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## *The Epistemic Role of Intentions*

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THE EPISTEMIC ROLE OF INTENTIONS

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17.30 - 19.15

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#### EDITORIAL NOTE

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Some philosophers hold that intending to  $\phi$  can provide for ‘groundless’ knowledge that one will  $\phi$  or is  $\phi$ -ing. David Velleman interprets this view as an articulation of ‘commonsense psychology’, which he contrasts, but regards as compatible, with a philosophical explanation of practical self-knowledge in terms of its distinctive evidential support. In this paper I argue that Velleman’s interpretation is correct, but (contra Velleman) requires crediting the commonsense view with a grasp of the link between practical reasoning and warranted claims to knowledge. I also consider the implications of this argument for Velleman’s project of a philosophical explanation of self-knowledge.

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is a sharp divide, in the recent literature, between two attitudes to first-person knowledge of intentional actions. Some philosophers take it to be a mark of such knowledge that it requires no grounds. Others regard it as a condition of adequacy on a philosophical theory of such knowledge that it should identify the relevant grounds.

A suggestive way to make sense of these attitudes has been proposed by David Velleman. The idea that intending to do something typically provides for ‘groundless’ knowledge of what one will intentionally do or is doing, Velleman suggests, is a central element of the ‘commonsense psychology’ of agency. We are indebted to Anscombe and Hampshire for articulating that idea. But we are philosophers as well as commonsense psychologists, and one question we need to address, as philosophers, is whether our putative knowledge in this area ‘is worthy of the name’. (1989: 105) If an affirmative answer to that question is to be defended, we need to establish that, and how, our beliefs in this area meet ‘the usual requirements of evidential support.’ (1989: 25) A central aim of Velleman’s own well-known theory of practical self-knowledge is to show that the sense in which, from a naive standpoint, we take such knowledge to be groundless is consistent with the sense in which, as philosophers, we can make it intelligible in terms of its (highly distinctive) ‘evidential support’.

In this paper I won’t be much concerned with the details of Velleman’s account of how the ‘manifest’ and the ‘philosophical image’ of practical self-knowledge fit together. My question is whether we should accept his starting-point, the idea that there *is* a ‘manifest image’ of such knowledge, i.e. a pre-theoretical understanding reflective agents have of the connection between intention and ‘groundless’ knowledge. You might say that the idea is fanciful, given that ordinary members of the public usually take no interest in how they know what they are doing. Or you might insist that reflective agents are in fact familiar with some evidential basis, e.g. a combination of introspection and observation. Some of Velleman’s remarks suggest that he takes his claims about the manifest image to be borne out by reflection on the phenomenology of agency. In acting intentionally, he maintains, you ‘feel as if’ you know what you are doing without observation or evidence. (20) I will set this line of argument to one side. I want to focus on a different, and I think more promising, kind of consideration, which has to do with our reaction to a certain kind of challenge. Suppose you declare you will attend the staff meeting tomorrow, and suppose someone were to challenge you to corroborate your claim. ‘How can you *tell?*’, they ask, or ‘What makes you

think you will attend the meeting?’ Velleman makes two points about this kind of example. One is that ‘you’, or any reflective agent, would find these question not just surprising but somehow misconceived. You would insist that you know without *having* to ‘tell’ — without having to rely on evidence. (1989: 21) The second point is that what explains and rationalizes this response is that you subscribe to a certain explanatory schema: ‘the reason’ an agent knows her actions without evidence, according to commonsense, is ‘that the action was her idea to begin with: it’s what she had in mind to do.’ (1989: 24)

Let me put the upshot of this formally:

CP: According to ‘commonsense psychology’, intending to  $\phi$  normally puts one in a position to know one will  $\phi$  without relying on any prior evidence that one will  $\phi$ .

By formulating CP in this way I’m simplifying things in two respects. First, I’ll only be concerned with the case of knowledge of what one will do, not of what one is currently doing. Velleman, I think rightly, takes an explanation of former to have an important bearing on that of the latter, but the relationship between the two cases raises complex issues, for example to do with the various roles perception plays in controlling and monitoring bodily intentional actions, issues I will not consider here. Second, in focussing on CP I’m going to ignore a stronger thesis that features in Velleman’s discussion. Commonsense, he maintains, credits agents with knowledge that is *spontaneous*, i.e. ‘generated from within’ (1989: 47), where this in turn is glossed in terms of the thought that one acquires such knowledge by ‘inventing’ an ‘idea’ of what one will do. This material is not easy to interpret, and it is harder still to find any support for it. I suspect it is best seen as a description of how practical self-knowledge ‘appears to us’ in terms that foreshadow the philosophical *explanation* of that appearance Velleman will eventually construct, specifically his analysis of intention as a kind of belief, and of practical reasoning as a matter (roughly) of ‘jumping to conclusions’. CP offers a less loaded description of the putative appearance.

At this point it’s useful to distinguish three kinds of questions: First, is CP defensible? Second, how is the kind of explanation of self-knowledge CP attributes to commonsense psychology actually supposed to work? Finally, is the *view of self-knowledge* CP ascribes to commonsense defensible? The second question, I want to suggest, holds the key to the other two questions. Velleman takes a notably austere view of the explanatory resources of commonsense psychology. Our pre-theoretical understanding, he thinks, is merely concerned with how self-knowledge is *acquired*, not with whether what we have is actually *knowledge* (is ‘worthy of the name’). Commonsense psychology is restricted to the ‘cognitive psychology’ of self-knowledge, and has nothing to say about the ‘epistemological’ question of how claims to knowledge in this area are to be defended. This view implies a clear division of labour between commonsense and philosophy, on which Velleman’s approach to the third question turns. For whether the commonsense view is defensible, in his view, depends on what the correct epistemological theory has to say about the evidential basis of practical self-knowledge. (On the theory Velleman develops, the naïve view’s denial that our knowledge is based on prior evidence does turn out to be correct: practical self-knowledge, it transpires, ‘rests on’ evidence from which it could not have been ‘derived’.) [beliefs that are justified partly in virtue of being self-fulfilling]

Now, while Velleman's austere answer to the second question dovetails nicely with his conception of the project of assessing the commonsense view, it causes trouble with the first question. The case for CP, recall, crucially depends on the idea that our pre-theoretical understanding of self-knowledge explains *and rationalizes* our rejection of the request for evidence. But it is hard to see how the commonsense view can make it reasonable for us think we are able to know without evidence if it has nothing to say on how a claim to knowledge is to be corroborated. In the next section, I elaborate the challenge and offer some reasons to doubt it can be met so long as we accept Velleman's austere analysis of the commonsense view. In section 3, I sketch an alternative, less austere answer to the second question, which can be extracted from Stuart Hampshire's discussion of self-knowledge in *Freedom of the Individual*. The basic idea is that the naïve view of practical self-knowledge is inseparable from the naïve view of practical reasoning: we think of practical reasoning as something that can warrant claims to knowledge. On this analysis, I will suggest, CP has much plausibility. The problem, from Velleman's perspective, is that it now looks as if commonsense psychology and an 'evidentialist' epistemology offer rival accounts of what makes our knowledge 'worthy of the name'. I conclude by discussing whether the apparent conflict is real, and how it is to be resolved.

## II. COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Consider first Velleman's charge that philosophers such as Anscombe and Hampshire are guilty of a *non sequitur*. They held, plausibly enough, that practical self-knowledge is not derived from prior evidence, but mistakenly concluded that therefore such knowledge 'requires no evidential grounds'. The problem with this inference, in Velleman's view, is not just that it is rendered invalid by the possibility that knowledge may 'rest on' evidence from which it is not 'derived'. He thinks, rather, that the inference involves a kind of category mistake. It moves from a claim of 'cognitive psychology', about the way self-knowledge is acquired, to a conclusion that 'belongs to epistemology', 'since it's about how self-knowledge is to be justified' (25). In Velleman's striking phrase, Anscombe and Hampshire 'try to save the commonsense psychology of self-knowledge by elevating it to the status of epistemology.' (ibid.) One might object that in general information on how someone's knowledge that p was acquired (e.g. by observation or inference) has an utterly immediate bearing on how the claim that she knows that p is to be defended or justified. But of course Velleman may argue that the case of practical self-knowledge is an exception to that rule. Commonsense, he might insist, realizes that it is somehow because of your intention to go to the staff meeting that you know you will go but it has no idea of how to support or defend the claim that you know you will go.

The basic problem with this picture is that on the face of it, it's incompatible with the consideration Velleman uses to introduce and motivate the commonsense view in the first place. For the question 'How can you tell you will go to the meeting?' or 'What makes you think you will go?' is not a question raised from the detached perspective of cognitive psychology. It is, at least potentially, what Austen called a 'pointed' question, bringing into play the possibility that you don't actually know what you claim to know and requesting a reason to think that you do know. Correlatively, if you dismiss the question by insisting that you know without any *need* for evidence, you are insisting that your not relying on evidence does not impugn the credentials of your claim to knowledge. In Velleman's terms, your response 'belongs to epistemology'. We can reinforce this point by considering what you should say if your pre-theoretical understanding really were limited to the concerns of 'cognitive

psychology'. In that case, you should only be expected to say that as a matter of fact you consulted no evidence in arriving at your knowledge that you will come to the meeting. The obvious rejoinder would be that you had better start consulting evidence now, or else you should withdraw your claim to knowledge. At this point, you would have nothing sensible to say in response — for by stipulation you would have no *reason* to think that you are in a position to know without relying on evidence.

So there seems to be a mismatch between the *resources* attributed to the commonsense view by Velleman and the *work* it is expected to do, a mismatch that threatens to undermine the original argument for CP. As far as I can see, the most promising way to get around this problem, consistent with Velleman's project, would be to re-interpret the 'cognitive psychology' point along functionalist lines. Commonsense psychology, it might be said, has a naïve theory of intentions, involving numerous generalizations concerning the typical causes and typical effects intentions have, conditional on the agent's other mental states. One such generalization is that an intention to  $\phi$  tends to go with, or give rise to, 'groundless' knowledge that one will  $\phi$ . Our grasp of that generalization could make it rational for us to attribute knowledge to intentional agents, and to fend off the request for evidence. On the other hand, you might insist, this does not imply that we have any understanding of the *reason why* intentions provide for knowledge. To get to the bottom of why our generalization holds one would need to discover the 'realizer state' that occupies the characteristic functional role of intentions. Velleman's epistemological theory — his view of intentions as beliefs that are justified partly through being 'self-fulfilling' — might be read as an attempt to identify the psychological mechanisms realizing the commonsense theory of intentional, autonomous agency.<sup>1</sup>

But the functionalist interpretation is not a satisfactory solution. How are we supposed to have acquired the critical generalization linking intentions and knowledge? Presumably, as with the 'theory theory' in the philosophy of mind, the idea would be that our naïve theory is supported by evidence, insofar as it enables us to explain and predict observable phenomena. But then once again, the commonsense theory would have to be informed by concerns that Velleman thinks properly belong to epistemology: evidence supporting the generalization would have to be evidence that the attitude usually associated with intentions is indeed *knowledge*.

I would like to speculate a bit on how Velleman ended up with his strange picture of the commonsense view as folk cognitive science. I want to highlight two factors, to do with Velleman's reductive aspirations both in epistemology and the philosophy of action. First, there is his deep commitment to an 'evidentialist' epistemology, which may disable him from even contemplating the possibility that anyone might find the credentials of a knowledge claim intelligible other than by displaying the evidential support enjoyed by the relevant belief.<sup>2</sup> If commonsense has no insight into the evidential basis of practical self-knowledge, this would mean it can have no inkling of how such knowledge is 'worthy of the name'. The second factor lies in Velleman's reductive view of practical reasoning as a 'mode of theoretical reasoning' (1989: 90), involving the formation of expectations about one's actions by 'jumping to conclusions' on the basis of (insufficient) evidence regarding one's motives,

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<sup>1</sup> This reading accords with Velleman's general description of his project as that of constructing a 'hypothetical theory' designed to 'identify (...) a kind of personal constitution that would exemplify [put differently, realize] our conception of autonomy' (1989: 7) It would also be consistent with Velleman's later claim that his hypothetical theory finds support from empirical research in social psychology. (2007: xvii – xix)

<sup>2</sup> [see the permutations of his interpretation of Anscombe as evidence for this. 1989:103; 2007.]

expectations that are said to constitute intentions in virtue of their distinctive functional role. This is not how we ordinarily think about practical reasoning and intentions; nor does Velleman claim it is. What he assumes, though, is that we can articulate the commonsense psychology of practical self-knowledge without paying heed to the commonsense view of practical reasoning. (The two are importantly different, from his perspective, in that only the former is susceptible to a (partial) philosophical vindication.) I think that assumption makes it unsurprising that Velleman ends up with a picture on which commonsense has no idea as to *why* the generalization linking intentions and knowledge holds. For it's arguably practical reasoning, as ordinarily conceived, that constitutes the categorical basis of intentions' tendency to provide for knowledge of one's intentional actions. I think an extremely helpful, and rather neglected, way to spell out this thought can be found in Hampshire's discussion of self-knowledge in *Freedom of the Individual*. In the next section I will suggest that Hampshire's account yields a plausible defence of CP. (I'll leave open the interesting question to what extent Hampshire's account differs from Anscombe's.) In the last section, I consider where this leaves Velleman's distinction between the naïve and the philosophical perspective on self-knowledge.

### III. PRACTICAL REASONING

Hampshire's discussion revolves around a distinctive kind of statement, and the basis that licences the statement. The statement is 'I shall come to the meeting'. Its putative basis consists of the proposition that it would be a great mistake for him not to attend the meeting, and that he will be able to go or not, as he chooses. I first discuss Hampshire's central thesis, before looking at the naïve epistemology of self-knowledge that can be derived from it.

It is sometimes said that it's a 'structural element' of practical reasoning that a judgement that one has most reason to  $\phi$  licenses the formation of an intention to  $\phi$ , with no need for an extra mediating 'step' consisting of an expression of the desire to do what one takes oneself to have most reason to do. (Stroud 2003) The idea here is that to demand such an extra step would be to misrepresent something that belongs to the structure of practical reasoning as an additional input or premise for such reasoning. In that way, the demand would be reminiscent of Lewis Carroll's tortoise's insistence that we only have a reason to accept the conclusion of a deductive argument if the relevant rule of inference is represented as an extra premise. I won't pursue that debate here, but want to suggest that Hampshire can be seen to make an analogous claim. It is a structural element of successful practical reasoning, he argues, that the judgement that I have most reason to attend the meeting can license the statement 'I will come to the meeting'. That statement has what he calls a 'double aspect'. In making it one aims to express both the intention to attend the meeting and knowledge that one will attend the meeting. So the 'structural element' point means that practical reasoning can warrant not only the formation of an intention but at the same time what Hampshire calls a 'statement of fact about the future', without the need for any extra 'step' consisting, say, of the premise that one usually does what one intends to do.

We can probe Hampshire's structural claim by considering potential counterexamples. You may intend to move a log blocking your driveway without



being convinced that you will succeed.<sup>3</sup> In that situation, you don't think that your practical reasoning warrants the claim that you will move the log, and surely you may be right about this. If you know you are liable to bouts of forgetfulness, you may not even take yourself to be entitled to claim that you will *try* to move the log. Cases such as these may be thought to bring to light a general gap between intentions and warranted 'statements of fact about the future'. They may encourage not just a conclusion in the philosophy of action, that intending to  $\phi$  doesn't entail believing one will  $\phi$ , but also an epistemological conclusion, that there is a gap between practical reasoning and beliefs about what one will do. Bratman, I think, draws both conclusions. He holds that an intention to  $\phi$  'normally provides the agent with support' for a belief that he will  $\phi$ . This suggests that we come to know what we will do by inference from our current intentions and from the likelihood of our getting done, or trying to get done, what we intend to do.

How should a defender of Hampshire's structural claim respond to this challenge? Some would insist that attributions of intentions do entail attributions of belief. As O'Shaughnessy puts it, 'practical commitment necessitates cognitive commitment. It is simply not consistent with cognitive 'sitting on the fence'.' (2008: 552; see also Velleman 1989: 95) Others think that while unconfident intentions may be possible they are irrational: intending to  $\phi$  commits to the belief that one will  $\phi$ . But defenders of Hampshire's claim might also consider a weaker response. The idea here would be that even though the practical reasoning, in Bratman's cases, is not faulty or irrational, it is nevertheless not wholly successful. Intuitively, your plan to move the log is suboptimal. It would be better to find a method that only involves things you know you'll be able to do. This intuition, one may argue, reflects the essential objective of 'calculative' practical reasoning, to find a means that will enable one to attain a given end.<sup>4</sup> Only if you know, or at least have strong grounds for believing, you'll be able to act as intended can you think of your reasoning as genuinely successful practical reasoning, relative to your objective of removing the log. One might add that we have been given no reason to think Bratman's cases can be prototypical. In the log case, the formation of the intention to move the log is informed not by your knowledge that you will be able to do so, but merely by the weaker premise that you may be able to do so. But of course your plan will involve many things you do know you'll be able to do, such as leaving the house, walking to the drive, and so on. In fact, it might be said, it's not easy to envisage practical reasoning that does not draw on knowledge about one's practical abilities at any point. And insofar as it does, one might insist, Hampshire's structural claim holds. To refuse to accept the 'statement of fact' that you will  $\phi$  when you know you will be able to  $\phi$  and have formed a firm intention to  $\phi$  would amount to a confusion about the structure of practical reasoning, akin to the tortoise's confusion.

Supposing that Hampshire's structural claim can be defended, how does it bear on the explanation of self-knowledge? Well, if practical reasoning entitles you to a 'statement of fact' it's plausible that it can help to make it intelligible how you are in a position to know the fact in question. One might be tempted to put this by saying that you gain knowledge of what you will do *by* expressing your intentions. (Taylor 1985)

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<sup>3</sup> See Bratman 1987 and Holton 2009 for discussion. Compare also Anscombe's remark that 'the less normal it would be to take the achievement of the objective to be a matter of of course, the more the objective gets expressed *only* by 'in order to'. E.g. 'I am going to London in order to make my uncle change his will; not 'I am making my uncle change his will'. ' (1957: 40).

<sup>4</sup> See Vogler 2002 for a rich exposition and defence of the 'calculative' conception of practical reasoning.

The problem is that this makes it sound as if you do after all use a ‘method of discovery’ for gaining knowledge. As Hampshire stresses, the question to which the ‘double aspect’ statement is the answer is a *practical* question of what to do: in the normal case ‘my concern [is] not with what I should say but with what I should do’. (1965: 69) So I’ll stick with the formulation that practical reasoning can put one in a position to know what one will do. Importantly, on Hampshire’s analysis, this kind of explanation is one that is available to reflective agents in general. Even a non-philosopher who claims she will come to the meeting will find the knowledge expressed in her statement unmysterious in the light of the practical reasoning on which the statement is based. This should not be taken to mean that she has a good answer to the question ‘*How do you know you’ll come to the meeting?*’. For that question is naturally heard as a question about the means by which she obtained her knowledge; and as indicated, in the normal case she will not have employed any such means. Still, her awareness of the grounds that warrant her claim provides her with a robust response to the question featuring in Velleman’s argument for CP, ‘how can you tell you will go to the meeting?’ The response Velleman claims expresses the point of view of ‘commonsense psychology’ is: ‘I know without *having* to tell.’ As we saw, Velleman’s own analysis makes it hard to see what reasons occupants of the naïve point of view could have for that response. In contrast, Hampshire’s account offers a ready explanation. To be warranted to make the statement ‘I’ll come to the meeting’ one must know that one will come. Successful practical reasoning provides one with a warrant for the statement. Thus practical reasoning puts one in a position to know — specifically, given the nature of practical reasoning, to know without relying on evidence. Of course evidence may play a crucial role in establishing whether it’s in one’s power to go to the meeting. But that kind of evidence is not the basis on which one reaches the judgement that one will go. The judgement is based on practical considerations leading one to form the intention to go.

#### 4. EPISTEMOLOGY

In summary, I suggest we can extract from Hampshire a promising combination of answers to our first two questions (whether CP is defensible, and how the kind of explanation CP attributes to commonsense works). I want to conclude by considering how a Hampshire-inspired defence of CP would bear on the third question, whether the view CP attributes to commonsense is defensible. As we saw, Velleman has a strongly held view of what it would take to vindicate commonsense. If our knowledge in this area is ‘worthy of the name’, he insists, it must be open to what we may call a *belief-based* explanation —an explanation that validates a claim to knowledge by showing that the underlying belief meets certain general conditions (on Velleman’s view, the ‘usual requirements of evidential support.’) So we can break down the third question into two sub-questions: (a) Is it possible to vindicate the commonsense view, as characterized by Hampshire, through a belief-based explanation of practical self-knowledge? (b) What would follow from a negative answer to (a)?

The first thing to note is that the simple-minded epistemology Hampshire articulates is not itself an example of a belief-based explanation. The question why he *believes* he will attend the meeting does not figure in this discussion at all. His focus throughout is on the warrant he has for the statement or assertion that he will attend the meeting. That warrant bears on the epistemology of self-knowledge, given that assertions aims to express knowledge. If his practical reasoning provides him with a warrant for his assertion and a correct assertion is one that expresses knowledge, then practical reasoning must put him in a position to know. There is no mention here of

any evidence, or anything else that might plausibly be construed as a good reason to *believe* he will attend the meeting. Of course that doesn't mean there is no such reason. Reflection on his knowing that he will go to the meeting would give Hampshire a compelling reason to think he will go. But we can't construct a belief-based explanation by invoking *that* sort of reason: the reason presupposes and hence can't explain Hampshire's knowing that he will go.

The question, then, is whether the explanatory link between practical reasoning and knowledge, as characterized by Hampshire, is in some sense *underpinned* by a belief-based explanation. I think the shift from Velleman's to Hampshire's analysis of the commonsense view makes it much harder to see how this kind of explanation could be made to work. For on Hampshire's account, commonsense involves a positive view of how claims to self-knowledge are to be *defended* — by reference not to evidence or epistemic reasons, but to successful practical reasoning. While on Velleman's account, the commonsense view is not much more than a place holder for a philosophical explanation, Hampshire's picture suggest the two are potentially in competition. To see this, consider the following stab at a belief-based explanation. The firm beliefs about our future actions, it might be said, we use the following procedure. We form a firm intention to  $\phi$ , and then, in a separate step, endorse or accept an expression of that intention, by judging 'I will  $\phi$ .' One might go on to argue that beliefs formed in this way can be seen to meet the general conditions for knowledge, given certain features of the procedure. This would be one way to read Kevin Falvey's suggestion that we have a 'general warrant' to 'employ' or 'present' expressions of intentions as *descriptions* of what we are doing, or will do. The problem is that this would clearly amount to a revision, not a vindication of the view Hampshire puts forward. The idea of a procedure for forming beliefs about one's actions is surely inconsistent with Hampshire's structural thesis. Practical reasoning would only get us to the formation of an intention. It would take a further step — the use of the 'procedure' — to answer the factual or theoretical question of what one will do. But according to Hampshire's thesis, the same judgement can simultaneously provide an answer to the practical and the theoretical question.

I don't intend these remarks to rule out the possibility of a belief-based explanation. There may be ways to get around the difficulties facing that project. Still, I think the difficulties at least motivate a closer look at question (b): what if no such explanation is available? On Velleman's 'evidentialist' outlook, the answer is obvious: if our knowledge cannot be seen to meet the general requirements of evidential support, it will not be 'worthy of the name'. For him, what is at stake in a philosophical (belief-based) explanation of self-knowledge is whether the commonsense view 'can be saved'. A negative answer to question (a) would mean that it can *not* be saved. We would have to think of it as a kind of folk epistemology that from the vantage point of a philosophical theory turns out to be untenable.

One way to resist this analysis of the dialectical situation would be to argue that abandoning the naïve view of self-knowledge would take with it much more than Velleman allows. The kind of sceptical conclusion he envisages would, in effect, amount to a denial that we ever engage in practical reasoning as ordinarily conceived, i.e. reasoning that involves the structural element highlighted by Hampshire. The next question would be whether this would still leave room for the thought that people sometimes act intentionally. Intentional actions are explained in terms of the agent's reasons, and in giving such explanations, it is may be argued, we think of the action as

the outcome of the agent's practical reasoning, as ordinarily conceived.<sup>5</sup> (See Anscombe, 1957, Buss 1999, Schueler 2004, Stroud 2011) If this is right, it would suggest the sceptical threat on which Velleman plays is not just the threat that a certain view of how we *know* about intentional actions turns out to be mistaken but the more radical threat that we find we never do anything intentionally. One moral to draw from this might be to question the demand for a belief-based explanation. It's after all a substantive claim that an explanation of our possession of knowledge can only be any good if it can be underwritten by an account in terms of evidential support, or some other belief-based account. If that epistemological claim were to turn out to be in conflict with the view that we sometimes do things intentionally, that would perhaps give us a good reason to abandon the epistemological claim.

In conclusion, I have tried to defend Velleman idea that we have a pre-theoretical understanding of the epistemic role of intentions, but I have argued that Velleman underestimates the sophistication of this understanding. I have also raised some doubts about the prospects of vindicating the naïve view in the tribunal of an 'evidentialist' epistemology, and suggested that this might lead us re-consider the demand for such a vindication.

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<sup>5</sup> This doesn't mean that to intentionally  $\phi$  one must believe one will, let alone one must believe this as a result of practical reasoning.

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