

# The Guise of Good Reason\*

Ulf Hlobil

*Department of Philosophy, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada*

## Abstract

The paper argues for a version of the Guise of the Good thesis, namely the claim that if someone acts as the result of practical reasoning, then she takes her premises to jointly provide a sufficient and undefeated reason for her action. I argue for this by showing, first, that it is an application of Boghossian's Taking Condition on inference to practical reasoning and, second, that the motivations for the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning carry over to practical reasoning. I end by arguing that this version of the Guise of the Good withstands standard objections.

**Keywords:** guise of the good; practical reasoning; taking condition; inference; action; Aristotle; Immanuel Kant; Thomas Aquinas

## 1 Introduction

The goal of this paper is to articulate and defend a novel version of the Guise of the Good thesis (GoG).<sup>1</sup> This new version has the advantage that it is a consequence of an independently popular idea, namely Paul Boghossian's (2014, 5) "Taking Condition" on inference. It is part of the Taking

---

\*Work on this paper was supported by the EXPRO grant No. 20-05180X of the Czech Science Foundation. Thanks for invaluable discussions or comments goes to Katharina Nieswandt, Eugene Chislenko, Eric Marcus, Keren Gorodeisky, Jennifer Lockhart, David DeBruijn, Matthias Haase, Sergio Tenenbaum, Viviane Fairbank, Jordan Walters, Kieran Setiya, James Shaw, John McDowell, and audiences at Auburn University, the LMU Munich, and Haifa University.

The Version of Record of this manuscript has been published and is available in *Philosophical Explorations*, 2021, <http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/13869795.2021.1908577>.

Condition that, necessarily, if someone reasons from premises  $P_1, \dots, P_n$  to the conclusion  $C$ , then she takes  $P_1, \dots, P_n$  to support  $C$  (see Boghossian, 2014; Neta, 2013; Valaris, 2014). Applying the Taking Condition to practical reasoning, we get what we may call the Guise of Support (GoS):

GoS Necessarily, if someone acts as the result of practical reasoning from premises  $P_1, \dots, P_n$  to the action (or intention) of  $\phi$ -ing, then she takes  $P_1, \dots, P_n$  to support  $\phi$ -ing.

The notion of support at issue here is the notion of a good reason, i.e., of a collection of considerations that are jointly a sufficient and undefeated reason for the conclusion. We thus arrive at a new version of GoG, which I call the Guise of Good Reason (GGR):

GGR Necessarily, if someone acts as the result of practical reasoning from premises  $P_1, \dots, P_n$  to the action (or intention) of  $\phi$ -ing, then she takes  $P_1, \dots, P_n$  to be jointly a good, i.e. sufficient and undefeated, reason to  $\phi$ .

In this paper, I will argue for GGR by fleshing out the argument just sketched. I will not try to do justice to the rich history of the Guise of the Good. Moreover, I will leave many questions open: What is the nature of the 'takings' at issue? What makes something a good reason? Etc. These are questions about the nature of reasoning and reasons. It is an advantage of GGR that its advocates can treat different answers to these questions as parameters whose settings yield different readings of GGR.

Here is the plan: In the next section, I will provide some background regarding the Guise of the Good and recent debates about the nature of reasoning. In Section 3, I will present my argument for GGR. Section 4 addresses potential objections. Section 5 concludes.

## 2 Some Background

In this section, I will set the stage by doing three things: First, I will clarify my Guise of Good Reason by comparing it with some extant versions

of GoG. These brief remarks are not intended to do justice to any extant accounts or debates, which I will come back to in Section 4. Second, I will provide some background regarding the Taking Condition on inference. Third, I will clarify what I mean by “practical reasoning” in GGR.

## 2.1 Guises, Reasons, and Capacities

The best known version of GoG is the scholastic dictum: *quidquid appetitur, appetitur sub specie boni* (what is desired, is desired under the aspect of the good). There are, however, many versions and variants of this idea. Eugene Chislenko (2016a, 8) recently presented the following template with five parameters, each of which has three possible values (yielding 243 options):

An (action / intention / desire) (is / requires / requires a capacity to have) a (belief / judgment / appearance) that the (action / end / outcome) is (what one ought to do or bring about / good / in some way good).

Why would anyone accept a thesis like that? Different advocates of GoG hold the view for different reasons (see Chislenko, 2016a; Tenenbaum, 2013). Aristotle, e.g., thought that GoG offers insight into the (causal) explanation of actions (Aristotle, *De motu*). Others think that GoG explains why intentional actions or desires must make sense from the perspective of the agent (Boswell, 2018; Yao, 2019). Some endorse the view because it allows us to give a parallel treatment of belief and intention: both have a formal goal or object, namely the true and the good respectively. Some think that GoG will prove useful in normative epistemology (Milona and Schroeder, 2019). Still others think that GoG allows us to explain why considerations about what is good have an inescapable claim on us. These issues will not be important to my arguments, so I set them aside.

Regardless of the motivations behind GoG, the thesis has been under sustained attack over the last decades. Michael Stocker (1979) has presented an array of counterexamples to the claim that we must conceive as good what we desire, and more recently, David Velleman (1992) has contributed his own counterexamples (which have since been multiplied by

others). These examples are intended to show that one can want, intend to do, and do something without believing that it is good in any way. Advocates of GoG have responded by adopting versions of GoG on which desire or intentional action requires not a belief but rather a seeming (Stampe, 1987) or appearance (Tenenbaum, 2007). Something can appear good without one believing that it is good, and vice versa. Moreover, advocates of GoG have argued that appreciating such appearances doesn't require one to possess the concept of goodness or the like (Schafer, 2013). Opponents hold, however, that such moves make GoG mysterious and unmotivated (Setiya, 2007) or trivial (Velleman, 1996; Railton, 1997). The goal of this paper is to show that GGR is a well-motivated, substantive, interesting, and defensible version of GoG. I will discuss how GGR withstands standard objections to GoG in Section 4. But first, we need a clearer idea of what GGR says and how it relates to other versions of GoG.

We can bring out that GGR is a variant of Chislenko's schema by allowing ourselves to introduce new values for some parameters and formulating GGR thus: "An action that results from practical reasoning requires a 'taking' that the premises are jointly a good reason for the action or intention that is the conclusion of the reasoning." Notice that GGR is qualified in three ways that are not anticipated in Chislenko's schema.

- (A) GGR applies only to a subset of actions, namely those that result from practical reasoning.
- (B) The required act or attitude is not described as a belief or judgment or appearance but as a 'taking', where 'takings' are whatever act or attitude the correct version of the Taking Condition refers to.
- (C) What is 'taken' to be the case is not something about what is good or what one ought to do, but that one's reasons for acting are good.

Some comments are in order regarding these three features. Regarding (A), note that some versions of GoG apply to all actions, intentions, or desires, even some that could occur in non-rational animals. Aristotle (*De anima*, 433a27-29), e.g., holds that the object of any appetite (*orexis*) is always a

real or apparent good, and this applies to both rational appetites (*boulesis* or *orexis dianoetike*) and non-rational appetites (*epithymia* and *thumos*). By contrast, Immanuel Kant (AA5, 59) famously formulates the “old formula of the schools” thus: *nihil appetimus, nisi sub ratione boni; nihil aversamur, nisi sub ratione mali*. And he writes that this thesis is ...

... at least very doubtful if it is translated: we desire nothing except with a view to our well-being or woe [*Wohl oder Weh*], whereas if it is rendered: we *will* nothing *under the direction of reason* except insofar as we hold it to be good or evil, it is indubitably certain [...]. (Kant, AA5, 60, my emphasis)

Here Kant endorses, in effect, a version of GoG that applies only to acts of the higher appetitive faculty (*oberes Begehrungsvermögen*), i.e. the will, and not to acts of the lower appetitive faculty (*unteres Begehrungsvermögen*). He thinks that subjective well-being (*das Angenehme*) is the formal object of the lower appetitive faculty while the good (*das Gute*) is the formal object of the higher appetitive faculty (Kant, AA5, 24-25, 110). We find a similar restriction of GoG in Thomas Aquinas, who distinguishes human actions from mere actions of humans.

Of actions done by man those alone are properly called ‘human,’ which are proper to man as man. Now man differs from irrational animals in this, that he is master of his actions. Wherefore those actions alone are properly called human, of which man is master. Now man is master of his actions through his reason and will [...]. Therefore those actions are properly called human which proceed from a deliberate will. And if any other actions are found in man, they can be called actions ‘of a man,’ but not properly ‘human’ actions, since they are not proper to man as man. Now it is clear that whatever actions proceed from a power, are caused by that power in accordance with the nature of its object. But the object of the will is the end and the good. (Aquinas, ST, Ia-IIae, q1a1)

For Aquinas, mere actions of humans are automatic or instinctual actions, like playing with one's hair during a conversation. These actions don't issue from "reason or will." Like Kant, Aquinas thinks that if a version of GoG holds true of an act, then this is so in virtue of the nature of the capacity that is exercised in the act. Hence, particular versions of GoG should target exercises of particular capacities. If different actions, intentions, or desires are exercises of different capacities, then we must consider them separately with respect to whether GoG applies to them (and, if so, what precise version).

I agree with Kant and Aquinas, *pace* Aristotle. Actions that result from practical reasoning are manifestations of a particular capacity, namely the capacity for practical reasoning. Hence, we should consider such actions separately when we consider GoG. That is what GGR does. Thus, feature (A) is not an *ad hoc* restriction of GoG, but rather a restriction with deep historical roots in the idea that GoG is metaphysically grounded in the nature of the capacities whose acts stand under GoG.

Feature (B) is that GGR requires not a belief, judgment, or seeming, but a 'taking.' This is plausible because advocates of GoG have long disagreed about whether the attitude required by doing something "under a guise" is a belief (Chislenko, 2016b), an appearance (Tenenbaum, 2007), or something else entirely (Schafer, 2013). As will become clear in a moment, we find this same disagreement about 'takings' required by the Taking Condition. Some hold that 'taking' is a belief or judgment (Neta, 2013; Valaris, 2014); some think it is a seeming or appearance (Broome, 2014; Dogramaci, 2013); and some think that 'takings' are neither (Boghossian, 2014). Given this parallel it is reasonable to try out whether what is required to do something "under a guise" may be a 'taking.' If the answer is positive, that may not tell us what 'guises' or 'takings' are, but we will have made progress by connecting the two.

Feature (C) is that GGR doesn't require that the reasoner take her action to be good; rather, the reasoner must take her action to be supported by the reasons for which she does it. This is familiar from the recent literature. Alex Gregory (2013, 63) has argued for what he calls the *Guise of Reasons*,

which reads: “We only desire to act in ways that we believe we have normative reason to act in.” Similarly, Michael Milona and Mark Schroeder (2019) distinguish two kinds of the “Guise of the Normative,” namely the “Guise of the Good” and the “Guise of Reasons.” They argue that the Guise of Reasons is the superior version, and they formulate it thus: “If  $X$  desires  $F$ , she perceives herself as having reasons to do actions which, given her beliefs, would help to bring it about that she is  $F$ .” I follow Gregory, and Milona & Schroeder here, modulo (A) and (B) above. Their arguments, which I will not rehearse here, can be interpreted as congenial to my current project.

## 2.2 The Nature of Reasoning and the Taking Condition

So far, I have presented my preferred version of GoG, namely GGR, and I have explained and motivated three special features of GGR. My strategy in this paper is to use resources from recent debates about the nature of reasoning to argue for GGR. I will now provide some background about these debates.

The ongoing debate about the nature of reasoning or inference (which I will use interchangeably here) was sparked by a paper in which Boghossian formulates what he calls the Taking Condition on inference (2014, 5):

TAKING CONDITION     Inferring necessarily involves the thinker taking his premises to support his conclusion and drawing his conclusion because of that fact.

The Taking Condition has recently been endorsed by not only Boghossian (2014) but also Broome (2014), Neta (2013), Dogramaci (2013), Valaris (2014; 2019), Müller (2019), Kietzmann (2018), and others. The idea is also popular in the history of philosophy, where it can be found, e.g., in Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (IV, 17.2, 17.4) and the corresponding place in Leibniz’s *New Essays*, as well as in Peirce (1905, 483), Russell (1920), and Thomson (1965). Boghossian points to the following passage from Frege as his immediate source:

To make a judgment because we are conscious of other truths as providing a justification is known as inferring. (Frege, 1979, 3)

As already intimated, advocates of the Taking Condition disagree about what ‘takings’ are—whether beliefs or judgements, seemings or appearances, or neither.

There is some opposition to the Taking Condition. Some think that it over-intellectualizes reasoning and is in tension with the fact that small children and some non-human animals can reason (Winters, 1983; McHugh and Way, 2016; Siegel, 2019).<sup>2</sup> Others worry that the Taking Condition launches us on a vicious regress, often thought to be a version of Lewis Carroll’s (1895) famous regress (Wright, 2014; Rosa, 2019). And some hold that the Taking Condition is not true to the experience of reasoning (Richard, 2019). Here is not the place to engage such worries, and I have done so elsewhere (Hlobil, 2019a,b). Rather, for the purposes of this paper, I will use the Taking Condition as a premise. While the criticism is important and must be addressed, the support that the Taking Condition has received warrants, I think, an interest in its implications for the debate about GoG.

### **2.3 Practical Reasoning**

Before moving on, some remarks about what I mean by “practical reasoning” in GGR are in order. I use “practical reasoning” and “practical inference” interchangeably. In the debate about the nature of reasoning, reasoning or inference is often understood as a person-level, active, and conscious process of adjusting one’s attitudes in light of other attitudes. Following this usage, what I mean by “practical reasoning” is person-level and active, in the sense that reasoning is neither merely happening to the agent, nor is it a subsystem or part of the agent that is reasoning. However, practical reasoning need not be conscious.

Moreover, I distinguish between practical reasoning and practical deliberation. By “practical reasoning,” I mean the act in which we decide or choose<sup>3</sup> to do something based on certain considerations.<sup>4</sup> By “practical deliberation,” I mean the episodes of weighing reasons, considering consequences, and so forth that typically take place before important decisions or choices. Deliberation goes on over a stretch of time, it can be interrupted, and it makes sense to order someone to deliberate about a particular choice.



Steps of reasoning, by contrast, happen at a point in time, they cannot be interrupted, and it doesn't make sense to order someone to reason to a particular conclusion.

The contrast between reasoning and deliberating might appear unfamiliar. Note, however, that Alan White (1971, 289) made similar points about inference already in the 1970s:

Inferring is not something we could start and stop doing or could be interrupted at; it is not something we could ask someone to do or ourselves resolve to do; it is not something we enjoy or dislike doing nor take a little or a long time over. Inferring is not either a physical or a mental process.

It may be an overstatement that inference is not a process (depending on what exactly one means by that), but it seems right that individual steps in our reasoning cannot be interrupted or commanded. It makes little sense to say: "I was engaged in this modus ponens inference, but I couldn't finish because you interrupted me" or "Please infer that the moon is made of cheese from the premises that 2 is and isn't prime." Something similar holds for the practical case. It makes little sense to say: "I was engaged in deciding to invite her for dinner because she helped us yesterday, but I couldn't finish because you interrupted me" or "Please decide to invite her to dinner for the reason that she helped us." This contrasts with deliberation, because it does make sense to say: "I was deliberating about whether to invite her because she helped us, but I couldn't finish because you interrupted me" or "Please deliberate about whether to invite her (because she helped us)."

Relatedly—and contrary to Anscombe (2000, §33)—I do not require practical reasoning to always involve calculation. Nor is it necessarily complex (pace Dancy, 2018). According to my usage of "practical reasoning," the thoughts that are expressible, e.g., by "She killed my sister; so I shall kill her" count as a piece of practical reasoning. Even if practical reasoning involves calculation, such calculations aren't necessarily time-consuming. A bodyguard may, e.g., decide to perform a complex maneuver to protect

her client within split-seconds. The act of making such a decision on the basis of particular reasons counts as practical reasoning for my purposes. Whether any deliberative thoughts cross the bodyguard's mind before she makes that decision doesn't matter.

Finally, I should clarify my position regarding the long-standing controversy about whether the conclusion-acts of practical inferences are actions (Anscombe, 2000; Dancy, 2018), intentions (Broome, 2013; Paul, 2013), or judgments about what one ought to do (or has most reason to do, or the like) (Raz, 2015, 2020). I will stay neutral with respect to this issue. However, I hold that practical reasoning is an act of deciding or choosing to do something on the basis of practical reasons. Hence, those who think that the conclusion-acts of practical inferences are actions should hold that actions can be token-identical to decisions or choices, and similarly for those who think that the conclusion-acts of practical inferences are intentions or judgments. Some may find some of these token-identity claims more plausible than others; that won't matter for my arguments.

In what follows, I will often ignore the view on which the conclusion-acts of practical reasoning are judgments about what one ought to do or has most reason to do. That is because this view immediately implies a version of GoG. After all, according to that view, someone who  $\phi$ s as the result of practical reasoning must have reasoned to the belief or judgment that she ought to  $\phi$  or has most reason to  $\phi$  or the like. Notice, however, that if this view is correct and my arguments below are also correct, actions that result from practical reasoning stand simultaneously under two versions of GoG. According to this combined view, if someone  $\phi$ s as the result of practical reasoning, she must (a) have reasoned to the belief or judgment that she ought to  $\phi$  (or the like) and (b) take the premises of her reasoning to support this belief or judgment. That would be the upshot of my argument for the view that the conclusions of practical inferences are beliefs. We are now ready to look at my argument for GGR.

### 3 The Argument for the Guise of Good Reason

In this section, I will argue for the Guise of Good Reason. The idea behind GGR is to apply Boghossian's Taking Condition to practical reasoning. My overall argument for GGR is this:

- (P1) If the Taking Condition holds for practical reasoning and the relevant notion of support is that of being a sufficient and undefeated reason, then GGR is true.
- (P2) The Taking Condition in fact holds for practical reasoning and the relevant notion of support is that of being a sufficient and undefeated reason.
- (C) Hence, GGR is true.

The conditional premise, (P1), of this modus ponens argument is undeniable. After all, if the Taking Condition holds for practical reasoning and the relevant notion of support is that of being a sufficient and undefeated reason, then someone who makes a practical inference must take her premises to be a jointly sufficient and undefeated reason for the action (or intention) that is her conclusion-act. And if the latter holds, then, necessarily, if someone acts as the result of practical reasoning from premises  $P_1, \dots, P_n$  to the action (or intention) of  $\phi$ -ing, then she takes  $P_1, \dots, P_n$  to be jointly a good, i.e. sufficient and undefeated, reason to  $\phi$ .

It follows that an opponent who wants to reject GGR must reject (P2). We can distinguish three ways in which an opponent might try to do that. She could either (i) reject the Taking Condition altogether, or (ii) hold that the Taking Condition applies to theoretical but not practical reasoning, or (iii) admit that the Taking Condition holds for practical reasoning but hold that the relevant notion of support isn't of the right kind to support anything that could count as a version of GoG. I will discuss worries (ii) and (iii) in the two subsections below respectively.

As already intimated, I won't say much about (i). Some philosophers reject the Taking Condition (e.g. Siegel, 2019; Richard, 2019; Rosa, 2019;

McHugh and Way, 2016; Wright, 2014). They will not be convinced by my argument for GGR. Here, I use the Taking Condition for theoretical inference as a premise. My argument for GGR is interesting because it shows that those who reject GGR incur controversial commitments regarding the nature of reasoning.<sup>5</sup>

### 3.1 The Taking Condition for Practical Reasoning

The goal of this subsection is to show that worry (ii) does not undermine my argument for GGR above because the motivations for accepting the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning also apply to practical reasoning. Worry (ii) will seem particularly pressing for philosophers who think that practical and theoretical reasoning are not species of a common genus but radically different (Setiya, 2013).<sup>6</sup> Fortunately, I don't have to rely on any general, overall parallel between theoretical and practical reasoning. Rather, I will address worry (ii) by showing that the most important motivations for the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning carry over to practical reasoning. Thus, we can reproduce the arguments for the theoretical version of the Taking Condition on the practical side, as it were, in a piecemeal fashion. Even if practical and theoretical reasoning differ greatly in some respects, they also have specific commonalities that suffice, I will argue, to motivate the Taking Condition for both kinds of reasoning.

Conveniently for our purposes, in a recent paper, Boghossian (2019) lists (what he—rightly, I think—regards as) the five strongest motivations for the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning.<sup>7</sup> Let's look at each motivation and see whether it carries over to practical reasoning.

*(First motivation)* Inference must be distinguished from mere association of thoughts. One key difference is that we are responsible for our reasoning but not for the associations that occur to us. We can be held responsible for our reasoning if our premises don't support our conclusion, i.e., if our premises don't jointly constitute a sufficient and undefeated reason to accept our conclusion, given our circumstances. We are not responsible for mere associations in this way. The Taking Condition explains this dif-

ference between reasoning and other transitions between thoughts. Unless a better explanation is on offer, this supports the Taking Condition.

The motivation carries over to practical reasoning. There may or may not be an analogue of mere association for intentions. Fortunately, that doesn't matter because we are responsible for our practical reasoning in at least those ways in which we are responsible for our theoretical reasoning. We can be held responsible if the premises of our practical reasoning don't support our conclusion, i.e., if they don't constitute a sufficient and undefeated reason, given our circumstances, for the action or intention or judgment that is the result of our reasoning.<sup>8</sup> If we need the Taking Condition to explain this in the theoretical case, then it is plausible that the same kind of responsibility is explained by a parallel condition on practical reasoning, i.e. by GGR.

An opponent might hold that we are responsible for our practical reasoning in ways in which we are not responsible for our theoretical reasoning. That may be so because practical reasoning involves the will in a way which theoretical reasoning doesn't, and we are responsible for our will in a special way. I don't have to deny that. It suffices for my purposes that every kind of responsibility that we find in the theoretical case has a parallel in the practical case. I don't—and need not—assume that the converse also holds.<sup>9</sup>

*(Second motivation)* The kind of responsibility we have for our reasoning points to a sense in which our reasoning is something that we do, and not something that merely happens to us. Reasoning is probably not an intentional action, but it seems to be an action in some weaker sense.<sup>10</sup> On one popular view, it is our so-called “judgment-sensitive attitudes” for which we are responsible because they don't merely happen to us (Scanlon, 1998). The Taking Condition allows us to extend this view to judgment-sensitive transitions between attitudes, in particular reasoning. This motivation also carries over to practical reasoning. After all, practical reasoning is something we do and that doesn't merely happen to us, in the same way in which this holds for theoretical reasoning. So if the agential nature of reasoning lends support to the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning,

then it also lends support to the Taking Condition for practical reasoning, i.e. GGR.<sup>11</sup>

*(Third motivation)* Boghossian cites a paper of mine in which I pointed out that it seems self-defeating or incoherent to make an inference one believes to be bad (Hlobil, 2014). These are cases in which the agent could express her thoughts by saying something like “*P*; therefore *Q*. But that is not a good inference.” If reasoning is merely some doing or some transition of thoughts that doesn’t require any taking, then it is *prima facie* a mystery why such thoughts should be self-defeating or incoherent.<sup>12</sup>

This third motivation also carries over to the practical case. For, just as in the theoretical case, it is self-defeating or incoherent to have thoughts that could adequately be expressed thus: “*P*; so I shall do  $\phi$ . But *P* is not a good (i.e. sufficient and undefeated) reason for me to do  $\phi$ .” If this kind of incoherence motivates the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning, it also motivates the Taking Condition for practical reasoning.

*(Fourth motivation)* The Taking Condition offers an explanation for how there could be different kinds of inference, such as deductive and inductive inference, to which different standards apply. In making a deductive inference, the agent takes her premises to entail the conclusion, whereas in inductive inferences, the agent merely takes her premises to make the truth of the conclusion probable (or to lend some defeasible—but undefeated—support to the conclusion in some other way).

When we look at practical reasoning, we also find defeasible and indefeasible pieces of reasoning. The following is, I submit, an indefeasible piece of practical reasoning:<sup>13</sup> “To do this would mean to punish someone innocent. So, I shall not do it.” By contrast, “It would be fun to go SCUBA diving. So, I shall go SCUBA diving” is a defeasible piece of practical reasoning. The first kind of considerations are sometimes called “silencing considerations” (McDowell, 1980, 1978; Dancy, 1993). They close the matter at hand. That is not true for the premises of defeasible pieces of practical reasoning. The Taking Condition can explain this difference in a way that is parallel to how it explains the difference between deductive and inductive reasoning. In defeasible practical reasoning, the agent takes her premises

to provide some undefeated but nevertheless defeasible reason for her action. In undefeasible reasoning, by contrast, the agent takes her premises to close the matter and to silence any considerations that may speak against her conclusion. Thus, if we appeal to the Taking Condition to explain how deductive and inductive reasoning differ, then it is plausible that we should also appeal to the Taking Condition to explain the difference between defeasible and undefeasible practical reasoning.

*(Fifth motivation)* There are some inferences that are valid but impossible for humans to make, such as reasoning in one step from the axioms of Peano Arithmetic (PA) to Fermat's Last Theorem (FLT). If a human being transitioned in her thoughts immediately from the axioms of PA to FLT, we would be confident that this is not an inference. But why? The Taking Condition offers an explanation, namely that it is not possible for humans to 'take' the axioms of PA to support FLT because 'taking' requires that we see a connection between the premises and the conclusion, and in the case of impossible inferences, it is not possible for humans to see such a connection.

As before, this motivation has a parallel in practical reasoning. Suppose, e.g., someone faces a complex problem in chess or the kind of problem we encounter in game theory. Moreover, suppose that the person took a look at the problem and immediately, i.e. without any intermediate conclusions, reached a decision about what to do. I think we could agree that she is not acting as the result of practical reasoning. She may be guided by (perhaps even reliable) gut feelings or intuitions or the like. One indication of this would be that such a person couldn't explain how the situation at hand makes her decision appropriate. She doesn't see an appropriate connection between the premises and the conclusion. For complex problems, it seems impossible for ordinary human beings to see such a connection without establishing it step-by-step. So, just as in the theoretical case, the Taking Condition explains why certain pieces of practical reasoning are impossible for ordinary human beings.

Let's take stock. When we look at the motivations for accepting the Taking Condition, we see that they apply not only to theoretical but also to

practical reasoning. Hence, if we accept the Taking Condition, we should accept it not only for theoretical but also for practical reasoning. So, worry (ii) should be rejected once the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning is granted.

### 3.2 Practical Reasoning and Good Reasons

Let us now turn to the third and final way to resist my argument for GGR. The opponent who wants to press worry (iii) concedes that if someone acts as the result of practical reasoning, then she takes her premises to support her conclusion. The opponent rejects, however, the idea that this supports any version of GoG. I have already argued that GGR is recognizably a version of GoG (in Section 2.1). If that is granted, the opponent must hold that the notion of support at issue in the Taking Condition for practical reasoning is not the notion of a sufficient and undefeated reason for the action or intention that is the conclusion of the reasoning.

That view is implausible because it doesn't fit with the first and the third motivations for the Taking Condition just rehearsed. Recall that the first motivation was that we are responsible for our reasoning. In order to show that someone has not lived up to this kind of responsibility, however, one must show that their premises don't jointly provide a sufficient and undefeated reason for their conclusion. Hence, the first motivation for the Taking Condition requires us to interpret "support" as "providing a sufficient and undefeated reason for the conclusion."

The third motivation was that it is self-defeating or incoherent to make inferences that one believes to be bad. However, it is equally self-defeating or incoherent to have thoughts that can adequately be expressed thus: "*P*; so I shall do  $\phi$ . And while *P* provides some *prima facie* or *pro tanto* reason for doing  $\phi$ , that reason is either not sufficient or defeated in my current situation." Thus, the third motivation above supports the idea that an agent takes her premises to provide a sufficient and undefeated reason for her conclusion. It doesn't support the idea that the agent takes her premises to provide merely some insufficient or defeated reason for her conclusion.



To sum up, given the motivations above, we have good reason to think of the relevant support relation as that of providing sufficient and undefeated reasons, and not a weaker relation. Hence, granting the Taking Condition, we have good reason to hold that if someone acts as the result of practical reasoning, then she takes her premises to jointly constitute a sufficient and undefeated reason for her action or intention or judgment. That concludes my case for GGR.

Before moving on, two clarifications are in order. First, an opponent might worry that my version of GoG remains merely a promissory note unless I provide a substantive theory of the takings required by the Taking Condition. It is true that different theories of ‘takings’ can be plugged into my argument for GGR, leading to different readings of “take” in GGR itself. If we assume that the ‘taking’ required for inference is a belief (Valaris, 2014; Marcus, 2020), then my argument will yield the view that acting as the result of a practical inference requires that the reasoner believes that her premises jointly provide a sufficient and undefeated reason for her action or intention. If we assume that the Taking Condition requires an appearance or seeming (Broome, 2014; Chudnoff, 2014; Dogramaci, 2013), then my argument will yield a parallel version of GGR that requires an appearance. I see this flexibility as a virtue and not as a shortcoming of my view. Once we connect the Taking Condition and GoG, new moves become available in both debates. If we have, e.g., independent arguments that the attitude that figures in the true version of GGR is a judgment, then this will lend support to a version of the Taking Condition that requires a judgment.

Notwithstanding this flexibility, I want to stress that several philosophers in the debate about the nature of inference have argued for versions of the Taking Condition on which ‘takings’ are neither beliefs nor judgments. Some have argued, in effect, that ‘takings’ are *sui generis* attitudes or acts (Boghossian, 2014; Stroud, 1979). Given my argument above, such views yield versions of GGR according to which GGR does not require that the agent’s judges or believes that her premises provide a good reason for her action or intention. As will become clear below, these are the versions I find most defensible.<sup>14</sup>

My second clarificatory point is that some opponents of GoG think that it is implausible that if someone acts immorally and does so knowingly, then she has incoherent commitments. If we suppose, however, that everyone who knows that she acts immorally also knows that she doesn't have sufficient and undefeated reasons for her action, it follows that GGR has precisely that supposedly implausible implication. After all, an agent's 'taking' commits her to her reasons being sufficient and undefeated, and the fact that she knowingly acts immorally implies that she knows that she doesn't have any such reasons. Note, however, that all the work in the objection is done by the assumption that everyone who knows that she acts immorally also knows that she doesn't have sufficient and undefeated reasons for her action. Insofar as someone grants that assumption, she should also grant that knowingly acting immorally yields incoherent commitments. That doesn't seem problematic to me. After all, it seems incoherent to say something like the following: "*P*; so I shall do  $\phi$ . But *P* is not a good reason to  $\phi$ ." If, on the other hand, we reject the idea that everyone who knows that she acts immorally also knows that she doesn't have sufficient and undefeated reasons for her action, then the supposedly objectionable consequence no longer follows from GGR.

To sum up, I have argued that GGR is true on the grounds that it is an application of the Taking Condition to practical reasoning. The reasons that support the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning equally support GGR.

## **4 Does GGR Stand Up to Scrutiny?**

In this section, I argue that the Guise of Good Reason withstands objections commonly leveled against GoG. I will discuss three kinds of objections. The first kind of objection says that our concept of (intentional) action leaves room for actions that the agent considers bad or unsupported by reasons. I will show that GGR withstands such worries because of feature (A) from Section 2, i.e., GGR is restricted to actions that result from practical reasoning. The second kind of objection points to examples of weakness of will

and acting out of frustration or spite. I will argue that such objections fail against GGR because of feature (B) above, i.e., GGR requires ‘takings’ and not beliefs or judgments. There is a third miscellaneous group of objections that I don’t want to leave unaddressed and that are handled by a combination of features (A)–(C). I will take these three kinds of objection in turn.

#### 4.1 Objections Based on the Concept of Agency

Kieran Setiya (2010; 2007) and David Velleman (1992) have argued that the concept of intentional agency leaves room for actions that the agent considers bad and doesn’t consider good in any way. Hence, they hold that it is misguided to think that we can establish a version of GoG on conceptual or philosophical grounds. In this subsection, I will argue that GGR is not vulnerable to such objections. Both versions of the worry fail against GGR because GGR is not a claim about all intentional actions but only about actions that result from practical reasoning; that is feature (A) above. I will take the two versions of this objection in turn.

Setiya (2010; 2007) has argued, following Anscombe (2000), that all that is required to  $\phi$  intentionally is to know without inference or observation that and why<sup>15</sup> one is  $\phi$ -ing. Now, one can know that and why one is  $\phi$ -ing without believing that this action is good or supported by reasons. So, Setiya reasons, the former doesn’t entail the latter. It seems, however, that the only reason to think that an agent necessarily takes her action to be good or well-supported would be that this is entailed by the fact that she knows that and why she is performing the action, for, according to Setiya, that is all intentional action requires. Hence, the advocate of GoG must explain the extra requirement to take one’s action or reasons to be good. We can summarize Setiya’s objection thus:

*Objection 1:* The necessary and sufficient conditions for acting intentionally, namely that one knows without inference or observation what one is doing and why, don’t entail that one takes one’s action to be good in any way. Hence, it is not necessary that an agent takes her action to be good in any way.

*Reply 1:* This argument doesn't apply to GGR because GGR applies only to actions that are the result of practical reasoning. Setiya's crucial premise is that knowledge of what we are doing and why is sufficient for intentional action.<sup>16</sup> But such knowledge is not sufficient for practical reasoning. In order to apply to GGR, we would have to reformulate Setiya's objection as follows: "The necessary and sufficient conditions for acting as the result of practical reasoning don't entail that one takes one's action to be supported by one's reasons." If the Taking Condition holds for practical reasoning, however, practical reasoning requires that one takes one's action to be supported by one's reasons.<sup>17</sup> So, if I am right that we should accept the Taking Condition for practical reasoning, this automatically blocks Setiya's argument.

Perhaps Setiya might want to reply that I didn't show that he is wrong to think that GoG doesn't hold true of all intentional actions, and that this was his thesis.<sup>18</sup> I agree, but my goal is not to refute Setiya. My goal is to establish GGR, which is explicitly restricted to actions that result from practical reasoning. I take this restriction to be motivated by the thought that, for the purposes of considering GoG, following Kant and Aquinas, we should look at acts of different capacities separately. Hence, unless Setiya shows that this restriction is illegitimate, GGR is not vulnerable to his objection.

Let us move on to Velleman's version of the objection. Like Setiya, Velleman thinks that GoG leads to implausible restrictions on our notion of intentional action. We can formulate Velleman's worry thus.

*Objection 2:* It is coherent that Satan desires and intentionally brings about what is bad, precisely because it is bad. To think that Satan desires the bad under the guise of the good is to turn Satan into a well-meaning but ignorant character. Hence, there is no conceptual necessity for an agent to take her intentional actions to be good.

*Reply 2:* This objection does not apply to GGR because GGR doesn't imply that Satan takes all his actions to be moral or ethically good, merely that

he takes the actions that issue from his practical reasoning to be supported by his reasons. The necessity that Velleman denies arises because GGR applies to exercises of practical reason: it is incoherent that Satan would act as the result of practical reasoning without taking his reasons to support his conclusion, or so I have argued above. GGR doesn't force us to think of Satan as a well-meaning fool. Satan aims at good practical reasoning (in the sense that he takes his practical inferences to be good). That doesn't take anything away from his diabolical nature.

To sum up, GGR isn't vulnerable to objections that point to the concept or metaphysics of intentional action in general because GGR applies only to actions that result from practical reasoning.

## **4.2 Objections Based on Acting Against One's Better Judgment**

A second kind of objection starts with the observation that we often act in ways that conflict with our considered beliefs about what is good or—with a view to GGR—what we have sufficient and undefeated reason to do. One version of the worry is that the reality of weak-willed action speaks against GoG. A second version is that the fact that we can act out of spite and frustration undermines GoG. In this subsection, I will look at these two versions of the worry in turn. I will argue that GGR withstands both attacks because it is not implausible that an agent 'takes' certain considerations to support a particular action while also believing that the considerations don't support the action.

The general strategy for advocates of GGR to avoid counterexamples is to adopt a conception of 'taking' that allows them to make sense of the alleged counterexamples to GGR. I will begin by illustrating this strategy as it applies to akratic actions.

*Objection 3:* There are weak-willed actions. An agent may take a second piece of pie even though she believes that she should not do so. Advocates of GoG cannot explain how this is possible.

*Reply 3:* In order to apply to GGR, the idea of the opponent would have to be that an agent can act as the result of a practical inference while believing

that her premises don't support her conclusion. Moreover, the opponent would have to hold that if the agent believes that her premises don't support her conclusion, then the agent doesn't take her practical inference to be good. Notice, however, that advocates of GGR can reasonably hold that we can take a practical inference to be good while also believing that the practical inference is not good. Depending on what we think 'takings' are, this response can take two forms. If we construe 'takings' as beliefs or judgments, this will require us to attribute inconsistent beliefs or judgments. Chislenko (2020), e.g., has adopted a version of this view by arguing that weak-willed actions require conflicting beliefs.<sup>19</sup> If that seems implausible, advocates of GGR can also give the response a different form by adopting a version of the Taking Condition on which 'takings' are neither beliefs nor judgments. According to such a view, weak-willed action requires merely that the agent 'take' something to be the case that she believes not to be the case. This view is very plausible, e.g., if 'takings' are seemings. After all, it seems to me, e.g., that there are more integers than even integers although I believe that this isn't so. In general, as long as it is possible that one 'takes'  $p$  to be the case and also believes that  $\text{not-}p$ , examples in which someone acts as the result of practical reasoning that she believes to be bad don't threaten GGR. And the advocate of GGR can adopt a conception of 'takings' that ensures this possibility.

Michael Stocker has presented a different and very influential version of the objection. He thinks that we can act in ways that go explicitly against our own goals when we act out of spite or frustration and that this undermines GoG.

*Objection 4:* We can sometimes act out of spite or frustration, as when we say to ourselves, "The whole day has gone so badly, I might as well complete it by ruining the little I did accomplish," and then act on that thought (Stocker, 1979, 748). According to GoG, such spiteful and frustrated actions would be impossible.

*Reply 4:* GGR doesn't make spiteful and frustrated actions impossible. Advocates of GGR can acknowledge the possibility of such actions by holding

that we sometimes (irrationally) take the fact that everything is going terribly to be a good reason to sabotage our own efforts, or destroy what we have accomplished. What this ‘taking’ amounts to will again depend on our preferred version of the Taking Condition. Those who think of ‘takings’ as beliefs may want to attribute inconsistent beliefs in such cases. But those who think of ‘takings’ along different lines may not feel any need to do so.

For both versions of the objection, the key move that GGR makes possible is this: Either it is plausible that weak-willed or spiteful actions require inconsistent beliefs or it isn’t. If it is, there is no problem for GoG (Chislenko, 2020). If not, then GGR can be fleshed out in such a way that no such inconsistent beliefs are required.

### 4.3 Further Objections

In this subsection, I will briefly discuss some further worries about GoG. The connection between key features of GGR and my responses is less immediate for these objections. My responses are available to advocates of other versions of GoG. I nevertheless include responses to these objections here because they are very popular and, hence, I don’t want to leave them unanswered.

Let me begin with the worry that GoG is too demanding; it requires an implausible amount of sophistication and reflection on the part of agents.

*Objection 5:* There are small children and brutes who cannot form beliefs about what is good because they don’t possess the concept of the good, but they can desire things and act intentionally. Hence, one can desire and act intentionally without believing or judging anything to be good.

*Reply 5:* Small children and animals don’t pose a problem for GGR. While it does seem very implausible that nonhuman animals or small children cannot act intentionally or have desires, how plausible it is that they can reason practically will depend on how demanding the operative notion of practical reasoning is. GGR can be maintained on both demanding and

expansive notions of practical reasoning. If we adopt an expansive notion, then practical reasoning doesn't require much sophistication. Thus, some nonhuman animals and small children can plausibly reason practically. In that case, the motivations for the Taking Condition will push us towards a relatively weak conception of 'takings', such that these creatures can take their practical inferences to be good.<sup>20</sup> If, on the other hand, we adopt a demanding notion of practical reasoning, then they plausibly cannot reason practically (in the relevant sense). In that case, GGR does not apply to them. Either way, there is no problem for GGR.

The opponent might claim that some creatures can reason practically but cannot take their reasoning to be good. But that claim is equally plausible for theoretical and practical reasoning. Hence, if that objection works, it shows that the Taking Condition fails across the board. While this argument is sometimes made in debates about theoretical reasoning (McHugh and Way, 2016; Winters, 1983), it is also frequently rejected (Müller, 2019; Boghossian, 2018). In any event, its proper target is not GGR but the Taking Condition in its full generality.

The objection that GoG requires too much sophistication was also used in a slightly different context by David Velleman (1992). He has argued that the central motivation behind GoG is that intentions or desires can rationally justify the action, thus allowing us to see intentional actions as under the rational guidance of the agent. After all, if my intention to go shopping has as its content the proposition that it would be good for me to go shopping, then the intention rationally justifies my action, i.e., if the content of the intention is true, then my action is good. In line with the objection currently under consideration, Velleman argues that intentions cannot have such complicated contents. Otherwise, small children and brutes could not have intentions. An alternative may be that goodness doesn't enter into the contents of intentions but into their direction of fit. However, Velleman argues that the direction of fit of intentions cannot play the justificatory role that the motivation for GoG requires.

To see that this worry doesn't apply to GGR, note that the motivation Velleman identifies as fueling GoG is not the motivation behind GGR.



According to the view advocated here, what justifies an action are the premises of a good practical inference. Taking one's inference to be good doesn't play any independent justificatory role. Hence, it is no problem for GGR that it doesn't allow 'takings' to play such an independent justificatory role.

Let's turn to the final worry, namely that GoG faces a dilemma: it is either uninteresting or false (see Velleman, 1996; Railton, 1997). If we apply the objection to GGR, we can formulate it as follows.

*Objection 6:* If "taking one's premises to support one's action" is understood in a substantive way, then GGR is false because it is too demanding. But if all that such 'takings' require is that our action satisfy the condition(s) whose violation would lead us to rule out an action in practical reasoning, then GGR is trivial. Hence, GGR is either false or trivial.

*Reply 6:* I have already argued that GGR is not too demanding. So let me now address the worry that GGR is trivial. The opponent may worry that GGR doesn't require the agent to have any substantive conception of good practical reasoning, rationality, or the good. Isn't GGR simply the empty claim that whenever we reason practically, we do so under the guise of whatever it is (if anything) that we are directed toward in practical reasoning? In a related discussion, Velleman puts the point thus:

Asking the agent to identify a rational action under the guise of rationality as such, or to identify a reason for acting under the guise of a reason as such, would be somewhat like asking him to hunt for something described only as "the quarry," or to play a game with an eye to something described only as "winning." It would be to assign him a task with a formal object but no substantive object—and hence with no object at all. (Velleman, 1996, 700)

In response, I first want to point out that the crucial disagreement between advocates and opponents of the Taking Condition is precisely whether we

are directed towards something in our reasoning, in the sense of necessarily taking up a particular perspective on our own reasoning. This disagreement is independent of how the property of being a good piece of (practical) reasoning is grasped in 'takings.' To bring this out, we can formulate the controversial thesis *de re*: The property of being a good piece of practical reasoning is such that, if someone reasons, then she takes her reasoning to possess that property. That thesis is not trivial. It is implied by GGR. Hence, GGR cannot be trivial.

A second respect in which GGR is clearly not trivial is this: everyone who acts as the result of practical reasoning is thereby open to certain criticism whose force the agent must recognize by her own lights. In particular, GGR explains why criticism that targets the quality of your practical reasoning is a kind of criticism that you cannot simply shrug off or dismiss without addressing its merits, on pain of being irrational by your own lights. This is unsurprising. After all, that the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning explains the parallel features of theoretical reasoning is the essence of many of the motivations for the Taking Condition listed above.

To forestall misunderstandings, I should point out that what I just said does not imply that agents don't act with justification as the result of practical reasoning unless they have independent reasons to believe that their practical inference is good. Opening oneself up to a particular kind of criticism, by one's own lights, is not the same as already having a defense against such criticism in place.

This concludes my responses to potential objections. The special features of GGR that I highlighted at the beginning, especially (A) and (B), allow it to withstand standard objections. Moreover, GGR offers its advocates a lot of flexibility to adjust the details of their responses to objections to their other commitments. This flexibility strikes me as a virtue of GGR.

## 5 Conclusion

I have argued that the Taking Condition, applied to practical reasoning, implies a plausible version of the Guise of the Good, namely the Guise of

Good Reason. The Guise of Good Reason is an application of the Taking Condition to practical reasoning. And I have argued that the motivations for the Taking Condition for theoretical reasoning carry over to practical reasoning.

The resulting version of GoG is not vulnerable to standard objections. Some of these objections may motivate a particular conception of the ‘takings’ required by the Taking Condition. Conversely, strong reasons for a particular conception of ‘takings’ might be used to tip the scales in favor of a certain construal of the Guise of Good Reason. That strikes me as a feature rather than a bug. For, it means that my version of GoG allows us to motivate interesting claims in theoretical philosophy on the basis of considerations coming from practical philosophy, and vice versa.

## References

- Anscombe, G. E. M. (2000). *Intention*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2. edition.
- Aquinas, T. (1265). *Summa theologiae*. Santo Rosario: <http://www.santorosario.net/summatheologiae.htm>.
- Aristotle (1984). *The Complete Works of Aristotle*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, revised oxford translation edition.
- Aristotle (1985). *Aristotle's De Motu Animalium: Text with Translation, Commentary, and Interpretive Essays (by M.C. Nussbaum)*. Princeton paperbacks. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Boghossian, P. (2014). What is inference? *Philosophical Studies*, 169(1):1–18.
- Boghossian, P. (2018). Delimiting the boundaries of inference. *Philosophical Issues*, 28(1):55–69.
- Boghossian, P. (2019). Inference, agency and responsibility. In Balcerak-Jackson, M. and Balcerak-Jackson, B., editors, *Reasoning: New Essays on Theoretical and Practical Thinking*, pages 101–124. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Boswell, P. (2018). Intelligibility and the guise of the good. *Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy*, 13(1):1–31.
- Broome, J. (2013). Practical reasoning and inference. In Bakhurst, D., Hooker, B., and Little, M. O., editors, *Thinking About Reasons: Themes*

- From the Philosophy of Jonathan Dancy*, pages 286–309. Oxford University Press.
- Broome, J. (2014). Comments on Boghossian. *Philosophical Studies*, 169(1):19–25.
- Carroll, L. (1895). What the tortoise said to Achilles. *Mind*, 4(14):278–280.
- Chislenko, E. (2016a). *Intention and Normative Belief*. PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley.
- Chislenko, E. (2016b). A solution for Buridan’s ass. *Ethics*, 126(2):283–310.
- Chislenko, E. (2020). Akratic action under the guise of the good. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 50(5):606–621.
- Chudnoff, E. (2014). The rational roles of intuition. In Booth, A. and Rowbottom, D., editors, *Intuitions*, pages 9–35. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Dancy, J. (1993). *Moral Reasons*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Dancy, J. (2018). *Practical Shape: A Theory of Practical Reasoning*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Dogramaci, S. (2013). Intuitions for inferences. *Philosophical Studies*, 165(2):371–399.
- Frege, G. (1979). *Posthumous Writings*. Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Gregory, A. (2013). The guise of reasons. *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 50(1):63–72.
- Hlobil, U. (2014). Against Boghossian, Wright and Broome on inference. *Philosophical Studies*, 167(2):419–429.
- Hlobil, U. (2019a). Goodness-fixing isn’t good enough: A reply to McHugh and Way. *Mind*, 128(512):1309–1318.
- Hlobil, U. (2019b). Inferring by attaching force. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 97(4):701–714.
- Kant, I. (1900). *Gesammelte Schriften*. Bände I–XXII hg. v. d. Königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin 1900ff., Band XXIII hg. v. d. Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin 1956, ab Band XXIV hg. v. d. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Berlin 1966ff.
- Kietzmann, C. (2018). Inference and the taking condition. *Ratio*, 31(3):294–302.
- Locke, J. (2008). *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Marcus, E. (2020). Inference as consciousness of necessity. *Analytic Philosophy*, 61(4):304–322.

- McDowell, J. (1978). Are moral requirements hypothetical imperatives? *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 52:13–29.
- McDowell, J. (1980). The role of eudaimonia in Aristotle’s ethics. In Rorty, A. O., editor, *Essays on Aristotle’s Ethics*, pages 359–376. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- McHugh, C. and Way, J. (2016). Against the taking condition. *Philosophical Issues*, 26(1):314–331.
- Milona, M. and Schroeder, M. (2019). Desiring under the proper guise. *Oxford Studies in Metaethics*, 14:121–143.
- Müller, A. (2019). Reasoning and normative beliefs: not too sophisticated. *Philosophical Explorations*, 22(1):2–15.
- Neta, R. (2013). What is an inference? *Philosophical Issues*, 23(1):388–407.
- Paul, S. K. (2013). The conclusion of practical reasoning: The shadow between idea and act. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 43(3):287–302.
- Peirce, C. S. (1905). Issues of pragmatism. *The Monist*, 15(4):481–499.
- Railton, P. (1997). On the hypothetical and non-hypothetical in reasoning about belief and action. In Cullity, G. and Gaut, B., editors, *Ethics and Practical Reason*, pages 53–79. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Raz, J. (2015). Normativity: The place of reasoning. *Philosophical Issues*, 25(1):144–164.
- Raz, J. (2020). On Dancy’s account of practical reasoning. *Philosophical Explorations*, 23(2):135–145.
- Richard, M. (2019). Is reasoning a form of agency? In Balcerak-Jackson, M. and Balcerak-Jackson, B., editors, *Reasoning: New Essays on Theoretical and Practical Thinking*, pages 91–100. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Rosa, L. (2019). Reasoning without regress. *Synthese*, 196(6):2263–2278.
- Russell, B. (1920). The nature of inference. In Slater, J. G. and Frohmann, B., editors, *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell: Essays on Language, Mind, and Matter, 1919-26*, chapter 15. Unwin Hyman, London.
- Scanlon, T. (1998). *What We Owe to Each Other*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Schafer, K. (2013). Perception and the rational force of desire. *Journal of Philosophy*, 110(5):258–281.
- Setiya, K. (2007). *Reasons without Rationalism*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Setiya, K. (2010). Sympathy for the devil. In Tenenbaum, S., editor, *Desire, practical reason, and the good*, pages 82–110. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- Setiya, K. (2013). Causality in action. *Analysis*, 73(3):501–512.
- Siegel, S. (2019). Inference without reckoning. In Balcerak-Jackson, M. and Balcerak-Jackson, B., editors, *Reasoning: New Essays on Theoretical and Practical Thinking*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Stampe, D. W. (1987). The authority of desire. *The Philosophical Review*, 96(3):335–381.
- Stocker, M. (1979). Desiring the bad: an essay in moral psychology. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 76(12):738–753.
- Stroud, B. (1979). Inference, belief, and understanding. *Mind*, 88(350):179–196.
- Tenenbaum, S. (2007). *Appearances of the good: an essay on the nature of practical reason*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Tenenbaum, S. (2013). Guise of the good. In LaFollette, H., editor, *The International Encyclopedia of Ethics*, pages 2262–2271. Wiley-Blackwell, Hoboken, NJ.
- Thomson, J. J. (1965). Reasons and reasoning. In Black, M., editor, *Philosophy in America*, pages 282–303. Cornell University Press, Ithaca.
- Valaris, M. (2014). Reasoning and regress. *Mind*, 123(489):101–127.
- Valaris, M. (2019). Reasoning and deducing. *Mind*, 128(511):861–885.
- Velleman, J. D. (1992). The guise of the good. *Noûs*, 26(1):3–26.
- Velleman, J. D. (1996). The possibility of practical reason. *Ethics*, 106(4):694–726.
- White, A. R. (1971). Inference. *Philosophical Quarterly*, 21(85):289–302.
- Winters, B. (1983). Inferring. *Philosophical Studies*, 44(2):201–220.
- Wright, C. (2014). Comment on Paul Boghossian, “The nature of inference”. *Philosophical Studies*, 169(1):27–37.
- Yao, V. (2019). The undesirable & the adesirable. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 99(1):115–130.