

Abstract of
"Modality, Normativity, and Intentionality"
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Two central features of intentionality (here identified with concept use) that have seemed especially puzzling are its intensionality (non-extensionality, sensitivity to specification), and its normativity (liability to assessments of correctness, asymmetry of authority/responsibility as "direction of fit"). One sort of enlightenment that is evidently valuable when available would be provided by a *naturalistic* account of them. A characteristic strategy of recent and contemporary philosophy is to appeal to our understanding of *modal* vocabulary in order to offer such an explanation of these phenomena. But it is worthwhile remembering that empiricist philosophers, from early modern times through the first half of the last century, took modal concepts such as lawlike necessity and dispositions as possibilities themselves to be most in need of philosophical explication. How should we characterize the lesson that *justifies* this shift of modality from *explanandum* to *explanans*? (Another good question is how that lesson is related to the considerations that *caused* the change of attitude.) I offer two reasons I take to be bad, and one that I take to be good. The good one generalizes so as to make the demand for wholly non-normative explanations of what is expressed by the use of normative vocabulary as inappropriate as the demand for wholly non-modal explanations of what is expressed by the use of modal vocabulary. Just as it is legitimate, where helpful, to use *modal* vocabulary in elucidating and explaining various features of intentionality, so it is in principle legitimate to appeal to *normative* vocabulary to do so. It is not circular or otherwise objectionable to appeal to non-extensional modal concepts to make sense of the kind of intensionality peculiar to intentional phenomena. And it is not circular or otherwise objectionable to appeal to normative concepts to make sense of the specifically *conceptual* normativity distinctive of intentional phenomena.