



WORKSHOP
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Causal Mechanisms within Collective Actions

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Abstract

Bratman's leading account of collective action defines two main types of collective actions: one encompasses small-scale collective actions, commonly referred to as shared intentional activities, and the other encompasses institutional actions. Shared intentional activities and institutional actions are defined in terms of individual intentional actions. Thanks to Bratman's focus on individual intentions, it is possible to use his account to identify the actions of the individuals involved in a specific collective action. However, Bratman's account does not provide a method of distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant individual actions, neither for a specific collective action to be completed, nor for a specific output to be caused. Making this distinction is important because of the intuitive difference in evaluating the responsibility of individuals performing relevant and irrelevant actions in collective actions. I argue that we can utilise the concept of constitutive relevance, derived from the literature on causal mechanisms, to clarify the distinction between relevant and irrelevant actions analytically. Constitutive relevance, applied to Bratman's notions of collective actions, reveals the causal mechanisms as the core causal structures within collective actions.