

Getting people to do things

A. J. Julius, November 9 2009

Some ways of getting people to do things are wrong. Early sections of this paper characterize that wrongness by defending this principle:¹

- (1) You should not (do y and believe that your y'ing will lead me to x and that this fact is a reason to y) unless, for some reasons R that hold independently of your y'ing, your y'ing helps me to [do x as a result of my belief that I should x in virtue of R].

Later sections use the principle to explain the point, scope, and content of certain political standards.

I

I believe that (1) explains the wrongness of central examples of wrongful coercion. They are wrong, I think, because they violate (1).

For examples take

- (2) threatening to shoot a person unless she hands you her money
threatening to fire a worker if she attends a union meeting
threatening to expose a colleague's adultery unless she votes for you

When you develop these episodes in the usual way, you suppose about each of them that the speaker takes as a reason for making her threat that it leads the listener to do something. And in each of them it's supposed that the listener, if she does that thing, will do it for reasons that depend for their existence on the threatener's having made her threat.

By contrast notice that typical *warnings* are OK as far as (1)'s concerned. If I know that in my rage at your holding onto the money I will hurt you, and if I tell you this beforehand to save you a beating, you have sufficient reason, independent of the warning, to do what I'm trying to get you to do. The hypothesis that wrongfully coercive threats are wrong because they violate (1) also explains the appearance that typical warnings are not wrong in the same kind of way.

Of course (1) is not the only principle that accounts for the wrongs of (2). In condemning the mugger's threat to kill the muggee you might instead appeal to

- (3) If your z'ing is impermissible in virtue of its consequences or its significance for me, and if your y'ing gives me reason to expect that you'll z, then your y'ing is impermissible.

Threats to do independently impermissible things are perhaps themselves impermissible.

But I doubt that (3) locates the central objection to objectionable coercion. It seems to me that a typical (2)-style threat—a threat to expose your adultery, say—is morally worse if and because it's part of my plan to steer you into some course of action like voting for me than if I do it on a whim. Moreover I'm pretty sure that a threat to do something permissible can count as wrongfully coercive. I coerce you

and I wrong you when I threaten to sell a couch of mine that holds fond memories for you unless you do my chores.

I'm no more optimistic about views that trace coercion's wrongness to the wrongness of making a person worse off, or of making her unfree, by depriving her of options for action. By threatening to spit on you if you take a seat on the bus I deprive you of the option of sitting there unspat upon. But I subtract that same option—subtracting from your wellbeing and from your freedom whatever was subtracted by the threat to spit—when I sit down there myself. Only the first of these option removals seems wrong. So these views threaten to overproduce judgments of wrongness. Elsewhere they tend to underproduce them, as when they fail to condemn my act of threatening to leave money to a worthwhile charity that you disapprove of unless you polish my grave. That threat carries no substantial cost to any person's wellbeing or freedom, but it is wrong.²

Here's an argument for (1), then. If it seems to you that the acts in (2) and in (4) threatening to sell my couch unless you wash my clothes threatening to give to a charity unless you polish my grave are wrong, and if you think that they have in common some feature that makes each of them wrong, and if you think that these are not true of the examples in (5) taking a seat on the bus before you sit there threatening on a whim to expose your adultery then you should take as evidence for (1) the fact that, of the principles I've mentioned so far, only (1) agrees with you about all of that: the acts and attitudes in (2) and in (4) violate that principle while the acts and attitudes in (5) are untouched by it.

This drive-by argument is not too effective. I'm not too confident in the judgments I've just rattled off. I know that many people don't share them. And of course I've left many alternative explanations of them still standing.

II

A more powerful argument will have to explain the explanation—explain why violations of (1) are wrong. If there are some things that are just the case, unexplainedly and inexplicably the case, (1) is not among them.

The courses of action that violate (1) are courses of directing the action of other persons. This principle takes them to be wrong because of the bad way in which they direct it. To defend the principle I'll have to explain how action-directingness can matter to wrongness. And this looks unpromising. I discuss one difficulty—general anguish about how motives can matter to wrongness—in a side paper.

The other problem is that a good explanation is hard to find. You will hear that coercing a person marks a failure to recognize her agency or to respect her autonomy. Probably something like that is true. Left there, as an explanation of coercion's wrongness, it fails to satisfy. If I threaten to tease your sister unless you jump through a hoop, and if you then jump through it, you are exercising your reason, jumping because you see that my threat to tease counts in favor of doing that. I make my threat precisely *because* I know that you're a reasoner and that I

can count on your reasoning toward the act that suits me. How here do I fall short of recognizing or respecting your agency or autonomy?

That is not a rhetorical question. We need to find out what it is to take heed of a person's agency or to respect her autonomy such that these attitudes are inconsistent with coercion or with violations of (1). I doubt that this can be discovered in a direct interrogation of agency, autonomy, recognition, respect. The strategy I like better is to explain the moral onus on action-directing action with the help of considerations *outside* this circle and then to bring those considerations in as lending content to agency, autonomy, recognition, respect. I'd like to solve for those values subject to the constraint that they're what's at stake in getting other people to do things. You can spell "respect," now find out what it means to me.

III

I'll argue here that following (1) is required. That violating it is in particular wrong will have to come later.³

A

Forget other people. Think about the intrapersonal ethics of your own government of what you do. You should, I think, act for reasons. Or, better to say, you should not act not for reasons. You face a rational requirement like

(6) You should not (do x and have it be false of you that, for some reasons

R, you [do x as the result of your belief that you have x in virtue of R]).

This principle is false, of course. It's too strong. You can, without violating any plausible rational requirement, do certain things routinely or idly or on a whim and so without believing that you have good reason to do them. And it's not clear how best to weaken (6) so as to formulate these dispensations. But my interest allows me to set them aside, for a reason that I'll explain in footnote 4.

Some people reject (6) all down the line. They deny that any such revision can make it plausible that you face a genuinely normative requirement to act for reasons. You should do, if anything, at least one of the things that you have sufficient reason to do, they think. And, they think, you should believe it true, of those things, that you have sufficient reason to do them. But these requirements to do the reason-supported acts, and these requirements to believe that the reasons support the acts, exhaust the requirements that bear on those acts and beliefs. Beyond those simple act- or belief-governing principles, there is no compound act-and-belief-regulating requirement demanding of you, as (6) demands, that you not act not for reasons.

B

The fact that *you* should do things for reasons rationally constrains the attitudes that *I* may take toward your action and the acts by which *I* may affect it. A requirement like (6) is *public* in the respect that, when read as referring to you, it bears not only on what you do and how you reason but also on my action and practical thought.

Here's a simple way of making this interpersonal connection. Too simple. You might think only that I should act in a way that allows you to satisfy (6). That

stricture would make some difference. It would tell me not to put science-fiction stuff into your head that causes you to jump without your believing that you have reason to jump. But it wouldn't furnish anything like (1). By threatening to break your fish tank I can bring it about that you cook my breakfast. But you'd be cooking it as the result of your belief that, thanks to my threat, you have good reason to cook. And so the threat's compatible with your satisfying (6).

The interpersonal upshot I have in mind is trickier. To explain it I need to take another look at intrapersonal problems.

C

You and your friend are unhappy together. You see that you should leave and that, once gone, you should keep your distance. Behind a radiator in the friend's apartment you hide the expensive fur hat that you had borrowed from your employer. Your secretion of the hat makes it the case that you'll have good sheerly hat-grounded reason to return. You leave it there so that it will bring you back.

You shouldn't do something without believing that you have good reason to do it. And you shouldn't try to *bring it about that you do something* except where you believe that you'll have good reason to do *that something* in virtue of reasons that hold independently of what you now do to bring yourself to do it.

Here's a stab at the second thought:

(7) You should not (do y, believe that your y'ing will lead you to x and that this fact is a reason to y) unless you have, independently of your y'ing, good reason to x.

But this principle is too weak, as the next idiotic example will make plain.⁴

D

You're back with your friend. I forgot to mention that your mother lives in the same apartment complex. She's very sick. The fact that by returning to the complex you'll bring her some comfort is a decisive hat-independent reason to return. But you have issues with *her*, too. Those might keep you from carrying this out. So maybe you should leave the hat after all?

I think that it would be OK of you to leave the hat and to take as a reason for leaving it that you'll be led to do something that comforts your mother. But to leave the hat while taking as a reason for leaving it that you'll be led to resume your unhappy connection with your friend is not OK.

(7) is blind to this difference between two ways of stashing a hat. A principle that picks it up is

(8) You should not (do y and believe that your y'ing will lead you to x and that this fact is a reason to y) unless, for some reasons R that hold independently of your y'ing, your y'ing helps you to [do x as a result of your belief that you should x in virtue of R].

This rules out hiding the hat on Monday so that you'll reconnect with the friend on Wednesday. Produced in that fashion your return to the apartment will count as the result of your judging on Wednesday that you should retrieve the hat and of your wanting on Monday to see your friend again. It won't be the result of any day's recognition of the mother reason that you judge to suffice for returning and that's

independent of the hat's location. By contrast (8) rules *in* your hiding the hat on Monday so that you'll see your mother on Wednesday. For there your return will be the result not only of your Wednesday recognition of a hat reason but also of your Monday recognition of a mother reason.

E

The bad news is that I want to talk about another principle. The good news is that, if I'm right, it's the only principle you're going to need in this area.

Consider

(9) You should not (do *y*, do *y* as the result of an attitude of yours in favor of A's *x*'ing, and have it be false of you that, for some reasons R that hold independently of your *y*'ing, your *y*'ing helps A to [do *x* as the result of A's belief that A should *x* in virtue of reasons R]).

(8) is the specialization of (9) that you get by substituting yourself for A and by substituting, for an attitude in favor of A's *x*'ing, your belief that your *y*'ing will lead to your *x*'ing and that this is a reason to *x*. Though a little harder to make out, (6) is also very nearly a special case of (9). Just let A be you and let *y* be *x*. Then you have

(6') You should not (do *x*, *do x as the result of an attitude of yours in favor of your x'ing*, and have it be false of you that, for some reasons R *that hold independently of your y'ing, your y'ing helps you to* [do *x* as the result of your belief that you should *x* in virtue of R]).

This differs from (6) only in the italicized phrases. For "your *y*'ing helps you to" substitute "you". The insistence on reasons "that hold independently of your *y*'ing" makes (6') more plausible than (6) by insisting, plausibly enough, that the reasons for which you act be facts that hold independently of your act. And the first phrase makes (6') more plausible than (6) by restricting its attention to stuff you do as a result of attitudes in favor of that stuff. Presumably your knocking over the cookie jar despite your lacking any belief that you should knock it over violates a rational requirement only where the upsetting of the jar figures in the content of the attitudes that lead you to do it.

If it seems to you that (6') is true, and that (8) is true, and that those two principles are of a piece insofar as they require that your production of your acts be governed by your recognition of reasons for those acts that hold independently of their production, then you should mark in (9)'s favor the fact that it's an exact general requirement to that effect and that it subsumes the principles (6') and (8).

F

I've been talking about intrapersonal instances of (9) for which A is you. But why suppose that (9) is true only where A is you? That is not a rhetorical question either. But until I can answer it, I'm ready to believe that the full interpersonal principle—(9) for any value of A—is true.

I mean to appeal to a thesis of publicity:

(10) If A should have some attitude toward A's *x*'ing, and if B can also have that attitude toward A's *x*'ing, and if nothing in sight counts against B's having that attitude toward A's *x*'ing, then B should also have that attitude toward A's *x*'ing.

Consider the attitude *trying to bring it about that A does x, if at all, only as the result of A's recognition of reasons that hold independently of your bringing this act about*. I've argued that you should take the version of this attitude for which you're A. But you can also have the version of it for which I'm A. And the publicity principle (10) says that, in the absence of considerations against your having it, you should have it. So there's a case for (1).

IV

A

Coercion is not the only thing that (1) condemns. Force, deceptive manipulation, and plays upon persons' emotions are also often forbidden by it. So are certain offers.

This brings an objection. Most offers are not, after all, wrong like coercive threats. When from across the cafeteria table I tell you "I'll give you my chips if you give me your pretzels" I'm leading you to do something—surrender a salty snack—that, as it may be, you don't have sufficient reason to do independently of my offer. Apparently this violates (1). But it is no less apparently irreproachable.

B

Though it might be that you don't have sufficient reason to give me your pretzels, it might also be that, because pretzels are good for me and chips good for you,

(11) We should do (I give you the chips, you give me the pretzels).

It might be that you and I are subject to a *joint requirement* that we perform that set of acts—that (11) is true of us, and that there is no conjunction of individual requirements of the form *I should do this, you should do that* such that (11) consists in or holds in virtue of the conjunction. I argue in a side paper that there are some joint requirements.

If (11) holds at all, it holds independently of my offer. And my offer aids in your playing your part in the pair it requires. You can't do your part unless I will do mine, without which there's no pair for yours to form part of. Letting you know that I'm ready to do mine allows you to opt for doing yours as a way of fulfilling (11). My offer helps you to come to do your part as the result of your accepting this offer-independent requirement that you and I together face.

I conclude that offers are OK by (1) where they can be understood as facilitating the other person's response to a joint requirement of the pair of acts that carry the offer out.

C

Not every offer is susceptible of vindication by this proposal. It is false that

(12) We should do (you work in my sweatshop to produce \$20 an hour, I give you \$1 an hour).

So my offer "I'll give you \$1 an hour if you work in my sweatshop" doesn't facilitate your response to an offer-independent joint requirement of carrying it out.

This observation is maybe the germ of a theory of exploitation. Exploitative offers, I imagine, are the ones that can't be justified as facilitating their recipients'

response to a joint requirement because the relevant acts are too lopsided, too asymmetrical in their reason-giving aspects, to be jointly required. Though they're not coercive, these offers draw a moral objection from the same source as condemns wrongful coercion: from (1), the morality of getting others to do things.

With this story about offers tacked up as a model, I turn to some other political incidents of that morality.

V

An idea that is much in the air.

(13) For some standard *S*, the fact that an institution satisfies *S* makes it the case that the acts of coercion that help to cause or constitute the institution are not wrong. We should bring it about that the institution satisfies *S* because this makes the relevant coercion not wrong. A society's being just consists in the fact that its institutions satisfy *S* or in the fact that, because they satisfy *S*, the coercive acts that cause or constitute them are not wrong.

The *point* of justice, seen from this view, is to purge our institutions of wrongful coercion. A patch of social life can be just or unjust only if it's regulated by coercive institutions that raise the one moral problem that only justice can solve. So the *scope* of justice coincides with the scope of those institutions. The *content* of justice's standards is determined by such considerations as justify coercion, and they owe their *urgency* to the requirement that we not wrong people when we coerce them.

These proposals are hard to get down. Here are a few difficulties.

Point and scope Why aim for a Rawlsian well-ordered society where people obey the liberal-egalitarian laws in the conviction that they're correct rather than for a nightmarishly inequality-ridden Lockean association of independent producers who obey the property laws because they're convinced Lockean? What reason does *justice* give you to aim for the first society? Each association is uncoerced. So the two are tied in respect of avoiding wrongful coercion. To break the tie you might take on

(14) A social arrangement's being just consists in the fact (a) that if coercion were involved in causing or constituting it, this coercion would be permissible; and (b) that it has some further morally valuable features.

But then it's tempting to find the whole nature of justice in (b). Justice is having the (b)-features, whatever they are. Having them justifies any coercion that arises. But that justification of coercion is no part of their justice.

Many people find it hard to believe in any case that standards of justice come into force only where people are trying to coerce one another. They think that these standards already recommend to people who've never before interacted that they aim for the strong patterns of allocation or interaction that justice demands.

Content and urgency A principle like (1) leaves no explicit room for morally decent coercion. If coercion is always wrong, there's no hope of working out the content of justice standards by asking what can make it OK. On the other hand it

seems that many acts of coercion are not wrong all things considered. But these appear to owe their permission to their promotion of or respect for urgent moral interests whose existence and force are independent of any moral constraints on coercion. The interest in protecting people from being killed, for example, justifies a coercive threat to imprison killers. Because these urgent independent interests are urgent and independent, the standards through which we honor or pursue them in our social life won't depend for their content or urgency on the avoidance of wrongful coercion. But then it's looking unlikely that a concern with coercion will impart a distinctive content or urgency to our political standards after all.

These complaints sound right to me, and they incline me against the coercion view. I'll now describe an alternative, centered on (1), that stands clear of these problems even as it joins the coercion view in claiming that moral requirements on action-directing action ground some special political standards.

VI

Though (1) covers other sins, let's hold the focus on coercion for a moment. What if anything can make it the case that coercion is not wrong?

A

A boring but credible suggestion. Often enough, declining to secure some urgent moral interest by coercive means draws an objection even stronger than (1) raises against the coercion. Then violating (1) is not wrong considering all things.

Perhaps the moral badness of severe poverty is enough to license the coercive enforcement of taxes to help poor people. But the moral interest in furnishing poor people with the things they lack has got to be strong, quite strong, if it's to overcome (1). Presumably that weighty interest already recommends with all its coercion-independent weight that political communities act to end poverty even before coercive projects of tax collection cross their minds.

This is the content problem that I described in the last section. The problem goes away when a second, maybe more interesting justification of coercion comes in.

B

Every dweller in our low town has the same interest in a levee's being built to hold back the floods. In virtue of those interests we face this joint requirement:

(15) We should do (each pitches in with labor and materials to make a levee that protects us all).

Suppose we're uncertain whether every person will recognize or act on (15). Then we might announce that, if anyone holds out, we'll pump water into her house, taking as part of our reason for this announcement that, if a person doesn't in the end recognize (15), the announcement will lead her to contribute.

I claim that this announcement is reconciled with (1) by the consideration that, if I do in the end recognize (15), the announcement will have helped me to contribute as a result of my belief in (15). Where the announcement turns out *ex post* to be coercive, it's justified by the *ex ante* prospect that this same announcement helps to make it the case that I contribute because I accept (15).

The announcement does this work by assuring me that the others will contribute. When I look forward to seeing them heave their sandbags onto the wall, I also know that by showing up with my own bag I can play my part of the set mentioned in (15).

But the form of this assurance is quite special. I don't claim only that the utterance of this announcement addressed to the others assures me that they'll contribute. For this wouldn't show that the addressing of it *to me* aids my own response to (15). And that's what required if the announcement I hear is not to violate (1).

My thought is instead that the threat's being addressed to me helps me to contribute on the basis of my acceptance of (15), by helping to make it morally OK to address the announcement to every other person in a way that assures me that she will do her part. It's a criss-cross justification:

(16) For every person *i*,

(A(i)) We address the announcement to *i* in part so that, if she doesn't in the end recognize (15), she nonetheless contributes;

and A(i) is justified by the fact

(B(i)) We address the announcement to *i* in part so that, if she does in the end recognize (15), she can act on it;

and B(i) is justified by the fact

(C(i)) For every *j* other than *i*, A(*j*) holds, assuring *i* that *j* will contribute, and B(*j*) and C(*j*) hold, justifying A(*j*).

Here it's true of every person, every node of this totally connected justificatory graph, that addressing the announcement to that person helps her to respond to (15) by ensuring that the others can be led to do what (15) asks of them without being themselves wronged in the eyes of (1).

VII

A

For any group of us, there are things we should do. We have several ways of getting the members of our group to do these jointly required things. We can make potentially coercive announcements like the ones I just considered. Each can commit herself to following centrally chosen rules and then try with the others to establish rules directing each to play her part of the jointly required sets. We can try to persuade one another that each should play her part because the set is jointly required while assuring each that the others will play theirs by effecting their persuasion. Beyond these direct means of arranging our acts into the required set by invoking that set as part of the content of our coercive announcements, our rules, or our arguments, we can also use coercion, rules, and arguments to bring action about whose own effects will in turn lead people to do the jointly required acts. Though each human's next move is unpredictable—that's why we love the human!—the central tendency of the action of many humans is somewhat more predictable. We can make it the indirect target of our coercion, our rules, and our arguments.

One of the things we should do, I think, is to induce a mixture of coercion, jointly adopted rules, argument, and the indirect manipulation of people's action by

manipulation of the foreseeable consequences of coercion, rule, and argument—a mixture of those that will lead us all to do the various other things we’re jointly required to do.

This action-directing ensemble has two virtues. First, there’s a bunch of stuff that we should do, and by aiming for this ensemble we can bring ourselves to do all of that. But, second, we can uphold (1) in our attempts to get people to do things if we aim for this ensemble. This is unproblematic where the argumentative and the rule-making components are concerned: rational persuasion and the fine-tuning of rules that each undertakes to obey as a way of doing her part are morally decent ways of directing people’s action. But the potentially coercive and the indirectly manipulative components are also eligible for approval by (1). For the *ex post* coercion or manipulation of a person might be justified in the “criss-cross” fashion of VI.B; it might be justified as helping that person [to do her part because she accepts that the set is required.]

B

I’m not quite ready to identify a society’s being just with its having this ensemble in place. Having these *institutions* in place, I might as well say. But consider what such an equation would make of the problems of point, scope, content, and urgency.

Point One point of aiming for the just ensemble is strictly negative. We can avoid wrongfully misdirecting other persons’ action if we direct their action only by aiming for the just-making institutions. But there is a second, positive rationale for that program. Between aiming for a just uncoerced association, aiming for one that’s not just, and refraining from association altogether, we should go for the just one because we’re jointly required to do the things we’re led to do under it.

Scope Every person shares with all other persons near, far, past, present, and future—no matter whether and how she may now be interacting with them—a reason to aim for the just society so that we do things that we should do. In this cosmopolitan conclusion the proposal agrees with divided-world luck-egalitarians and other desert-island cosmic-justice types. But unlike them the proposal can’t make out a presently effective individual duty to aim for a just world society. Each of us should now expect most other people to fail to participate in the institution-making that’s jointly required of us on a world scale. So none of us has in virtue of that requirement alone an individually effective reason to get it started.

For some *content* and *urgency*, at last, take a look at three political standards.

VIII

A. *Equality*

I assume that, where people have similar interests in the common effects of all their actions, they face requirements to perform a set of acts that advances those interests in similar degrees. Not for deep egalitarian reasons, just on grounds of indifference. At high-enough levels of abstraction that similarity condition is surely met: our interests in leading good lives, for example, are presumably

indistinguishable. If that's right, we're jointly required to aim for sets of acts that, as it happens, distribute life's goods in a rough equality.

We can accept these requirements without supposing that the worst-off people can raise a stringent personal objection against every failure to meet them. An A who lives in the lowest ward has, I imagine, no stringent objection to B's, C's, and D's building a levee that protects only their higher ground, even if this construction falls short of the requirement (15).

But A should cry foul when B, C, and D try to impress her into building their too-low levee. For it's false that

(17) A, B, C, and D should do (each person pitches in to make a levee that protects B, C, and D).

Directing A to work on a levee can't be justified by something like (17), only by something like the egalitarian (15). B, C, and D wrong A by directing her to work on any but an egalitarian levee.

The boring justification of coercion held out for urgent moral interests strong enough to overturn (1)'s prohibition of wrongness. The interesting justification of coercion looks elsewhere. A joint requirement can serve not to override the principle (1) but to make certain ex post coercion OK by it. The requirement that plays this role, since it need not best (1), need not be grounded in reasons of any particular moral stringency. So where we affirm that (1) does ground stringent political standards their stringency can be the creature of (1) itself.

A's story makes a good example. Her loud complaint against being led to work for any but an egalitarian levee owes its severity to (1) and not to the antecedently mild requirement that the people build that kind of levee.

B. Liberty

The so-called interesting justification of getting people to do things runs on genuinely joint requirements. If each person's interests are affected only by her own toothbrushing, an apparent requirement like

(18) We should do (I brush my teeth, you brush your teeth)

decomposes into a pair of individual ones like

(19) I should brush my teeth.

You should brush your teeth.

It's not joint. And there's nothing joint here to justify a coercion of your toothbrushing.

More generally where there's no interaction between the reason-giving features of what I do and the reason-giving features of what you do, there'll be no joint requirement that can make the extrarational manipulation of any one of us alright. So you have a kind of Harm Principle. Extrarational interference with my action gets a pass only where other people have the sort of stake in it that can make it part of something that all the people should do.

The view also contains, along with this Millian liberty, a Rawlsian one. To justify your directing a person's action requires at least some prospect that, starting where she starts, she will reach the judgment that she has reason to do what you're trying to get her to do. If there's no sound deliberative route from her initial beliefs to that

judgment, you fail that test. You can't credibly pretend to a facilitation of her response to the reasons she faces if there's no live chance of her coming to recognize them by reason alone.

C. Democracy

I've been talking about a project, justice, by which we can get ourselves to do things that we should do. If we do this right—if we honor liberty by directing our action in a way that takes account of our common status as persons whose acts are to be governed by their own beliefs about the independent reasons that support them—we'll have helped each person to act from her recognition that her action forms part of the equality-bent patterns in which we should act. Each will do what she will because it's part of what we should. I think that this fact will make it true of us that we act together, that acting together on large scales up to the scale of all humanity is valuable for its own sake, and that the value it realizes is democracy.

These thoughts have me thinking, of liberty, equality, democracy, and justice, that we can't have one without the others.⁵

Notes

1. By putting several acts or attitudes in parenthesis I emphasize that they form the compound object of the *should not* which they follow. By putting an entire verb phrase in square brackets I put the focus on the full course of action and deliberation that it describes.

2. I've helped myself here to a boring conception of freedom on which a person counts as being unfree not to x in virtue of her lacking an alternative to x'ing and as being less free not to x in virtue of her having fewer or worse alternatives to x'ing. It's not a very good conception. It stands little chance of explaining many of the central judgments that we express by talking about freedom. But no matter. The view I'm criticizing holds precisely that coercion is wrong because it makes us in this boring way less free.

3. See "Joint requirements", section V, for a sketch of an argument for wrongness that remains to be fit into this paper.

4. Keeping my promise from III.A. When you make a target of your future conduct, locking it in the sights of your planning, you don't act routinely or idly or otherwise acceptably unthinkingly. So the subrational episodes that threatened complication for (6) don't come up. That's why I decided to ignore them.

5. Thanks to Richard Arneson, Anne Barnhill, Selim Berker, David Bordeaux, Lindsey Chambers, Jerry Cohen, Ashley Feinsinger, Elizabeth Harman, Barbara Herman, Pamela Hieronymi, Louis-Philippe Hodgson, Adam Hosein, Waheed Hussain, Sean Ingham, Sari Kisilevsky, Steven Lukes, Adam Masters, Mike Martin, Ben McKean, Thi Nguyen, Japa Pallikathayil, Georgios Pavlakios, Philip Pettit, Thomas Pogge, Ira Richardson, Matthias Risse, Andrea Sangiovanni, Tim Scanlon, Micah Schwartzman, Sophie Siow, Lucas Stanczyk, Nicos Stavropoulos, Anna Stiliz, Tiffany Teeman, Sabine Tsuruda, Laura Valentini, Emmanuel Voyiakos, Stephen "UCLA" White, and Andrew Williams. I took a lot of good direction from Pallikathayil's unpublished *Your money or your life* and from White's unpublished "What's wrong with coercion?".