution for doing A readily. For example, if he is irritable, he is of the constitution for being easily ruffled, under fairly normal conditions. Similarly, if an object is brittle, it is disposed to, i.e. of the constitution for breaking readily under fairly normal conditions. It possesses a physical disposition. If a man is irritable - disposed to being easily ruffled (during that time) this does not mean that he is disposed to (sense (1)), i.e. that he feels inclined to be easily ruffled, or that he wants to be easily ruffled. Certainly if he is irritable, he may be disposed to (1), feel inclined to e.g. reply sharply if he is disturbed. But he may be irritable without ever in fact wanting to reply sharply - without ever having an 'active want' to reply sharply - if the conditions for his wanting to do so, do not in fact obtain - i.e. he is not disturbed. In other words, one can be disposed (sense (3) - the Rylean sense) to want to do certain things if certain conditions obtain. But, I shall argue, wants do not exhibit the characteristics of dispositions in the Rylean sense.

First of all, however, I shall indicate some respects in which they are like physical dispositions.

- (1) (a) To possess a disposition to X is not necessarily to be Xing; it is to be liable to X, to have a tendency to X if certain

conditions obtain. A substance may have a disposition to do X, and yet never in fact do X, if some of the conditions for its Xing never in fact obtain.

- (b) To have a 'want to do X' is not necessarily to be Xing. It is to be liable to X, or to have a tendency to Xing, if certain conditions obtain. One may want to do X, and yet never in fact do X if some of the conditions for Xing (e.g. the opportunity) never in fact obtain.
- (2) (a) The response to certain test conditions justifies the claim that a substance has a certain disposition, and can form the grounds of a prediction of what it is liable to do under certain other conditions.
 - (b) Similarly, certain test situations can justify the claim that a man has a certain want, and can form the basis of a prediction of what he is liable to do in certain other situations.

For example, if a man, when offered the opportunity to join a number of clubs, joins most of them; when invited to social events accepts those invitations in preference to invitations to other activities, etc., it can be concluded that he, e.g. wants to meet people, and that given the opportunity of further introductions he is liable to accept readily.

- (3) (a) If a substance under normal conditions dissolves when placed in water it follows that it is soluble.
- (b) If a man, given the opportunity, does A intentionally then it follows that he wants to do A.

It may be noted at this point that those who maintain that wants are dispositions to act, must be maintaining that wants are dispositions to act intentionally. Otherwise, they are immediately open to the objection that a man may do X e.g. twitch, under relatively normal conditions without in any respect wanting to X, whereas it could not be claimed that a substance dissolves in water under fairly normal conditions, but it is not in any respect water-soluble. Hence they must be claiming that wants are dispositions to act intentionally. One could not claim that a man does X intentionally under normal conditions, but he does not in any respect want to X, - (argued in Chapter V).

- (4) (a) In the case of physical dispositions, the external conditions² provide a 'recipe' for producing the actualisation of the disposition. Certain of the external conditions necessary for the actualisation of the disposition are 'background' conditions - e.g. normal conditions of temperature and pressure, etc. - and one or more further conditions necessary to fill out a sufficient condition, are 'foreground' conditions, e.g. the hitting of the glass with a hammer.

A comparable model can be constructed to some extent in the case of wants.

For example, if the agent wants to travel to Europe, and does so, then the 'background' external conditions of opportunity would be e.g. the existence of a flight to Europe, the money to pay for the flight, etc., and the 'foreground' condition might be e.g. his

employer's unexpected offer to him of a fortnight's holiday: Just as the hammer causes the glass to break at a certain instant, so the offer of the holiday that particular fortnight results in the agent travelling to Europe at that particular time.

As Ryle³ points out,

We are perfectly familiar with the sorts of happenings which induce or occasion people to do things, otherwise ordinary dealings between people could not exist.

Hence to some extent a 'recipe' of external conditions under which an agent, if he wants to do A, is liable to do A, can be produced, but I shall argue that whereas in the case of physical dispositions, this 'recipe' gives the sufficient conditions for the actualisation of the disposition, given that the substance has that disposition, in the case of 'wants', the 'recipe' is incomplete. It does not provide sufficient conditions for the action given that the agent has that want.

One cannot produce a law-like proposition of the Rylean variety for 'he wants to do X', comparable to that attributing a disposition, because a denial of any conflicting wants must appear in the conditional giving the conditions under which he will do X. It will be shown that if a clause denying the presence of a 'conflicting' disposition appeared in the law-like proposition attributing a disposition, it would be redundant, irrelevant, or simply not fully analysed.

First of all it is necessary to indicate what I mean by 'conflicting wants' and 'internal' and 'external' conditions.

Conflicting Wants

I mean by 'conflicting' or 'opposing' wants, a set of two or

more wants whose fulfilling actions are causally incompatible. Either they cannot both be performed at once - e.g. lack of opportunity, or the performance of one is contingently also a case of performing an action which is unwanted.

e.g. (a) I want to go to a concert

(b) I want to visit a friend

I cannot do both, e.g. there is not time to do both, - the friend leaves tomorrow, and it is the last night of the concert. The actions are contingently incompatible. I must choose.

e.g. (a) I want to go rock-climbing - I know that this will upset my parents.

(b) I do not want to upset my parents.

I cannot fulfill both wants. They are contingently incompatible. It so happens that my parents are upset by my rock-climbing pursuits. I must choose.

Cases of holding logically incompatible wants may be somewhat anomalous and rare. They are perhaps exemplified in love-hate relationships, (although here it could be argued that they are not held simultaneously but are oscillating) or in cases of split-personality-cases involving a strong element of irrationality.

Internal and External Conditions

I shall define an internal condition as any condition of the substance which is a necessary or sufficient condition of a substance or object having a disposition and is causally operative in the actualisation of that disposition. An external condition is any condition which is a causally necessary or sufficient condition of a disposition of a

substance being actualised, and is not a necessary or sufficient condition of its having the disposition.

For example, the structure of the fibers of a cloth is a necessary condition of its being flammable. This is an internal condition.

The application of a flame to the cloth is along with the appropriate standing conditions sufficient condition of its bursting into flames - but not a condition of its having the disposition to burst into flames. This is an external condition.

A dispositional analysis of wants would require a law-like proposition giving the conditions under which if he wants to X, he will do X, corresponding to

e.g. It is soluble entails if it is placed in water, etc. (conditions a, b and c), it will dissolve.

In the case of wants, if he wants to X then if he believes (without a doubt) that he has the opportunity and capacity to X and no conflicting wants, and he has the opportunity and capacity to X and no conflicting wants, and he is rational and does not change his mind, he will do X; or in other words,

I. He wants to X entails if he believes (without a doubt) that he has the opportunity and capacity to X, and he believes that the fulfillment of any of his other wants will not conflict with Xing, and he has the capacity and the opportunity to X, he is rational and does not change his mind, and (D) he does not want to Y where Ying is contingently incompatible with Xing, he will X.

If a clause corresponding to (D) appeared in the analysis of a dispositional statement, then either it would be irrelevant, or it would be redundant, or else the statement would not be fully

analysed.

E.g. in

- II. It is soluble entails if it is put in water etc. (conditions a, b and c) and (D_1) if it is not disposed to Y (e.g. explode) where Ying is contingently incompatible with dissolving, then it will dissolve.

Here either (1) (D_1) is irrelevant:

If the conditions of its Ying (e.g. exploding) differ from a, b and c, then it will dissolve under conditions a, b and c whether or not it is also e.g. explosive (i.e. it explodes under other conditions) - hence this condition is not required at all. It is in this sense irrelevant.

or (2) (D_1) is redundant:

If it denies that it e.g. explodes and hence can not dissolve under the same conditions a, b and c, then it is redundant - because if it does explode under these conditions, then it is not soluble but explosive under these conditions, in which case the clause amounts to denying that it is not soluble - i.e. 'it does not not dissolve under these conditions', and is in this respect redundant.

or (3) If the clause (D_1) is translatable as 'and there are no external conditions also present under which (along with a, b and c) it will explode, rather than dissolve' - then the clause is simply not fully analysed, but can in principle be analysed as 'and external conditions d, e and f (the conditions under which it would explode) are not also present'.

or (4) If this clause cannot be analysed out - i.e. if the

conditions sufficient for its not Ying when conditions a, b and c are present cannot in principle be specified, then the dispositional statement and analysis should be indeterministic in form, and should be expressed:

e.g. It is disposed to either X or Y entails if conditions a, b and c obtain it will either X or Y.

But the corresponding statement in the case of 'wants' would be
 III. he wants to either X or do something incompatible with Xing entails if he believes he has the opportunity and capacity to X or do something incompatible with Xing, etc., he will either X or do something incompatible with Xing.

This does not correspond to the statement I. above.

The clause (D) in I. is neither irrelevant nor redundant in the respect specified, nor is the statement I. equivalent to III. above. It remains then to see whether it corresponds to case (3); that is, that it is simply not fully analysed but can in principle be analysed out as in case (3), giving the conditions sufficient for his not Ying (doing anything incompatible with Xing) which along with the conditions of opportunity and capacity to X etc., are sufficient for his Xing, without reference to the absence of a want to Y.

I shall argue that it seems that clause (D) cannot, in principle be analysed out as in case (3), - that it is difficult to see how in an analysis of the statement 'he wants to X', one could specify distinct conditions which along with the other conditions of opportunity and capacity etc. for Xing, are sufficient for his not Ying and for his Xing, without reference to the absence of a want to Y. It is sufficient for his not doing Y that he does not have the opportunity and

capacity to Y - but this along with the other conditions is not sufficient for his doing X (intentionally) when he wants to X. He may believe he has the opportunity and capacity to do Y, want to do Y and try to do Y (and fail) but as a result not do X (intentionally). In order to specify conditions sufficient for his Xing, it must also be mentioned that he does not believe he has the opportunity and capacity to do anything incompatible with Xing - which involves refraining from Xing. But here I would claim that it is difficult to see how this condition could enter into an analysis of 'he wants to X', because it is difficult to see in what sense he can be said to want to do X (intentionally) if he believes that he cannot do anything but do X - i.e. if he believes that he cannot in any way refrain from Xing. No matter what conditions are specified which are sufficient for his not Ying (incompatible with Xing) any analysis of 'he wants to X' must allow that he at least believes that he can do something incompatible with Xing, and as long as he believes this, he may always try to do Y, and hence not do X (intentionally), unless he does not want to do Y (anything incompatible with Xing); - and no matter how this is analysed, if wants were dispositions, then it would refer to the absence of conflicting dispositions, and it is any reference to conflicting dispositions in the conditional of a dispositional statement which is objectionable as specified in case (1) and (2) above. However (D) is not irrelevant nor redundant.

It may be argued that (D) could in principle be analysed out by giving sufficient conditions of his not wanting to Y. - But this would not be like case (3). It would be equivalent to giving sufficient causal conditions of its not having a disposition which

conflicts. This would be to deny the presence of internal conditions such that it would e.g. explode rather than dissolve. However, this would fall to the criticism in case (2) - It would be redundant if equivalent to 'and it does not have internal conditions x, y and z sufficient for its being e.g. explosive under conditions a, b and c'. To say that it is soluble is already to say that its internal conditions are not such that it will do something incompatible with dissolving under these conditions. It is soluble does not mean if its internal conditions are such that it is not e.g. explosive, it will dissolve if conditions a, b and c obtain.

Hence even if an analysis of he wants to X were given in these terms, it would not be equivalent to the dispositional analysis.

Statement I could be restated as follows:

Either he wants to X or (exclusive) he wants to do something incompatible with Xing, (Y), entails if he believes (without a doubt) that he has the opportunity and capacity to either X or Y and he has the opportunity and capacity to X or Y, and he does not change his mind, he will either X or Y.

It could be claimed that this is still a dispositional analysis, - but nevertheless it demonstrates that there is an indeterminacy involved and in this respect it is not amenable to analysis in terms of a Rylean law-like proposition.

A further difference may be noted here. In the above proposition, one of the conditions required to be stated in the conditional is that 'he has the capacity to do X'. In the case of physical dispositions, however, to state that the substance has the

disposition in the first place is to state that it has the capacity to e.g. dissolve, under those conditions. In contrast, to state that an agent 'wants to do X' under certain conditions of opportunity is not to state that he has the capacity to do X - (although I would maintain that he must believe that he has the capacity). He may want to do X, believe he has the capacity to do X, when in fact he does not have the capacity, in which case he will not do X.

A physical parallel to the case of conflicting wants can be produced. This would be an indeterministic physical system, where the external conditions and the two internal physical bases of the tendencies provided necessary but not sufficient conditions for the actualisation of the tendencies, and where either actualisation could occur under those external conditions - but the actualisation of the one, would preclude the actualisation of the other.

Wants are tendencies. It can be claimed that we may explain another man's action by saying that he performed it because of a certain want, without having any knowledge about how the man tends to behave normally in similar circumstances. As has frequently been pointed out with reference to motive explanations, in opposition to Ryle's dispositional analysis, a man may act from a certain motive only once under circumstances and never again act out of that motive in similar circumstances. Similarly a man may act from a certain want only once and never again act from that want in a like situation. Yet the want, though unlike a disposition in this respect, seems nonetheless to be a tendency in that had the circumstances been slightly altered, he might have altered his course of action accordingly, if possible so as still to satisfy the particular want³. For example, if he wants to

visit a friend some distance away, he may as a result of this want, set off to the station to catch a train - only to be faced with the discovery that because of a 'work-to-rule', the train will be three hours late. So he may then decide to take the plane instead - in order to satisfy the original want.

Wants seem to be much more intimately tied up with the particular circumstances, in which they arise, than physical dispositions. This has been shown in the examples of conflicting wants. It may be that the particular time that I am offered the opportunity to go climbing, I have very specific reasons for wanting to stay in my parents' favour. I have other wants which become active on presentation of these circumstances. There may be several sets of conflicting wants, which occur simultaneously in that particular situation, and which conflict only in that situation. This particular combination may never occur again.

In the following chapters I shall be considering the relationship between the want and the intention to act. I shall indicate that this relationship is quite unlike that of dispositional cause to its effect.

Chapter IV. References

1. Ryle. "The Concept of Mind".
2. See p. 57.
3. Ryle, op. cit., p. 109.
4. A similar point is made with respect to 'motives' by Meiland.
"Motives and Ends", Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. 13, (1963),
pp. 64-71.
5. Goldman. "A Theory of Human Action", pp. 112-113.

CHAPTER V

THE LOGICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN 'WANTING' AND 'INTENDING'

My aim in the following chapters is to show that an agent's wants and corresponding beliefs do not constitute causally necessary and sufficient conditions for his intention to act. The initial step will be to demonstrate the nature of the connection between 'wanting' and 'intending'. I shall argue that there is a strong logical connection between 'the want' and 'the intention' of a kind which forbids a contingent relationship between the two.

The notions of 'wanting to do' and 'intending to do' seem to be intricately bound up with one another. It seems that 'I intend to do X' logically entails that 'I want to do X', in that we could not make sense of the claim that 'I intend to do X, but I don't in any respect want to do X'.

There are a number of cases where the claim that 'I intend to do X', logically entails 'I want to do X' may be questioned.

Firstly it could be claimed that where I intend to X as a means to an end, I may want the end but I may not want the means. However I am taking 'to want to X' in the sense 'to have a pro-attitude towards doing X' and I am claiming that if I intend to X, I must have some pro-attitude towards doing X. In the above case, if I intend to X, I must have a pro-attitude towards doing X in so far as it is a means to the desired end. I may not want to X in the sense

that I do not have a pro-attitude towards doing X for the reason that I shall find Xing enjoyable, immediately gratifying etc.

Similarly it could be claimed that I may intend to do an action which I know to have certain unavoidable side effects which I do not want. For example, I may intend to remove a splinter from your hand, and I know it will hurt you. I may say 'I am going to hurt you, but I don't want to'. Here it might be claimed that 'I am going to hurt you' is not an expression of intention at all in this instance, but an inductive prediction of one of the causal effects of my intended action based on observation of causal conditions. But it cannot be claimed that I do not intend to hurt you. If I know that this is one of the causal effects of my removing the splinter, then if I intend to remove the splinter, I also intend to produce the known causal effects, as argued in Chapter I, in opposition to Anscombe. Here, if I intend to perform the action I must have a pro-attitude towards doing that action along with all its side effects as opposed to avoiding the side effects but not performing the action. If I intend to remove the splinter, I must regard the situation of my removing your splinter and hurting you as preferable to the situation of not hurting you but leaving the splinter intact, and in this respect I have a pro-attitude towards the action of removing the splinter and hurting you. Once again, I do not want to hurt you in the sense that I do not have a pro-attitude towards hurting you for the reason that I shall find it enjoyable, etc. to do so, - but I do have a pro-attitude towards hurting you for the sake of relieving you of the splinter.

Some¹ would claim that in some instances e.g. where I intend to do my duty, I may intend to do what I do not necessarily want to do.

Here I would maintain that one must have a higher-order want to do one's duty. Although one may not want to do the action under another description, one must want to do it under the description, 'a case of doing one's duty'. For example, X may not want to fight, but if he sees fighting as a case of serving his country, and serving his country as a case of doing his duty, then he must want to do the action under one of these descriptions, or he simply wouldn't do it. He must have some pro-attitude towards the action. He may not want to do the fighting in itself, seen purely as the activity of fighting. He may not enjoy the prospect of having to fight, but if he is not compelled by some external authority to do it, then he must want to do it under one of the other descriptions - and if he is compelled by some authority to do it, then he must want to do it under the description of avoiding the consequences imposed by the authority for refusing. Thus he intends to do X entails he wants to under some description.

I have claimed that 'I intend to do X' logically entails 'I have some pro-attitude towards doing X' but this does not preclude the possibility of 'the want' being a causal condition of the 'intention'. For example, 'this bar attracts iron filings' logically entails 'this bar is a magnet', but the presence of a magnet is nevertheless a causal condition of iron filings moving.

It must be shown that the converse is true - 'he wants to do X' is a logical condition of 'he intends to do X' and that this logical connection is a kind which is not also a causal connection.

'He intends to X' entails that, 'if he has the opportunity and capacity, he believes he has the opportunity and capacity, he is not irrational about this belief and he does not change his mind he will

do X.' If these conditions obtain and he does not do X, then it follows that he did not intend to do X. We could not make sense of the claim that he intended to X.

'He wants to X' does not entail that 'if he has the opportunity and the capacity, he believes he has the opportunity and capacity, he does not change his mind, he will do X.' The further condition is required in the conditional, that 'he has no conflicting wants' - that is that he does not want to do an action whose performance is contingently incompatible with Xing.

He may, of course have a conflicting want and nevertheless intend to X and do X. He may want to do his duty and intend to do his duty while still having the conflicting want to enjoy himself in some other activity.

'He wants to X' entails that 'if he believes he has the opportunity and the capacity, and no conflicting wants and he is not irrational about this belief, he intends to X; and if in addition he does in fact have the opportunity and the capacity and no conflicting wants and he does not change his mind, he will do X.' This is a logical entailment. We could not make sense of the claim 'I want to X, I believe I have the opportunity and the capacity and no conflicting wants, but I do not intend to X'. - We would simply say that in that case either I do not really want to X, or I must have some conflicting want.

Shaffer² claims that 'one's reasons typically consist of one's beliefs and wants' and then continues.

Some philosophers hold that it could not be the case that even though people had the best of reasons for doing something, no reason not to, and nothing to prevent them from doing it, still they never did it. But

I would disagree. Consider the desire to kill oneself - many people have reason and opportunity but just don't'.

I would claim on the contrary that if the person really has the desire to kill himself, he knows he has the opportunity, including the capacity, but does not, it must be maintained that he must have conflicting wants - even if he simply does not want the means to the end. It may be that he does not do it because he is in a state of lethargy, or inertia. But here there is a conflicting want - i.e. the want not to do anything which involves any effort. It may be that a condition denying him the opportunity has been over-looked. If all these possibilities are denied, then I do not see that we can accept the claim that he wants to do it. If I say I want to do X, but Xing involves Ying which I do not want, so I do not intend to do X, then if it is subsequently demonstrated to me that Xing does not in fact involve Ying, but I still refrain from doing X, then the tendency on the part of others is to start to wonder if I really do want to do X, and I think that if it were then shown that I had no other conflicting wants, they would then deny that I really do want to do X. I would be indulging in an idle reverie about doing X.

The logical connection here is stronger than that whereby the description of the object of the want is contained in the object of the intention. It is not simply that 'wanting to do X' contains the description of the object of the intention to do X, but that the occurrence of the intention is a logical condition for the validity of the claim that the corresponding want is present.

But it still remains to indicate more fully how this logical relationship differs from other logical relationships which appear to

be similar and which are nevertheless also causal relationships.

Firstly it could be claimed that we could not make sense of the claim that 'this is a magnet, it is placed close to iron filings, there are no opposing forces in the vicinity, and yet it does not attract the iron filings'. We would similarly be tempted to say that either it is not a magnet, or there must be opposing forces in the vicinity after all. Nevertheless, despite this logical connection, the presence of a magnet is a causal condition of iron filings moving.

However a want cannot be a cause of an intention of the mechanical kind, as a magnet is a cause of the movement of the iron filings, for the following reasons:

In the mechanical causal model, like that of the magnet and iron filings, there is a composition of forces, so that the presence of other forces in the vicinity may modify the effect of the magnet, and if they are acting in opposition to the magnet, will modify the effect of the magnet, - i.e. modify the movement of the iron filings - unless there are other forces present to cancel out the opposing forces. In any case, the effect is the 'action' of the resultant force.

In the case of a 'want to X', the presence of other wants need not modify the 'intention to X', even if there are opposing wants - i.e. wants tending to produce actions which are contingently incompatible with Xing. If one intends to X because one wants to X, then the intention is to satisfy that want. The object of the intention is the same as the object of the want in an unmodified form, even if there are conflicting wants present. The object of the intention is not to satisfy a compromise between the objects of the several wants; it is to satisfy that want to do X simpliciter. In other words, the intention

has undergone no modification. There is no composition of wants (in relation to the intention) equivalent to the composition of forces in the mechanical causal model.

Armstrong argues³,

Of course just as a number of physical pressures acting on a material object may issue, not simply in the object moving in the line dictated by one of the pressures, but rather along a line determined by a sum of all the forces at work, so competing desires may produce action that is a compromise between the different lines that each desire would have initiated if it had been in the field'.

This argument considers the relation between wants and the action rather than between wants and the intention to act, but I wish to show that an extension of the argument considering the relationship between wants and the intention, could not be maintained.

The difference between the case of the mechanical model and that of the wants and intention, is that in the mechanical model, the 'action' must be the product of the resultant force, - even although this may in some cases be equivalent to one of the forces present, when the others cancel themselves out, in which case the 'action' is an unmodified effect of that force. In the case of conflicting wants, however, it is conceptually possible that the intention be to satisfy any one of the wants without modification, or to compromise between them. This latter case would in any case be an intention to compromise entailing a want to compromise, not a compromise want corresponding to a resultant force. The resultant force is not a force over and above the forces present, whereas a want to compromise is a want over and above the other wants present, and the intention is to

satisfy that want without modification.

Even in the special case of the mechanical model where the other forces present cancel each other out, so that the introduction of the magnet produces as unmodified effect of that force, there is nothing which fully corresponds in the case of wants generally. Firstly, it is not obvious that the forces which cancel to zero oppose the magnet. In so far as the resultant of these forces is a zero force, there is no force opposing the magnet; in that respect, the effect is the same as it would be if there were no other forces present at all. However it may be claimed that, in so far as they tend to produce inaction, a state of rest, or tend to maintain the 'status quo', which is contingently incompatible with the movement produced by the magnet, they oppose in the same sense as conflicting wants may oppose in the situation where one want involves a want to refrain from the action - i.e. a want to maintain the 'status quo'. Here, if the want to X is fulfilled, rather than the want to refrain from Xing, we may allow that we have a case parallel to the above. But then what of the case where the want to refrain from Xing is fulfilled, as opposed to the want to X? It is impossible to construct a parallel to this case in the mechanical model. This would require the unmodified effect of a force tending to produce inaction, or to maintain the status quo, in the presence of opposing forces. It cannot be claimed here that the opposing forces may cancel to zero and allow the unmodified effect of the force tending to produce inaction. If the other forces cancel to zero, they also tend to produce inaction or to maintain the status quo, and hence do not oppose the first force in the required sense. Thus if there are opposing forces, i.e. forces which tend to produce action

and do not cancel to zero, then the effect must be the modified effect of the opposing forces and the force tending to produce inaction - i.e. the effect of their resultant force.

In other words, the case in the mechanical model where the 'opposing' forces cancel to zero, and the effect is the unmodified effect of a further force - e.g. a magnet, is a special case, and there is only one possible effect, the effect of the resultant force which in this case is equivalent to the unmodified effect of the magnet. There seems to be only one type of case of conflicting wants which corresponds at all, if we can make sense of the respect in which the zero force can be said to oppose.

On the other hand, the case of conflicting wants where the intention is to satisfy one of the wants without modification is not a special case, and there seems to be no parallel in the mechanical model except in the one limited instance mentioned.

Thus the relationship of the 'want' to the 'intention' does not completely resemble the sort of relationship between e.g. a magnet and the iron filings, or mechanical forces, and so the two statements do not exactly correspond.

It remains to show that the 'want' is not a dispositional cause of the 'intention'.

It could be argued that just as I have claimed that,

(1) 'He wants to X'

entails

(2) 'If he believes (without a doubt) that he has the opportunity and capacity and no conflicting wants, he is not irrational about this

belief, and he does not change his mind, then he intends to X.'

so,

(1') 'It is soluble'

entails

(2') 'If it is put in water etc., then it will dissolve.'

These two relationships seem at first sight to correspond to one another, and if we accept the realist account of dispositions, (argued in Chapter II) then its being soluble - i.e. the categorical basis of its solubility is a causal condition of its dissolving. Thus even although the connection between the statements (1') and (2') is logical, it refers to a contingent relationship between the categorical basis and the substance dissolving.

Similarly, it could be argued, that although the connection between the statements (1) and (2) is logical, his want to do X may also be a causal condition of his intention to do X.

However, I have claimed that (1) entails (2); and in addition (1) entails that if the conditions mentioned in (2) obtain and he also does have the opportunity and capacity and no conflicting wants, then he will do X. If this entailment holds, then it follows that an agent cannot consistently entertain a want to do X and at the same time believe that he will not do X if he has the opportunity and capacity and no conflicting wants. In other words, if the agent wants to do X, implicit in his want is a belief that he is going to do X if he has the opportunity and capacity and no conflicting wants. But this belief cannot be simply a prediction that he is going to do X if the conditions obtain. A simple prediction is not what is implicit in a want. This can be seen if we consider the first person expressions of

the want and belief, which this third person statement assigns.

'I want to do X' entails the belief 'I am going to do X if conditions C obtain'.

But this belief is not simply a prediction; a simple prediction does not contain the implications of the expression of a want. If the belief is implicit in the expression of a want, it must be the expression of an intention - the provisional intention, 'I am going (to do X if conditions C obtain).

In other words I am claiming that the agent cannot consistently entertain a want to do X, and deny that he intends (to do X if he has the opportunity, and capacity, and no conflicting wants).

(3) 'He wants to X'

entails

(4) 'he intends (to do X if conditions C obtain)'

This is not the statement of a law-like proposition to the effect of what will occur under certain conditions, but rather it states that if he wants to do X then he is intending (to do X if conditions C obtain). 'It is soluble' on the other hand does not mean 'it is dissolving'.

A further minor dissimilarity between dispositional statements, and statements relating the want to the intention is that 'he wants not to do X' entails 'if he believes (without a doubt) that he has the capacity and the opportunity and no conflicting wants, he is rational and does not change his mind, he intends not to do X'. There seems to be no equivalent to this in the case of dispositions. 'It is soluble' entails 'if it is put in water etc., it will dissolve'. 'It is not soluble' entails 'if it is put in water etc., it will not dissolve', but

the latter is equivalent to 'he does not (want to X)' meaning 'the want to X has not occurred to him' entails 'if he believes (without a doubt) that he has the capacity and the opportunity etc., he has no (intention to do X)'. There seems to be no equivalent to 'He wants not to X' entails 'If he believes (without a doubt) that he has the capacity and the opportunity etc., he intends not to X' in the case of the dispositional statement.

It may be noted here that there are two kinds of provisional intention.

e.g. (a) I shall go for a walk if it's fine

(b) I shall fly tonight if there is a plane.

In the first type, the proviso stipulates the conditions under which the agent will undertake to perform the action - the conditions which he favours. Here the agent could (i.e. may have the opportunity and ability to) perform the action, even if the conditions do not obtain - but the proviso states the conditions which he sees as appropriate or desirable for performing the action.

In the second type of provisional intention, the proviso states the conditions of opportunity or capacity under which he will be able to carry out his intention - where he believes that if these conditions do not obtain then he cannot perform the action. More generally, the second type can be expressed 'I shall X if the opportunity presents itself', or 'I shall X if I have the ability', or simply 'I shall X if I can'.

The provisional intention implied by a want is a mixture of the two kinds. 'I shall X if I have the opportunity and capacity and

no conflicting wants'. The 'no conflicting wants' clause is of the first kind, the other conditions of the second.

It may be noted here that just as Ryle indicates that in a dispositional statement the conditions in the hypothetical may never be fully specified, so in the case of the provisional intention the conditions of the proviso may never be fully specified.

In the next chapter I shall indicate the peculiarities which would result if the provisional intention along with the belief that conditions C obtain were a causal condition of the categorical intention.

Chapter IV. References

1. For example, Meiland. "The Nature of Intention", pp. 117-119.
Lawrence. "Motive and Intention".
2. J. Shaffer. "The Philosophy of Mind", (N.J. 1968), p. 100.
3. Armstrong. "A Materialist Theory of Mind", p. 153.

CHAPTER VI

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROVISIONAL INTENTION AND THE CATEGORICAL INTENTION

Before considering some of the characteristics of the provisional intention and its relation to the categorical intention, it will be useful to make a few observations about the nature of categorical intentions.¹

If I categorically intend to X, this implies that I believe that I am going to X - I could not consistently claim that I intend to X (or to try to X) and I do not believe that I am going to X (or try to X). If I do not believe that I am going to X (or try to X) then I cannot be said to intend to X (or try to X). I must be aware that if I intend to X (or try to X) I must believe that I am going to X (or try to X). If I understand what it means to intend to X (or try to X) then I understand that I cannot both intend to X (or try to X) and not believe that I am going to X (or try to X).

If I know that I have the opportunity and capacity to act in any way contrary to my present activity, then it is a necessary and sufficient condition of my acting in any other way, that I intend to so act. My belief that I am going to so act, implicit in my intention, is to that extent self-fulfilling. In the case of spur-of-the-moment actions (as distinct from reflex actions), the belief that I am going to X may occur more or less simultaneously with the moment of initiation of the action, but this belief is still necessary for the

action to take place.

I must recognise that my believing I am going to X, implied by my intending to X is operative in this way if it is to qualify as the belief implicit in an intention. E.g. if it is necessary to fill out a sufficient condition of my avoiding a car that I intend to avoid it, and I believe I am going to avoid it - but do not see my believing this as in any respect necessary to fill out a sufficient condition of my avoiding it - I think that I will avoid it regardless of whether I believe I am going to or not, - in other words I do not distinguish my belief from a 'hunch' or pure prediction that I will avoid the car - then I shall be somewhat surprised by the ensuing collision.

In other words it is a necessary condition of my belief being self-fulfilling, that I recognise it as such.

I shall now relate the above considerations to the case of provisional intentions. Firstly, I shall try to bring out more fully the various beliefs involved in provisional intentions, by indicating the similarities and distinctions between provisional intentions and non-intentional quasi-self-fulfilling conditional anticipations. I shall then show that because of the nature of the beliefs implicit in the provisional and categorical intentions respectively, certain anomalies would result if the connection between the provisional and categorical intention were causal.

If I have a provisional intention e.g. I intend to jump if the branch cracks, this implies that I believe I am going to jump if the branch cracks and I believe that my believing that I am going to jump if the branch cracks will be operative in bringing it about that I jump, when I believe (without a doubt) that the branch is cracking.

In the case of a non-intentional anticipation where e.g. I believe that I am going to fall if the branch cracks, I do not believe that my believing that I am going to fall if the branch cracks is operative in bringing it about that I fall, when I believe (without a doubt) that the branch is cracking (unless I believe that my falling is caused by my fear of falling).

In the case of the provisional intention to X if C, because the 'if-clause' is within the scope of the intention, the conditions of my Xing are 'intended' in the sense that I intend that conditions C obtaining be sufficient, along with my intention, and the necessary conditions of opportunity and capacity, for my Xing. I must however recognize that it is only if I believe (without a doubt) that C is the case that my believing that I am going to X if C is operative in bringing it about that I X.

In the case of the non-intentional anticipation, on the other hand, I believe that if C is the case, regardless of whether or not I believe it is the case, I am going to X.

In the provisional intention, or the non-intentional conditional anticipation, the 'if-clause' may of course contain reference to my believing C, - but that is a different case.

To illustrate the distinctions, consider the following:

Provisional intentions:

- (1) I will jump if the branch cracks
- (2) I will leave if I believe² there is an impending earthquake.
- (3) I will go to the psychiatrist if I believe I am Napoleon.

In (1), I must recognise that I will in fact jump if I believe the branch is cracking - but my intention is to jump if it is cracking. If having jumped on believing that it is cracking, I discover that it was not in fact cracking, I will consider that in a sense I have not fulfilled my intention, - my action was inappropriate; and if it is cracking, but I do not realise that it is and so do not jump, I will have failed to carry out my intention.

In (2), my intention is to leave if I believe there is an impending earthquake. I consider that my believing this, whether or not it is true, is sufficient reason for me to leave. If I do leave on thinking there is an impending earthquake and then discover that no earthquake occurs, I will not consider my action inappropriate - I carried out my intention.

In (3)³, my intention is to go to a psychiatrist if I have reason to believe I am entertaining a certain belief - that I am Napoleon. This is more like case (1), but of a peculiar kind. In this case, the condition is a belief of mine, but in a different respect from case (2), in that here, case (3), I must step outside my belief. As in case (1), I must believe that I believe I am Napoleon - in other words I must be self-conscious of my belief and what it implies, before I will act on it. It cannot be a current belief.

Contrast with the above:

Conditional non-intentional anticipations:

- (1) I will faint if you inject the needle
- (2) I will faint if I believe you are preparing to use the needle
- (3) I will suffer a nervous breakdown if I believe I am being persecuted - i.e. if I develop a persecution complex.

In (1) I believe that my physical reaction to the physical process of the injection fluid entering my bloodstream, if you inject the needle, will be fainting. If I do not faint if the needle is injected, my belief was false, and if I do faint in believing you are injecting the needle, when in fact you are not, then this does not constitute a fulfillment of that prediction (1).

In (2) I anticipate that my reaction to my believing that you are preparing to use the needle, whether you are or not, would be to faint. If I faint on believing you are preparing to use the needle, when you are not doing so, my prediction was true.

In (3) I anticipate that if I develop a persecution complex, I will suffer a nervous breakdown, not in this case as a result of believing X, Y and Z are persecuting me, but as a result of being plagued by beliefs which I realise are irrational, as a result of realising that I am mentally ill, - where the complex is seen for what it is, from a standpoint 'external' to the beliefs involved in the complex.

Cases (3) and (3) are somewhat unusual examples of case (1) and (1). They need no longer be individually treated, but were introduced to keep them distinct from cases (2) and (2).

A non-intentional conditional anticipation 'I am going to X if C' could be operative in bringing it about that I do X on believing C is the case, because I am convinced that I am going to X if C. For sake of brevity, I shall call these quasi-self-fulfilling conditional beliefs. Strictly speaking they are not self-fulfilling at all. They are not operative in bringing it about that C is, along with the standing conditions, a causally sufficient condition of my Xing, - but

rather the conditional belief along with the belief that C obtains is sufficient together with the standing conditions to bring it about that I X.

If I come to recognise (1') as a quasi-self-fulfilling belief, however, I must also recognise that it is in fact if I believe you are injecting the needle, regardless of whether you are or not, that I will faint.

In order for a conditional belief to operate in a quasi-self-fulfilling manner, the person who entertains the belief must believe the conditions referred to in the 'if-clause' to obtain, otherwise the belief cannot become operative, simply because the person does not see the situation as appropriate to the fulfillment of his belief. This is the case regardless of whether or not he is aware that the anticipation is operating in this manner.

It may be that if I am aware of the self-fulfilling nature of a belief of mine, that I recognise that it only operates in a self-fulfilling manner if certain conditions obtain, but where there is no means of my ascertaining whether the conditions do obtain. E.g. in a situation where as a result of my conviction that I will survive, I will survive but only for a limited amount of time - I may believe that I will survive and that this belief will be self-fulfilling only if a rescue party is on the way, but where I have no means of knowing whether this condition obtains. But here the condition is not included in my belief - the self-fulfilling belief must be that I will survive, not that I will survive if a rescue party is on the way - or, in any case I must work on the assumption that the conditions do obtain, that a rescue party is on the way, if I intend to 'use' my belief in order

to survive. In other words, once again, I must believe that the conditions obtain.

Also, if a conditional belief is to operate in a quasi-self-fulfilling manner, I must connect the beliefs: If I believe (a) I am going to X if C, and I believe (b) C is the case, but I forget that I believe (a) or I am not sufficiently rational to connect the two beliefs, then my believing (a) cannot be operative in bringing it about that I X.

In other words, it is essential for any non-intentional conditional belief that I am going to X if C to be operative in bringing it about that I X, that a categorical belief that I am going to X is formed on the basis that I believe C is the case.

Similarly, it is essential for my provisional intention to X if C to be operative in bringing it about that I X, that there is a categorical intention to X on the grounds that I believe C is the case.

There are, however, several differences between the role of the 'if-clause' in the provisional intention, and the role of the 'if-clause' in a non-intentional quasi-self-fulfilling conditional anticipation.

Firstly, if I am unaware of the quasi-self-fulfilling character of my anticipation (1'), I will not realise that I must believe that you are injecting the needle before I will in fact faint, whereas in the case of a provisional intention to X if C, I must recognize, at least implicitly, that I must believe C to obtain before I will X - otherwise I do not recognize that the conditions of my Xing are part of my intention.

Secondly, in the case of anticipation (1'), the belief which is

quasi-self-fulfilling (provided I believe you are injecting the needle) is that if you inject the needle, I shall faint as a direct result of the injection of the needle. If I come to recognise the quasi-self-fulfilling character of my conviction, then I realise that in fact I will faint if I believe you are injecting the needle, whether you are or not, and this because I am convinced that I will faint if you inject the needle. But even if I recognise all this, and continue to uphold my belief, in order to be maintaining the same belief, I must continue to believe that if the needle is injected, I will faint as a result of the injection, regardless of the irrationalities involved here.

If my quasi-self-fulfilling anticipation is (2'), 'I shall faint if I believe you are preparing to use the needle', - then on recognising the quasi-self-fulfilling character of the anticipation, I will realise that I will faint if I believe you are preparing to use the needle because I am convinced that I will. But if I am to maintain the same belief, I must continue to believe that my believing you are preparing to use the needle is causally sufficient, together with the standing condition for my fainting. - Not that it is only sufficient together with the standing conditions and my conditional belief, for my fainting.

In the case of the provisional intention (2), on the other hand, I believe that my believing the conditions to obtain is sufficient only together with my intention, and the conditions of opportunity and capacity, for my Xing. Similarly in the case of provisional intention case (1), I believe that my believing the conditions to obtain is, along with my intention and the conditions of opportunity and capacity, sufficient for my Xing. But there is not the irrationality involved

here as in the quasi-self-fulfilling conditional anticipation (1'), when recognised as such, because the self-fulfilling belief in the case of the intention is that I shall X 'in the light of' C obtaining, and there is no inconsistency in realising that before I can act 'in the light of' certain circumstances, I must believe that they obtain. In other words, the recognition of the self-fulfilling character of the provisional intention is built in to the implicit belief.

It still remains that we would consider our action inappropriate if performed on the false belief that C obtains, or if we fail to X on not realising that C does obtain. However generally we assume when we form an intention case (1) that our belief concerning C will be true. If we are uncertain that our beliefs concerning C will be true we usually express our intention as in case (2).

It seems that it would be impossible to form a provisional intention which would exactly parallel the non-intentional quasi-self-fulfilling conditional anticipation. The conditional anticipation is that certain conditions if they obtained would be directly sufficient together with the standing conditions for my Xing. I cannot intend that if certain conditions obtain they will be directly sufficient, in the same sense, together with the standing conditions for my Xing. I can intend that I will bring about certain conditions which are causally sufficient together with the standing conditions for my Xing - but that is not the same and these conditions do not enter the conditional. E.g. I may intend to wear a rope in order that if I fall, I will survive - but it makes no sense to say that I intend that if I wear a rope I will survive.

It seems to be similarly impossible to think of a non-

intentional self-fulfilling conditional belief where what is anticipated is that I will X 'in the light of' C being the case - in the same sense as the provisional intention - where I do not regard C as a sufficient cause together with the standing conditions, of my Xing. Perhaps the closest would be a superstitious belief - e.g. 'I will succeed if a black cat crosses my path' - where I do not believe that the black cat, by some sort of magic, causes my success - but that in the light of this occurring, my success will simply follow. If any sense at all can be made of this notion, it seems that in the case of a superstition, if we do not believe that the black cat causes the subsequent success, then we regard it rather as a 'sign' that success is to follow: - but here it seems we must introduce some third party giving us the sign and causing the success. This does not resemble the case of a provisional intention.

A further point may be noted about non-intentional quasi-self-fulfilling conditional anticipations. It may be the case that the anticipation is only partly responsible for bringing it about that I X. E.g. If I anticipate that I will escape the fever if I receive an injection, it may be that when I receive the injection, I escape the fever partly because of the physical action of the injection and partly because of my belief that I will be protected if I receive the injection. However, in order to correspond to the provisional intention, the case must be such that the conditional anticipation is, along with the belief that I receive an injection, and the standing conditions, fully responsible for my protection, and the physical action of the injection plays no part in my protection. In this case, if I come to recognise the quasi-self-fulfilling nature of my anticipation and I come to regard

the situation more rationally, I will realise that I escape the fever because I am convinced that I will, and the injection is in that respect unnecessary. I could equally well believe I will escape the fever, no conditions attached. However I may realise that I am only sufficiently confident that I will avoid the fever, if I receive the injection, in which case what I recognise is that my believing that I receive an injection is sufficient to give me a categorical belief which is capable of being self-fulfilling. I require to believe that I am receiving an injection in order to make my categorical belief sufficiently strong to be self-fulfilling. There would still be a hint here that I had not completely shaken off the original belief that the physical action of the injection makes a contribution to my protection. However it might be possible that I should come to regard the operation of the conditions in this slightly different light. In other words, there would be a slight difference between being convinced that I shall escape fever if I receive an injection, and believing that if I receive an injection, I will be convinced that I shall escape fever, - and that I may remove some of the irrationality involved by coming to believe the latter, on recognition of the self-fulfilling character of the anticipation.

There is, on the other hand, no question of my regarding the conditions in the provisional intention in this way. When I have a provisional intention, I do not believe that my believing the conditions to obtain is sufficient to bring about my action by bringing about a categorical intention (argued below). I believe rather that my provisional intention is together with my belief that the conditions obtain, and the opportunity and capacity, including my belief

that they obtain, directly sufficient to bring about my action.

It seems that in the case of a provisional intention to X if C, the absence of a logical condition of its being self-fulfilling as opposed to what I have termed quasi-self-fulfilling - namely the recognition of its self-fulfilling character incorporated into the 'if-clause' - would render it inoperative in bringing it about, under the appropriate conditions, that I X. (-assuming the claims made on p. 81 are correct). It might be expected however, that if it were causally operative in bringing it about, under the appropriate conditions, that I X, the absence of a logical condition of its being self-fulfilling would simply (logically) render it quasi-self-fulfilling rather than causally inefficacious.

As a result of the 'built-in' awareness of their self-fulfilling character, provisional intentions if causally self-fulfilling, would not exhibit some of the irrationalities, relating to the 'if-clause', of the quasi-self-fulfilling non-intentional conditional anticipations when recognised as such. Provisional intentions would, however, if causally self-fulfilling, be irrational given the recognition of their self-fulfilling character, in the respect that the presence of the belief that I am going to X in the light of C would be the grounds for its own justification. In addition, because, in the case of intentions, it is essential to their being self-fulfilling that they are recognised as such, at least implicitly, they would be doubly irrational, compared with the non-intentional quasi-self-fulfilling anticipations, if held with complete recognition of their nature. They would, if causally self-fulfilling involve the further irrationalities of the type of non-intentional self-fulfilling beliefs which are held

to be self-fulfilling only if one has faith in the 'power' of self-fulfillment of those beliefs. The faith and the anticipation each require their own presence as grounds for themselves. If, however, under the appropriate conditions, my believing that I am going to X in the light of C were a logical condition of my going to X in the light of C, then there need be no question of irrationality involved in recognition that this is the case. There need be no irrationality in recognising that, under certain conditions, believing I am going to X in the light of C is to be going to X in the light of C - that it is implicit in my going to X in the light of C that I believe I am going to X in the light of C. In the case of the logical entailment in e.g. if this is red, then it is coloured, its being coloured is a logically necessary condition of its being red, but that it is coloured is not one of the truths which would constitute the grounds for inferring that it is red. To be red is simply to be coloured.

I shall now indicate the peculiarities which would result if the provisional intention, along with the belief that the conditions C obtain, were a causal condition of the categorical intention.

Those who may wish to argue that the relation between the provisional intention, the belief that C, and the categorical intention is causal, would liken the connection to that between the 'believings' in any process of inference, which they likewise take to be causal.⁴

The pattern of the inference procedure from provisional to categorical intention, which they take to correspond to the pattern of inference procedure between e.g. predictive beliefs, is as follows: my believing (1) I am going to X in the light of C and my believing (2) C is the case, (if I am rational) together cause my believing (3)

therefore, I am going to X.

The connection between the premises (1) and (2) and the conclusion (3) is, of course, logical, but the relation between believing (1), believing (2) and believing (3), they claim, may be causal.

It emerges from the previous considerations that if my belief expressed by (1) is causally self-fulfilling, then it is irrational if I am aware of its self-fulfilling character. If my belief expressed by (1) is the belief implicit in a provisional intention, then it is self-fulfilling and I am aware that it is. If my belief expressed by (3) is the belief implicit in a categorical intention, then it is self-fulfilling, and I am aware that it is. The fulfillment of my belief implicit in the categorical intention is the same when I believe C is the case, as the fulfillment of the provisional intention from which it is inferred when I believe C. The fulfillment of my belief expressed by (3), when I believe (2), is the same as the fulfillment of my belief expressed by (1).

If my belief expressed by (1) causes my belief expressed by (3) when I believe (2) then my belief expressed by (1) is causally self-fulfilling, - because if, when I believe (2) my belief expressed by (1) causes my belief expressed by (3) which is sufficient (whether logically or causally) together with the conditions of opportunity and capacity, for its own fulfillment, and that fulfillment is the same when I believe (2) as the fulfillment of the belief expressed by (1), then my belief expressed by (1) causes a condition which, together with the standing conditions, is sufficient for its (i.e. the belief that (1)'s) own fulfillment.

But if my belief expressed by (1), implicit in the provisional intention, is causally self-fulfilling, then it is irrational, as indicated above - thus, either the provisional intention is irrational, or it does not cause the categorical intention.

In addition, certain other peculiarities would be involved if the provisional intention were a causal condition, along with the belief that C, of the categorical intention.

As indicated above: When I provisionally intend to X if C, I believe C is the case, and thus categorically intend to X, my beliefs, implicit at least, include:

- (A) I believe that my provisional intention, together with my belief that C obtains, and the conditions of opportunity and capacity, including my belief that they obtain, is sufficient to bring it about that I X.
- (B) I believe that, when I believe C is the case, my categorical intention together with the conditions of opportunity and capacity, including my belief that they obtain, is sufficient to bring it about that I X.

However, the categorical intention, along with the conditions of opportunity and capacity, and my belief that they obtain, is necessary and sufficient for my Xing as a result of my provisional intention. Hence belief (A) would be ill-founded, unless I believe that the provisional intention is, together with the other conditions, indirectly sufficient for my Xing: - i.e. that it is sufficient, along with my belief that C, for my categorical intention, which in turn is, together with the other conditions, directly sufficient for my Xing.

This would be consistent with the theory that the provisional

intention, the belief that C obtains, along with the other conditions, and the categorical intention form a causal chain to the action, with the categorical intention as the final link. The provisional intention would bring about the action via the categorical intention. But I would maintain that belief (A) does not involve a belief that the provisional intention is indirectly sufficient, along with the other conditions, to bring about my Xing only via the categorical intention; but rather, that the provisional intention is directly sufficient, along with the other conditions, to bring about my Xing. If belief (A) did involve a belief that the provisional intention is indirectly sufficient to bring about any Xing only via the categorical intention, it would involve intending to intend.

On the principle that if Q is brought about by an intention of mine, and I know it is brought about by an intention of mine, and I know that the bringing about of Q is necessary for the fulfillment of my intention, I must intend Q; then if I believe that my provisional intention brings about my Xing indirectly via the categorical intention; - i.e. by first bringing about the categorical intention (Q) and I am aware that the categorical intention (Q) is necessary for my Xing as a result of the provisional intention, then I must intend the categorical intention, when I hold the provisional intention.

I would maintain however that in holding the provisional intention, I do not intend that if C I will (categorically) intend to X; I simply intend to X if C. The implicit belief is that the provisional intention is, together with the other conditions and the belief that C obtains, directly sufficient for my Xing.

If the provisional and categorical intentions were causally

related, then the provisional intention would be an intention by virtue of an ill-founded belief, while the categorical intention would not exhibit this peculiarity - which seems very odd.

These difficulties are all avoided if we abandon the causal hypothesis and instead regard the categorical intention, not as something over and above and caused by the provisional intention and the belief that C, but rather as constituted by the provisional intention and the belief that C. The intention carries right through.

Chapter VI. References

1. The following points have been developed more fully by K. W. Rankin in "The Non-Causal Self-fulfilment of Intention", American Philosophical Quarterly, November 1972.
2. Whenever I use 'believe' I mean 'believe without a doubt'.
3. Suggested by Rachels' example referred to in Chapter I, p. 2.
4. E.g. Goldman "A Theory of Human Action' Ch. IV, p. 100.

CHAPTER VII

EXPLANATIONS IN TERMS OF MOTIVES AND EMOTIONS

N. S. Sutherland¹ argues that motive explanations cannot be assimilated to dispositional explanations, because of the teleological character of explanations in terms of motives. He says,

If to give a motive explanation is to explain an action by referring to the end it serves, then there is a big difference between a motive-explanation and a dispositional explanation of the sort "the glass broke because it was fragile"

This argument however is open to the objection previously stated that a teleological explanation can be restated in terms of efficient causes, and these may be dispositional causes. Thus if explanations in terms of motives could be restated in terms of dispositional causes, Sutherland's conclusions would not answer the question at issue. If, however, it can be shown that explanations in terms of motives are appropriately restated in terms of wants and beliefs, then it can be argued that they are not dispositional explanations, because explanations in terms of wants are not like dispositional explanations as shown.

Some motive explanations seem more obviously to lend themselves to translation in terms of wants. These include the motives 'ambition', 'revenge', and 'gratitude'. To say that an action is done out of ambition is to say that the agent wants to gain or succeed, and that he believes this action is a means to gaining or succeeding, or is

itself a case of gain or success. To say that an action is done for revenge, is to say that the agent wants to do harm to someone in retribution for harm done to himself by that person; whereas to act out of gratitude is to want to thank or repay someone for benefit done to himself by that person. Certain goals have been recognized to be fairly commonly pursued by men, and thus a specific term has been coined to embrace the appropriate wants - 'revenge', 'ambition'. It is no more than the want that is being described. An ambitious action may be cool and calculated with no emotions involved, merely the persistent desire to succeed. On the other hand certain emotions may accompany actions done, e.g. out of revenge - for example grief, anger or hatred, - but the emotion is not the motive for the action here. The motive for the act of revenge is specifically the want to repay an injury.

Other wants may be involved arising from the accompanying emotions, and may be barely distinguishable from the want to repay the injury; for example, the desire to hurt the person arising from hatred. But once again an act of revenge may be quite simply a coolly deliberated pursuit of the fulfillment of the want.

Other motive explanations name emotions as the instigators of action. For example: love, hatred, fear, anger, grief, despair, etc. The link with wants is perhaps less apparent in the case of emotions, because experiencing an emotion seems to involve more than simply wanting to do certain things.

These emotions are often accompanied by "thrills, twinges, pangs, throbs, itches, glows, etc." - to employ Ryle's terms - resembling the bodily sensations which accompany pain, hunger, etc.

These feelings accompany the emotions, but they do not characterize the emotion. The emotion does not consist in the bodily sensations, which may be the same for a number of emotions. For example, the sensations characteristic of fear are similar to those characteristic of anger, or grief. The particular emotion experienced may not be recognized unless it is known what is eliciting these sensations. For example, one may not recognize the sinking feeling in one's stomach as anxiety until one remembers that the date for an important interview is approaching.

The object of the emotion is not a cause of the emotion. The object of the emotion may be a future event. - For example, in anxiety about the oncoming interview, or excitement about a forthcoming holiday. This future event cannot cause the emotion. It may never take place. Nor does the belief that the event will occur cause the emotion. Rather it is part of the emotion. Feeling anxious is in part believing that one is going to be confronted with a testing experience; feeling excited is in part believing that one is going to have an enjoyable experience; feeling afraid of a face at the window is in part believing that the face could be harmful.

There may be a cause of an emotion; for example, a physiological cause; but this is not the object of the emotion. Indigestion may cause one to wake up in the night feeling frightened - but indigestion is not the object of the fear. The object of the fear may have been a bad dream. This is complicated by the fact that it is probably the indigestion which causes the fear-like sensations, which in turn causes one to have the fearful dream in the first place. However it still remains that the sensations are not in fact sensations of fear until one believes one has something to be frightened about.

I would argue that explanations of actions in terms of these motive-emotions can also be restated in terms of wants, and the appropriate beliefs that the action fulfills these wants.

We could hardly make sense of the claim that a man is angry, does not want to do any of the things which an angry man usually wants to do, including saying that he is angry, and has no conflicting wants. We would probably maintain that he is not in fact angry at all. It is true that someone may be experiencing an emotion, e.g. love, when all he wants to do is indulge in daydreams, - but he still wants to do something, and does it.

Even if a person is overcome by such intense fear that he remains 'rooted to the spot', it may still be the case that he wants to do something, e.g. run away, but the physiological conditions are such that he lacks the capacity to do what he wants, - or perhaps they are such that he cannot rationally formulate his wants. Here there is a causal explanation of the 'action' - or rather 'non-action' - the involuntary physiological reactions.

Emotions may be accompanied by certain 'agitations' or 'commotions', to use Ryle's terms, - e.g. excitement, convulsions, shock, flurries, etc. - but these in themselves are never motives for action, and they serve as the explanations of the unintentional aspects of the actions performed, e.g. the stuttering, stammering, or trembling.

It may be that these 'agitations' take over in the case of extremes of emotion, - e.g. paralysing fear, temper-tantrums, sudden intense grief, etc. - but they are physiological reactions which provide a causal explanation of the involuntary actions, or the

unintentional aspects of intentional actions. The intentional actions performed from an emotion are actions satisfying some characteristic wants. Actions performed out of love are characteristically actions fulfilling the want to promote happiness for, or safeguard the welfare of, the person loved. Actions performed out of hatred, include actions satisfying the want to injure the hated. Actions performed out of pity satisfy the want to console someone, or alleviate their misery.

In some instances, the want may simply be to display that emotion in an appropriate manner. For example, he may hit her out of anger, because he is so angry that he wants to hit her, or else because he wants to show her that he is angry, in which case he may equally well have thumped the wall. It may be that when he is angry, he has an opposing want to hide his anger, in which case his actions will not be those fulfilling certain wants characteristic of anger, but rather they will be actions fulfilling the desire to conceal his anger. It still remains that there are certain things he wants to do because he is angry, and it is these things that he is at pains to conceal, and prevent himself from doing. His actions are not however done out of anger, although it may be true to say that if he were not angry it would not occur to him to so act, or it would not be necessary for him to so act.

The intentional action performed from an emotion may simply stem from a want to relieve the 'agitations' which accompany the emotion. For example, if I am angry because a tree has blown over and crushed my favourite shrubs, I may display anger-behaviour, e.g. kick and curse the tree, while no one is around to be in any way impressed by my actions. Here however it is significant to note that frequently

in situations of accidents we say, 'What is the point of being angry?' - certainly we may be upset, but anger seems to be pointless because no one is responsible and thus no wants, e.g. to retaliate, or hurt the offender, characteristic of anger can be satisfied. Anger seems to be a misplaced emotion in such situations - but one may simply want to relieve the 'agitations'.

It seems that when we claim that a person is experiencing a certain emotion in the face of some situation, we are in part saying that there are certain characteristic actions which he probably wants to perform (even if it is simply the want to display that particular emotional behaviour to those concerned), and which he will perform provided that he has no conflicting wants. When we explain an action as performed out of an emotion, we are explaining it as an action which fulfills the want; or wants characteristic of that emotion.

R. S. Peters² argues against this type of conceptual scheme for the emotions. He claims that to experience an emotion is essentially a passive activity as opposed to the active states of wanting, desiring, etc. He claims that for an agent to experience an emotion is for him to have something happen to him. He assimilates the experiences to those of involuntary actions and feels that they would fit more appropriately into the category of human involuntary actions, which can be explained in Freud's model of unconscious wishes, - 'actions' from 'slips of the tongue' to the neurotic's convulsions'.

Peters maintains on this basis that there is not the conceptual link between emotions and action, as implied in the previous arguments above, because 'wishing' is not linked with action in the same way as 'wanting'. One can wish for something; e.g. the moon; or

to do something, where there is no corresponding action one can perform to fulfill the wish.

He further substantiates his claim by maintaining that philosophers who have wanted to support the above conceptual scheme, linking emotions with wants fulfilled in action, have chosen to analyse emotions like anger, or hatred, but have neglected emotions like 'sorrow', 'grief', and 'despair', which he claims do not fit into the pattern. He argues that these emotions are intimately connected with 'wishes' rather than 'wants'. E.g. grief and sorrow can be connected with 'the wish that the dead person were alive again'. No action can fulfill the wish, and thus there is nothing that the agent can want to do, on the basis of this emotion. Rather he is 'overcome' or 'overwhelmed' by grief, and his actions are passive, involuntary reactions.

I would agree that certain of the physiological reactions to e.g. news of a sudden death, are involuntary, passive reactions; e.g. trembling, violent sobbing, breathlessness, stuttering, turning pale, hot and cold, etc. I would agree also that grief or sorrow is intimately connected with a wish, e.g. that the dead person were alive again.

I would still maintain however that there are certain intentional actions which the agent may be said to perform because of grief, or out of grief, which he chooses to do, and which are the fulfillment of certain wants characteristic of these particular emotions, and it is by implicit reference to these wants that the emotion explanations explain the action. E.g. he may want to be alone, want to be out of the company of people, and thus withdraw himself. He

may want to relieve the 'tensions' and cry. He may want to seek the company of others to comfort him, etc. These are the kinds of 'wants' which may be fulfilled in the actions performed out of grief; and certainly there is a wish intimately connected with the emotion - the wish that the dead person were alive. It is intimately connected in that the situation would not be one to grieve over if he did not wish that the dead person were alive. In other words, the situation about which he is grieving is the situation of 'someone being dead whom he wishes were alive'. That is what makes the situation an object of grief. The fact that someone is dead is not enough for someone to grieve over, unless it is also a fact that the agent wishes that person were not dead. It could be that the agent does not wish that the dead person were alive, - that the person's death is to his great advantage, in which case the emotion experienced on realizing his death may be joy.

The object of anger may be a companion's foolish behaviour, - the wish involved being the wish that the person had not behaved in that way; the want to strike the person, and the consequent fulfillment of the want in striking him being the expression of the anger in intentional action.

Similarly with grief: - the object of grief may be the death of someone whom one wishes were alive; the want to be alone and fulfillment of that want by shutting oneself away and refusing company, is the expression of grief in intentional action.

Thus Peters' argument does not seem to establish the conclusion he claims. It serves rather to illustrate that certain wishes are intimately connected with emotions, in that certain situations will

only be the objects of particular emotions in so far as the agent regards those situations in the light of certain wishes. The emotion can be expressed by intentional actions fulfilling certain wants characteristic of the emotions, providing the agent has no conflicting wants.

I do not wish to maintain that it is possible to specify precisely the set of wants which will be acted upon for any particular emotion. These will depend upon the situation. I am simply claiming that if an agent is said to have acted out of a certain emotion - where the emotional state is offered as an explanation of intentional action, then that action is explained by implicit reference to some want which is characteristic of a man experiencing that emotion.

Motives, Moods, and Character-Traits

Stanley Paulson³ claims that there are two types of motive explanation, which he calls diathetic (dispositional) and adiathetic (non-dispositional). He claims that the former give motive explanations in the form of character-traits; e.g. in 'because he is greedy'; whereas the second do not admit of a dispositional form; e.g. in 'because he is grateful'.

He says,

Those psychological expressions whose adjectival and substantival forms are used to give motive-explanations, but which have no forms used to ascribe dispositions, I shall call adiathetic expressions.

He points out that diathetic expressions admit of being predicated of a person when there is no object, or objects with respect to which the person 'is P' at that time; e.g. in 'he is greedy'. 'If

it is not possible correctly to predicate the adjectival form of 'P' in this manner, then 'P' is adiathetic in the statement in question'.

Paulson claims to be posing a more substantial objection to Ryle's dispositional analysis of motives, than that commonly urged⁴ to the effect that an agent may act on a single occasion from a motive, where it is not true to say that the motive attributes a character-trait; - where in fact the action is quite uncharacteristic of that agent.

What in fact emerges from a consideration of Paulson's discussion, is that whereas in the case of those expressions which he lists as diathetic, - including: greed; ambition; vanity; compassion; avarice: - the adjectival form with the present tense is usually used only to ascribe a character-trait, - i.e. the adjective, on the whole, is used only as a diathetic expression; on the other hand, in the case of those he classes as adiathetic, the adjectival form can be used either as an adiathetic or as a diathetic expression, - with the exception perhaps of 'gratitude'.

Paulson, however, for the most part seems to want to make the stronger claim that those motive-expressions whose adjectival forms give adiathetic expressions, likewise have no dispositional form; - their adjectival form never attributes a character-trait.

He does admit that 'curiosity' and 'jealousy', admit of both forms. However, that he is advancing the stronger claim on behalf of most of these motive-expressions is evident where he asserts that Ryle's antagonists have omitted to,

call into question a tacit assumption of that (Ryle's) theory - that all of the psychological expressions used to give motive explanations have forms

which are used to ascribe dispositions.

Paulson says, of those he lists as adiathetic,

Expressions of this second type are also used to give motive explanations, but they have no forms which are used to ascribe dispositions.

He claims that over and above the aforementioned objection normally levelled by Ryle's opponents,

A very different reason is that one may be able to explain the agent's behaviour by appealing to a motive with respect to which the question of a disposition simply does not arise.

These claims seem to be unwarranted. His list includes:

gratitude; admiration; envy; hatred; love; pity; remorse; and sympathy.

It seems that, with the exception of gratitude which does seem to be peculiar in this respect, all of these motive-expressions have forms which are used to ascribe character-traits; - as follows:

'admiration'; a reverent person: 'hatred'; a malicious or malignant person: 'love'; a loving, amorous or affectionate person:

'sympathy'; a sympathetic person: 'pity'; a compassionate person.

What distinguishes a few, and only a few, of these expressions is that the adjectival form with the present may also be used as an adiathetic expression; e.g. in 'because he is sympathetic'; whereas the adjectival forms of some motives may be used only as a diathetic expression; e.g. in 'because he is vain'. However the latter point usually applies also to, e.g. 'hatred', 'love' and 'admiration'.

A further difference may be noted between those motives which he has classed as diathetic, and those classed as adiathetic. The character-traits 'ambitious', 'greedy', 'vain', and 'inquisitive' are more often attributed to people, in that the objects of the

corresponding wants need not be very specific. If he is ambitious, he wants to succeed generally; greedy, he wants to acquire more than his share of most things; vain, he wants to be admired by almost anybody; inquisitive, he wants to discover about anything. It is not so usual on the other hand for people to have such general wants connected with hate, love, admiration, pity, - although they may have, in which case it will be a character-trait. For example, love is usually felt towards particular people, and so with hatred. Admiration is given for particular achievements. Paulson implies that those listed as adisthetic can only be directed towards a particular person or object; but this is not so. They may be character-traits, as shown above.

A further related difference is that in the case of ambition, vanity, greed, and inquisitiveness, the person may actively seek out situations in which his wants can be fulfilled. In the case of gratitude, sympathy, remorse, admiration, in contrast, the situations in which the corresponding wants arise, are not actively sought out. In fact if they are, we would suspect that the motive is not really, e.g. pity, sympathy, or remorse.

Also, a person may be a sympathetic person without ever being given the opportunity to act out of sympathy, - like a glass may be brittle without ever breaking; but a person cannot be ambitious without ever acting out of ambition, or be vain without ever acting out of vanity, although his ambitious or vain actions may not be detected by others.

To return to Paulson's argument: It seems that he has shown that motive-explanations may either attribute a character-trait, or explain a single uncharacteristic instance, but he has not shown, as

he claims, that some can explain only single instances, and not attribute character-traits. 'Gratitude' is perhaps an exception; although there seems to be no reason why a person should not have the character-trait attributed to him of being very ready to give thanks where due. We can certainly speak of an ungrateful person.

The substantival form of those he lists as diathetic more readily imply the character-trait, e.g. 'out of greed'; 'out of vanity'; whereas those listed as adiathetic do not so readily imply the character-trait, e.g. 'out of sympathy'; 'out of admiration'. But, the former need not be a character-trait, as Ryle's opponents point out, and the latter may be. A difference, as Paulson points out, is that acts of sympathy, admiration, hatred, love, etc., must be directed towards an object, whereas this is not the case with ambition and vanity, but so must e.g. acts of revenge, which he lists as diathetic.

I shall briefly consider the differences between explaining in terms of a mood, and explaining in terms of a character-trait, my main aim being to show how they too are intimately connected with 'wants', and explain by attributing wants.

The difference between claiming that a person is irritable, meaning that he is in an irritable mood, and 'irritable' meaning he is an irascible person, is that to say a person is in an irritable mood is to claim that he is easily ruffled, and angered for this short period, but that this is not his usual reaction. To say that someone is an irascible person, on the other hand, is to claim that he is liable to be easily ruffled or angered most of the time, and that when he is, he is not in a mood but is exhibiting a character-trait. If he went through a short period of time when he was not easily ruffled or

angered, we might then say, he was in a tranquil mood; whereas we might not want to say this of the first person, because his periods of tranquility are the norm. He may be a tranquil person.

An intermediate case would be someone who tends quite frequently to fall into irritable moods. This irritability would not be a character-trait provided that there remained many more frequent periods of calm. But his tendency to be 'a man of moods' would be a character-trait.

To explain a person's actions by saying that he is an irascible person is not to claim that his irascibility causes these actions. It is rather that we call him irascible because he frequently wants to do the sorts of things an angry person wants to do in certain situations, which for most people do not so readily incite anger. In other words the connection is logical. Someone who frequently wants to do these things is called irascible.

On the other hand, if we say that someone is in an irritable mood, we are saying that he is at that time disposed to do certain things characteristic of an angry man; but to call it a mood is to point out that the behaviour is not in character - that he does not normally do these actions in these circumstances. He may have a headache, or have just received disturbing news.

A person may be in an irritable mood without realizing that he is. He may simply be aware that he is angry about a series of situations in turn, without realizing that these are situations which would not normally anger him so readily. In other words, to say that he is in an irritable mood is to describe his actions in those particular circumstances, and to imply that they do not normally

warrant the behaviour on the part of that person.

What the agent feels and acts out of as each situation arises is anger, and the connection between this anger and his actions can be analysed as before - the emotions. It may be that the anger is not justified but it is still anger.

In other words, I am claiming that explanations of the actions in terms of moods, are often simply explanations in terms of emotions, with the added implication that the same emotional response is being exhibited towards a series of situations over a period of time, and that this is not the agent's normal response to these situations, but arises from a particular disposition of comparatively short duration to do certain things. Certainly a full explanation of the behaviour has not necessarily been given until an explanation for his having that particular disposition to behave in that manner is given. This may be a causal explanation, e.g. a severe headache.

The above treatment of moods and character-traits is not intended to be a full account of their characteristics, but merely to indicate how they are bound up with wants.

That all these kinds of explanations in terms of motives, emotions, moods, and character-traits can be restated in terms of wants, and corresponding beliefs, means that they share the characteristics as explanations, of explanations in terms of wants.

Chapter VII. References

1. N. S. Sutherland. "Motives as Explanations", *Mind* LXVIII, (1959) pp. 145-159.
2. R. S. Peters. "Motives, Emotions, and Schemes of Common Sense", reprinted in "Human Action".
3. Stanley Paulson. "Two Types of Motive Explanations", *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 2, April 1972.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding arguments, I have set out to show that necessary and sufficient causal conditions for the intention to act, and subsequent action, cannot be given in terms of the agent's wants and corresponding beliefs; (1) because of the characteristics of conflicting wants, which seem to render an assimilation to any of the causal models inappropriate; - there is an indeterminacy in the case of wants on the conceptual level; and (2) because the connection between the 'wanting' and the 'intending' seems to be a strong logical connection which would be subject to certain anomalies if it were also causal.

In this respect I have touched on the problem of the determinacy or indeterminacy of human action; the problem to which the question of the explanatory nature of reasons for action is most pertinent. But this is only a beginning of an answer to the former problem. Firstly a full analysis of the nature of intention is also required. The categorical intention is not one of the reasons why he did it, - when we ask for the reasons why he did it, we are asking for the reasons why he had the intention of doing it, - we presuppose that it is an intentional action. Nevertheless the categorical intention may be one of the antecedents to the action, and hence must enter into a full account of the nature of the prior conditions for action. Secondly, it is still open for the physicalist to claim that, even if wants seem to exhibit an indeterminacy on the conceptual level, there

may be an explanation in physical terms which provides necessary and sufficient causal conditions for the action.

It seems that the line of attack must be directed against the physicalist claims; - but that is another very large problem.

Surname: HILDITCH Given Names: JENNIFER JOAN

Place of Birth: KINGSTON-ON-THAMES, U.K. Date of Birth: APRIL 4, 1947

Educational Institutions Attended, with Dates of Entering and Leaving:

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS, SCOTLAND, U.K. 1965 to 1970

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE, SCOTLAND, U.K. 1970 to 1971

_____ to _____

_____ to _____

Degrees, Diplomas, Etc., Awarded, with Dates and Names of Institutions:

M.A. (Honours) 1970 University of St. Andrews,
Scotland, U.K.

Diploma In Education 1971 University of Dundee,
Scotland, U.K.

Honors and Awards:

University of Victoria Fellowship 1971/72

Publications:

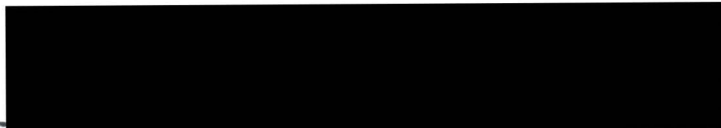
PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant the right to lend my thesis or dissertation (the title of which is shown below) to users of the University of Victoria Library, and to make single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or similar institution, on its behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or a member of the University designated by me. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission

Title of Thesis

REASONS AND CAUSES

Author



Signature

JENNIFER JOAN HILDITCH

Name

30th April 1973

Date