

Lowe's original reason for deriving (\*) himself was that he hoped to provide a *reductio*: he intimated that he had cast in doubt my assumption that actions are events (see ANALYSIS 41.3, June 1981, p. 129). Now that he has encouraged us to see the matter in a more general light (see above), I think he has made it clear that if we must reject the assumption that actions are events, then so also must we reject the claim that ball B's hitting ball C is an event.

The reader who shares Lowe's view of (\*) may want to deny that B's hitting C is an event, or he may think that Lowe's reasoning was flawed. For my part, I am convinced that, however strange it might be to use them, many instances of (\*) can be got from unexceptionable premises by truth-preserving steps.

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## ACTIONS, ATTEMPTS AND INTERNAL EVENTS

By MICHAEL SMITH

OVER the past few years several people have argued that all tryings are internal events.<sup>1</sup> They claim to show that if, for instance, an agent tries to raise his arm, then whether he raises his arm or not, the rising of his arm is no part of his attempt. His attempt is rather an internal event which, if he does raise his arm, causes his arm to rise. The time has come to review such arguments. For, as Jennifer Hornsby has recently pointed out, if all attempts to act are internal events, and all successful attempts are identical with the actions the attempted performance of which was successful, then all actions are internal events. If such arguments can show that no attempt to raise an arm has arm-rising as a part, then no arm-raising has arm-rising as a part either. Her argument is valid, so those of us who think that her conclusion is false must reject one of her premises.<sup>2</sup> I reject the first. My assumption will be that the arguments given for the first premise have a common form. The contention I wish to defend here is that that form is fallacious.

<sup>1</sup> See for instance, Hugh McCann's 'Is Raising One's Arm a Basic Action?' in *Journal of Philosophy* May 1972; David Armstrong's 'Acting and Trying' in *Philosophical Papers* May 1973; Brian O'Shaughnessy's 'Trying (as the Mental "Pineal Gland")' in *Journal of Philosophy* July 1973; and, more recently, and more tentatively, Jennifer Hornsby's 'Arm Raising and Arm Rising' in *Philosophy* January 1980, and Chapter Three of *Actions* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> Amongst those who think that Hornsby's conclusion is false is E. J. Lowe: see his "All Actions Occur Inside the Body" in *Analysis* 41.3, June 1981. But Lowe's arguments against Hornsby are, I think, fallacious. See her 'Reply to Lowe on Actions' in *Analysis* 42.3, June 1982.

Why have people thought that all tryings are internal events? They accept an argument like the following. Suppose that an agent tries to raise his arm and raises his arm. Note that, had he been totally and unexpectedly paralysed just prior to trying to raise his arm, he might still have tried to raise his arm, though his arm would not have risen. In such a case his attempt would have been identical with some event, though, evidently, arm-rising would have been no part of it. In such a case his attempt could only have been an internal event. But now note that there is an event which occurs when an agent raises his arm, namely, his trying to raise his arm, and that the same event, the attempt, would have occurred had the agent been paralysed and the arm not risen. The latter attempt would have been an internal event, so, given its identity with the former, his trying to raise his arm when he raises his arm must be an internal event too. This argument can be generalized in the obvious way to show that all tryings are such internal events.

What is wrong with this argument? To begin with, one premise is ambiguous. It is claimed that when an agent tries to raise his arm and raises it 'the same event, the attempt, would have occurred had the agent been paralysed and the arm not risen'. Is it claimed that the same *type* or *token* event would have occurred had the agent been paralysed? It is uncontroversial that the event would have been of the same *type*, viz. an *attempted arm-raising*. But given this uncontroversial claim, and the additional fact that the attempt which would have occurred would have been an internal event, nothing follows about which *token* event the *actual* attempt is (and hence it doesn't follow that the actual attempt is an internal event). So, if the premise is read uncontroversially as 'same type', the argument is invalid.

It may be thought that if the premise is read as stating that the same *token* event, the attempt, would have occurred had the agent been paralysed, then the argument is valid. However, this thought is false if you take certain views on the cross-world identity conditions of events. For instance, if you hold that not all parts of events are essential parts, then the argument is invalid. In order to see this, consider an argument of the same form. Just as we supposed that there is an attempt to raise the arm and the arm rises, suppose that there is a party, and that towards the end of it, Monica has a last drink. The argument we are considering would have us reason as follows. Had Monica not had that last drink (the arm not risen), the same token event, the party (the attempt), would still have occurred. Monica's having that last drink (the arm's rising) would have been no part of the party (the attempt) which would have occurred. Conclusion: Monica's having that last drink (the arm's rising) is no part of the actual party (attempt). The conclusion doesn't follow if you think that the same token party would have occurred whether Monica had had that last drink or not: that is, if Monica's having that last drink is a non-essential part of the party which actually

occurs. Thus, even if the crucial premise is read as stating that the same token attempt would have occurred had the agent been paralysed, given this view on the cross-world identity conditions of events the argument is of a form which is invalid.

Such a reply to the argument will appeal to those who expect arguments concerning the identity of events to run parallel to arguments concerning the identity of continuants. For in the case of continuants, the parallel argument to that we are considering for events is clearly invalid. Suppose that there is a lizard with a tail. Had there been no tail, there would still have been a lizard: indeed it would have been the very same lizard as that which is actual, albeit without a tail. We certainly do not conclude that the actual lizard is a continuant without a tail! Rather we conclude that the tail of the lizard in the actual world is a non-essential part of it. By parity of reasoning we conclude that Monica's having that last drink is a non-essential part of the actual party. And that leaves open the possibility that the rising of the arm is a non-essential part of the actual attempt.

In showing the argument to be invalid we have so far been exploiting the possibility that an event in some possible world may be identical with an actual event though the event in that possible world has different parts from the event in the actual world: a possibility afforded us by the view that events, like continuants, may have non-essential parts. But what if you deny this and hold instead that all parts of events are essential parts? Then the argument is valid.<sup>3</sup> For this view blocks the possibility that a token event in the actual world may occur in some possible world *with different parts*. Given this view, the token attempt which actually occurs would have occurred had the arm not risen only if *all parts* of the actual attempt would have occurred had the arm not risen. Conclusion: the actual attempt does not have arm-rising as a part.<sup>4</sup>

However, even if the argument is valid when offered in conjunction with this view, is it sound? It seems to me that if such a view is correct, then we have good reasons for thinking that the crucial premise, that 'the same [token] event, the attempt, would have occurred had the agent been paralysed', is false. For if this is meant to be knowable *a priori* it amounts to *a priori* physiology. For how are we to know *a priori* that some physical events which occur when an agent tries to raise his arm and raises it, would have occurred had

<sup>3</sup>The argument is now only as plausible as is the view that all parts of events are essential parts. According to this view World War Two would not have taken place had some soldier who had a drink during the war instead refused that drink: a *different war* would have occurred. And how plausible is that?

<sup>4</sup>Strictly the argument so construed is of the form 'If x, all of whose parts are essential parts, would have existed had y not existed, then y is no part of x'. Those who would advance such an argument here would deny that we should expect a parallel between arguments concerning the identity of events and continuants on the grounds that, unlike events, not all parts of continuants are essential parts.

the agent been paralysed? Mightn't paralysis just be a condition such that, when an agent is paralysed, his reasons for acting cause events to occur which they wouldn't have caused to occur had he not been paralysed? (Perhaps *that's* why a paralysed man can't move.) If this is possible, then so much for the crucial premise's *a priori* status.

Of course, the premise may be offered as an *a posteriori* claim: one whose truth-value we could discover by the investigation of various attempts. But even if it is, I suggest that we should reject it. In order to see why, consider how the argument of the same form given above would run according to this view. Suppose that there is a party and that towards the end of it Monica has a last drink. We may advance the *a posteriori* premise 'Had Monica not had that last drink the same event, *viz.* party, would still have occurred'. Given that all parts of events are essential parts, this premise is false if 'same' is read as 'same token'. What is true, given the essentialist view, is that a *different* party would have occurred had Monica not had that last drink. Thus the reading of the crucial premise which renders it true, where 'same' is read as 'same type', is not one which will allow us to infer that the actual party is an event which does not include Monica's having that last drink. And that seems right. For we know that Monica's having that last drink *is* a part of the actual party. But if this is right, then, likewise, why mightn't the actual attempt be an event which has arm-rising as a part? This cannot be rejected on the grounds that, had the agent been paralysed, the same token attempt would have occurred, and arm-rising would have been no part of *it*. For what is being asked is precisely why we should think that it would have been the same token attempt which would have occurred rather than, like the party which would have occurred, a *different* event. In order to explain this, those who offer the argument under consideration would have to bolster their argument with some theory of attempts according to which arm-rising is no part of the actual attempt. But that would render their argument circular. It would entail its conclusion only if it assumed it to begin with. Moreover, giving a theory of attempts is so closely bound up with giving a theory of action that it is unlikely that those who think that arm-raising has arm-rising as a part, and who accept that all successful attempts are identical with the actions the attempted performance of which was successful, will advance a theory according to which no attempted arm-raising has arm-rising as a part. For they will think that some attempted arm-raising, those which occur when an agent raises his arm, *do* have arm-rising as a part.

At the outset I assumed that all arguments for the view that tryings are internal events are variations on the argument considered here and shown to be fallacious. If that assumption was a good one, then such arguments provide no obstacle to the view that some attempts are events which include gross bodily movements. And that means that there is no straightforward argument of the kind

that Jennifer Hornsby outlines which shows that all actions are internal events.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Thanks to Jennifer Hornsby for comments on a draft of this paper.

## MR MORE ON RIGIDITY AND IDENTITY

By MICHAEL LISTON

**M**. J. MORE (ANALYSIS 42.2, March 1982) argues that Kripke employs two non-equivalent criteria for rigid designation:

- (A) 'E' is rigid if 'E might not have been E' is false, i.e. if *being E* is an essential property of E;
- (B) 'E' is rigid if it designates the same thing in every possible world in which it designates anything and means E.

While More's argument that (A) and (B) are not equivalent is incontrovertible, it is hardly relevant to Kripke's treatment of rigidity, firstly because Kripke does not hold (B), and secondly – and more importantly – because More seems to misunderstand Kripke's strategic use of intuitive tests to make semantic distinctions.

Although More is not alone in attributing (B) to Kripke,<sup>1</sup> I can find no textual evidence that Kripke holds (B). He uses, rather, a second, closely related, criterion:

- (B') 'E' is rigid if it designates the same thing in every possible world in which that thing exists.<sup>2</sup>

We may, of course, now ask whether a counterexample similar to More's can be constructed which will show the non-equivalence of (A) and (B'). Let us grant that More is right: 'the father of Elizabeth II' is not rigid under (A), since the father of Elizabeth II, George VI, indeed might not have been the father of Elizabeth II, as would have been the case had he lived a life of celibacy. As to whether the description is rigid under (B'), we seem to lack a clear-cut answer. 'The father of Elizabeth II' might be taken to be non-rigid under (B') in the sense that it does *not* designate George VI

<sup>1</sup> Hilary Putnam also does, 'Meaning and Reference' in *Naming, Necessity, and Natural Kinds*, ed. Stephen P. Schwartz (Cornell U.P. 1977), p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> 'Identity and Necessity' in Schwartz op. cit., p. 179: 'All I mean is that in any possible world where the object in question does exist ... we use the designator in question to designate that object.'