
Intending the Intender (Or, Why Heidegger Isn't Davidson)

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For several years I have been attempting to convince Hubert Dreyfus that the early Heidegger can be profitably compared with Donald Davidson. In this chapter I take up this challenge yet again, but with a twist. I start by pointing out what have come to seem to me obvious points of similarity between Davidson and Heidegger concerning the nature of intentionality. But, I then ask, if Heidegger and Davidson are so similar, why do they appear so different? The answer is that Heidegger *seems* to give a certain priority to first person approaches to intentionality that Davidson denies, but that this seeming emphasis is merely apparent. Having said this, I go on to suggest that Heidegger does have a unique view of the relation between self-directed intentions and intentions directed toward other entities that distinguishes him not only from Davidson, but also from everyone else.

My positive thesis regarding the difference between Heidegger and Davidson has three parts. First, Heidegger holds with much of the Continental tradition, but against Davidson, that there are two intentional aspects of every intentional state: an intention directed toward the object of that state and an intention directed toward the one who has that state. On this view, part of what it is for me to intend a hammer, for example, is for me to intend myself. This thesis crucially distinguishes Heidegger from Davidson. But, second, virtually the entire Continental tradition interprets this supposed constraint on intentionality in terms of self-presence. And it is easy to interpret

Heidegger as accepting this view, while Davidson rejects it, thus severing the tie between intentionality and consciousness. I argue, however, that Heidegger also rejects this understanding of the relation between self-directed intentions and intentionality in general. Instead, I argue that for Heidegger, all intentionality involves intending an entity as an entity of one sort or another, and, given the distinctive normative character that Heidegger holds is central to the intentionality of Dasein, to intend an entity as having some specific determination is also to intend oneself as a Dasein of some particular sort. The intention of self that is involved in all intentionality does not, for Heidegger, involve any consciousness or presentation of self, even in the form of "what it is like" to be Dasein. Rather, the very intention that is correctly describable as a taking of something as a shoe, for example, is always necessarily also correctly describable as a taking of the intender as a certain sort of Dasein:

The shoemaker is not the shoe; but shoe gear, belonging to the equipmental texture of his environing world, is intelligible as the piece of equipment that it is only by way of the particular world that belongs to the existential constitution of the Dasein as being-in-the-world. In understanding itself by way of *things*, the Dasein understands itself as being-in-the-world by way of its world. The shoemaker is not the shoe but, existing, he is his world.¹

The third part of my thesis is that when we properly understand this dark saying, we also understand what is distinctive, and important, about Heidegger.

I Intentionality, Representation, and Consciousness

Let us begin with Davidson's and Heidegger's common enemy: Rene Descartes. Here is the central Cartesian picture. The mind is a substance whose essential attribute is thinking. This claim has two parts. First, to be a substance is to be an entity whose being is logically independent of the being of any other entity. So, even though it may be true that entity A is causally dependent on entity B, as long as what it is for A to be is specifiable independently of any relation which A might have to B or anything else, then A counts as a substance. Second, all of the attributes of the substance which is the mind are

modifications of thought, where the extension of the term "thought" includes "everything that is within us in such a way that we are immediately aware of it."² That is, to be a thinking thing is to be a substance such that it is essential to the substance's attributes that the substance is aware of those attributes. For a Cartesian, nothing belongs to me which is not *conscious*; or, as Descartes himself puts it: "We cannot have any thought of which we are not aware at the very moment when it is in us."³ Although a thinking substance might have some determinations which are not conscious, all of these are modifications of consciousness, in the sense that they are dispositions to think, or possible thoughts, or abilities to think, and so forth.

The other pillar of the Cartesian view of the mental is that all thoughts involve ideas, where an idea is "the form of any given thought, immediate perception of which makes me aware of the thought."⁴ The Cartesian asserts that every conscious event, and thus every thought, has a form, and these events are typed and identified according to their form. It is by the "immediate perception" of this form that the thinker is "immediately aware" of her thought. The form of a thought, by which it is typed and of which the thinker is immediately aware, is also the *content* of the thought, in the sense that this thought, in virtue of its form, amounts to a representation of some object. In virtue of that representational relation with that object, it is intentionally directed toward that object. Finally, since thoughts are the thoughts they are in virtue of their form, which is immediately perceived by the thinker, the nature of her thoughts and what they represent are transparently presented to the thinker.

Cartesians thus believe: (1) The mind is a substance; (2) All mental states are conscious; (3) A state has intentional content just in case it is conscious; (4) A conscious mental state is intentional in virtue of its character as a representation; (5) What is represented in a mental state is transparent to the thinker.

So, how is Donald Davidson similar to the early Heidegger? They both reject all of 1-5. Moreover, they both reject 1-5 for the same reasons and in the same way.

Let's start with proposition (1), that the mind is a substance. The mind, or self, is not a substance for either Heidegger or Davidson, if

"by *substance* we can understand nothing other than a thing which exists in such a way as to depend on no other thing for its existence."⁵

For Davidson, a person is simply an entity which has mental states. Davidson follows Brentano in identifying mental states with intentional states ("the distinguishing feature of the mental is not that it is private, subjective, or immaterial, but that it exhibits what Brentano called intentionality"⁶), but distinguishes himself by insisting that if we use the criterion of intentionality to distinguish the mental, then *actions* must also be seen as "mental". "[I]ntentional actions are clearly included in the realm of the mental along with thoughts, hopes, and regrets."⁷ Indeed, for Davidson, that non-action mental states are intentional depends upon their role in the rational explanation of behavior, teleologically or intentionally described, and the specific intentional content of any given state is a function of the specific role of that state in the explanation of behavior. "Adverting to beliefs and desires to explain action is therefore a way of fitting an action into a pattern of behavior made coherent by the theory. . . . there is a clear sense in which attributions of belief and desire, and hence teleological explanations of belief and desire, are supervenient on behavior more broadly described."⁸

Rational explanations are distinctive in that they appeal to *reasons*. Reasons are themselves distinctive in several ways. For a state of an individual to count as a reason it must be so related to a set of other possible states of that individual that if the person has the first state, (and perhaps some others), then the entity *should* have some of the others. If I believe that Gray is between Portland and Lewiston, and that Portland and Lewiston are thirty-five miles apart, then I *should* also believe that Gray is less than thirty-five miles from Portland. Similarly, if I want to go to Gray, and believe that Route 26 is the best way to get there, then all things equal, I *should* take Route 26. That is, it is essential to reasons as reasons that they belong to a system which stands under norms which specify the manner in which the states in the system should be related. An entity has reasons for what it does only if it stands under the inferential norms of rationality.

But when does an entity have states that stand under the normative constraints of rationality? Reasons not only specify what an agent ought to do, as reasons they also explain what the agent in fact does.

And, Davidson thinks, a being can count as standing under the normative constraints of rationality just to the extent that its reasons explain its behavior, and reasons explain behavior only to the extent that the entity in fact acts as it ought given its reasons. So, I stand under the constraints of rationality if my reasons explain most of my acts, and my reasons explain most of my acts if I tend to act rationally.

My beliefs and desires ought to be related to each other rationally. And, insofar as my acts can in fact be rationally explained, they *must* by and large be related to those beliefs and desires as they ought to be. So my acts being rationally explicable entails that my acts are generally coherent with each other and that my other mental states, my beliefs and desires, are generally consistent with each other and with my acts.

If to be a person is to be a being with mental states, and for a state to be mental is for it to be intentional, and a state is intentional only if it is an act or potentially involved in the rational explanation of acts, then an entity has intentional states only if she acts, and the conditions on being a person include whatever conditions there are on correctly describing a being as acting intentionally. It is a condition on acting intentionally that one act coherently, and for Davidson an entity can count as acting coherently and thus having mental states at all just in case it is possible to interpret it in such a way that most of what it does is successful and most of what it believes is true, (the doctrine which is called the "principle of charity"). Since these conditions involve specific relations between the entity and her environment, it follows that nothing can be a person, and nothing can count as a mental state, unless they are related in the right way to beings other than themselves.

This directly implies that no person can be a substance, if by a substance one means a being which needs no other being in order to be. For if a person must have mental states, and to be a mental state involves a relation between the person and some other thing, then what it is to be a person is only specifiable in terms of those relations, and nothing can be a person unless other things exist.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger quotes the Cartesian definition of substance which I cited above, and states that the categories of the

extant, such as substance, can not be used to articulate the self. But why not? In discussing this issue, Heidegger typically first reaffirms the Kantian point that the subject as thinker and agent can never be represented as such. Any such representation would present the self as if it were merely one object among others. And, since substance is a category which applies to and organizes representations, it never applies to the subject. As Kant says, "Consciousness in itself is not a representation . . . but a form of representation in general."⁹

Heidegger does not think that this critical stance toward Descartes is critical enough, however. And he is right. If to be a substance is to be a being such that it needs nothing else in order to be, then the subject as described is a substance. It is a substance because it is conceived as *consciousness*, and the notion of consciousness is essentially Cartesian. For Descartes, the paradigm acts of the subject, or mind, are conscious and self conscious; they are presentations of the self to the self which present beings other than the self. But since these presentations are conceived as *representations* it is thought that it is possible for the self and its representations to be even if what is represented is not. Perhaps, as Kant thinks, the subject must *think* objects in order to think itself, but what it is to be a subject (the form of representation of objects) can be specified independently of other beings, so, according to the definition, the subject is *ontologically* conceived as substance.

To complete the criticism of the conscious substance which Kant started, Heidegger reminds us that even for Kant, the I think is the I think something. To think something is to intend something. And, Heidegger believes, there is a necessary condition on the possibility of intending something, being-in-the-world. Since, as we shall see, being in the world demands the being of beings other than Dasein, Dasein cannot be without other beings: it is not a substance.

But what of the Cartesian claim that all mental states are conscious? Let us recall the central components of the Cartesian notion of consciousness. First, a thought is typed and identified by its form, which fixes its content by specifying what object the thought is about. Second, it is essential to a thought that it is immediately and completely known by the thinker. That it is so known is a function of the Cartesian claim that the form of the thought, the idea which the

thought embodies, is an object of "immediate perception". Since the content of a thought is essential to it, and it is necessary that a thought be completely known by its thinker, it follows that the person who thinks a thought has a complete knowledge of the form of that thought, in virtue of which knowledge she also has complete knowledge of what is intended in the thought and the manner in which it is intended.

For Davidson, thoughts so understood are simply impossible:

If a thought is constituted the thought it is by the mind's knowledge of the identifying object, then someone knows what thought she is thinking only if she knows what object she has in mind. Yet there seems to be no clear meaning to the idea of knowing which object one has in mind. The trouble is that ignorance of even one property of an object can, under appropriate circumstances, count as not knowing which object it is. This is the reason philosophers who have wanted to found knowledge on infallible identification of objects have sought objects that, like Hume's impressions and ideas, "Are what they seem and seem what they are"—that is, have all and only the properties we think they have. Alas, there are no such objects. . . . Not even appearances are everything we think they are.¹⁰

We can understand *why* Davidson thinks this if we recall his views on what thoughts *are*. Thoughts are states of agents which can be appealed to in the course of giving rational explanations of intentional action. Such states are intentional and have content solely in virtue of their roles in such explanations. So "what a thought is about" which identifies the thought as the thought which it is, is solely a function of its relations to other mental states, thoughts and actions. And there is no reason to think that the person who has a thought has any special access to *those* relations. So even though we can monitor our own states in ways in which others cannot monitor them, it does not follow from this that we can know *the intentional content of our thoughts* in ways in which others cannot. Nor does it follow that if we do not monitor one of our states in this way, that it is not a thought.

For a Cartesian, a state is intentional in virtue of its representing its object. This claim amounts to the thesis that it is in virtue of the state which is intentional, I, standing in the representation relation R to object O that I intends O. It is because the Cartesian thinks that

I stands in this relation R to O in virtue of the form of I, and this form is transparent to the thinker, that she thinks that the content of I is transparent to the thinker. But Davidson rejects the notion that the content of I is fixed by its transparently available form. Rather, Davidson thinks that the intentional content of a mental item is a function of its role in the rational explanation of the pattern of an agent's behavior, and since there is no reason to think that this relation, E, is in any way similar to R, there is no reason to think that intentional states are representations. "Beliefs are true and false, but they represent nothing. It is good to be rid of representations."¹¹

So Davidson rejects 2–5 just as completely as he rejects 1. For Davidson, agents are not Cartesian substances, mental states, though intentional, need not be conscious, their intentional content is not transparent to the thinker, and mental states represent nothing. But where does the early Heidegger stand on consciousness, representation, and intentionality?

These issues are complicated in Heidegger by his Husserlian upbringing. As Husserl clearly rejected the notion that intentionality was a matter of representation, it was easy for the early Heidegger to reject this view as well. For Heidegger the key point was that any intentional act is directed toward its object, not a representation of an object. When I see a chair it is the chair itself which I am intending, not any ghostly mental object. "When I look, I am not intent upon seeing a representation of something, but the chair."¹² "To say that I am in the first place oriented toward sensations is all just pure theory. In conformity with its sense of direction, perception is directed toward the extant being itself. It intends this precisely as extant and knows nothing at all about sensations that it is apprehending."¹³

What leads us to think that there must be representations immediately present to the mind through which we are related to an object is the relational character of intentions and intentional discourse. When I see the chair it seems that there is *something* which I see, as the verb "to see" here takes an object. But *the chair* itself need not be there, or be at all, as the fact of hallucination makes clear. So the relation cannot be a real relation between me and the chair, as real relations presuppose the existence of both relata. This suggests that

there must be another object, distinct from me and the chair, to which I am related and through which I might perhaps be related to the chair. The problem Heidegger sees with this, however, is that seeing the chair, for example, is an activity which takes *the chair* itself as object, not any chair representation.

Thus, we have a puzzle. Intentional states are typed and identified by the object toward which they are directed. But the intentional character of these states cannot be understood as a relation between these states and the actual object toward which they are directed, nor can it be understood as a relation between the intentional states and some mental representation of the real object. Heidegger's solution to this puzzle is to take the directedness toward, which is the defining property of the intentional, as an intrinsic, nonrelational property of the intentional comportment itself. Thought transcends itself towards its object in virtue of its own essential character as directedness toward, so the thought need not involve a real relation with its object, whether that object is conceived as actual or merely mental. Thoughts are about their objects; they do not represent those objects.

This solution to the puzzle raises as many problems as it solves. For, what is it for an intentional comportment to be open to or directed toward its object in its very nature? What must a state *be* to be intentional? What must a person *be* if she is to have intentional states? The properties of substances are either intrinsic properties, in which case they characterize the substance apart from any relations that substance has to any other entity, or the properties are relational, in which case the property involves a relation between the substance with the property and some other existing being. It is impossible for the properties of classically conceived substances to involve relations to something else *in-themselves*.

In the lecture courses prior to the composition of *Being and Time*, Heidegger frequently assumes the orthodox Cartesian position that the realm of intentionality is coextensive with the realm of consciousness. Nevertheless, by the time we get to the text of *Being and Time*, the word "Bewusstsein" has virtually disappeared from Heidegger's lexicon. Why is this? There are strong programmatic considerations undermining Heidegger's adherence to Cartesian

orthodoxy. Heidegger needs to answer the question regarding what sort of being can have states which relate to others, even though those others need not exist. And in response to this question he asserts that only an entity whose being is characterized as being-in-the-world can count as having such states. But what is it to be in the world and what sort of states are paradigmatic of entities which are in such a way as to be in the world?

Heidegger gives the following list of "modes of in-being belonging to everydayness", and the list remains pretty constant throughout the period of *Being and Time*: "Working on something with something, producing something, cultivating and caring for something, putting something to use, employing something for something, holding something in trust, giving up, letting something get lost, interrogating, discussing, accomplishing, exploring, considering, determining something."¹⁴

Heidegger characterizes the common denominator of these states as "concern", but from the standpoint provided by the puzzle of intentionality, another aspect of this list jumps out at you. All of these states involve overt behavior of embodied persons, overt behavior which is described in intentional terms. And, from the standpoint of the intentionality puzzle, what is striking is that each of these states demands *some* relation between an agent and its environment, but need not involve a relation between the agent and the object which is mentioned in the characterization of the act itself. When I am doing something which is correctly characterized as attempting to produce a widget, I must interact with my environment in some definite way, but as yet there is no widget for me to enter into relationship with. So, when I am in the state of producing a widget, I am both directed toward the widget, and in no real relationship with any widget.

But this is just what is required for a solution to the puzzle of intentionality. The intentional act of producing a widget is directed toward there being a widget, and in that sense directed toward the widget. But this being directed toward the widget of the production involves no relation to any widget. Thus insofar as Heidegger holds that the being-in-the-world of an agent is the necessary condition of all intentionality, we can say of the early Heidegger precisely what we said of

Davidson, that an entity has intentional states only if she acts, and the conditions on being a person include whatever conditions there are on correctly describing a being as acting intentionally.

The act centered answer to the puzzle of intentionality, an answer which suggests that intentional acts can be directed toward their objects without those acts being in a real relation to those objects, but only if the act involves a relation between the agent and other actual entities, demands that being conscious of oneself as attempting to produce something is not *sufficient* to guarantee that one is really attempting to produce. But is consciousness of one's attempt *necessary* for production, as Descartes thinks, or is it unnecessary, as Davidson thinks? Since each of these types of intentional activity are fundamentally overt doings, even if they are described in intentional terms, there does not seem any particular necessity that the agent *knows* what she is doing while she is doing it. In everydayness Dasein does not find herself by reflecting on the state she is in while she is performing an act: there is no moment of self-reflective consciousness built in to the act itself. Rather, we find ourselves, as ourselves, precisely in our everyday activities, and not in any conscious reflection on them: "Each one of us is what he pursues and cares for. In everyday terms, we understand ourselves and our existence by way of the activities we pursue and the things we take care of."¹⁵

But does this Heideggerean specific lack of focal knowledge of ourselves as agent amount to the claim that self-consciousness in an act is unnecessary for the intentionality of that act? There are two things which should arrest us about the entirely typical passage I just quoted from the early Heidegger. First, the Cartesian analysis of intentionality in terms of consciousness, the claim that every intentional state directed toward an object is in addition an immediate transparent presentation of the self to itself, is rejected. For Heidegger there is something *deeply* wrong with the Cartesian conception of intentionality as consciousness. But second, for Heidegger there is also something *deeply* right in the claim that every intentional state in *some way* involves a self reference:

But the question remains, *In what way is the self given?* Not . . . in such a way that an "I think" accompanies all representations and goes along with the acts directed at extant beings, which thus would be a reflective act directed

at the first act. Formally, it is unassailable to speak of the ego as consciousness of something that is at the same time conscious of *itself*, and the description of the *res cogitans* as *cogito me cogitare*, or self-consciousness, is correct. But these formal determinations, which provide the framework for idealism's dialectic of consciousness, are nevertheless very far from an interpretation of the phenomenal circumstances of the *Dasein*. . . . We must first of all see this one thing clearly: the *Dasein*, as existing, is there for itself, even when the ego does not expressly direct itself to itself in the manner of its own peculiar turning around and turning back, which in phenomenology is called inner perception as contrasted with outer. The self is there for the *Dasein* itself without reflection and without inner perception, *before* all reflection."¹⁶

So, we are left with the following attitude of Heidegger toward the Cartesian claim that all intentional states are conscious. If by this claim it is meant that every intentional state involves, in addition to its directedness toward an object, a self-referential intention directed toward the person with that state, then Heidegger is willing to grant that Descartes was right. If, on the other hand, it is claimed that this self-reference involves an immediate specific awareness of one's own intentional state as one's own intentional state, then Heidegger claims that the Cartesian tradition is wrong. And, as the notion of consciousness is usually taken to involve the latter determination as well as the first, we must conclude that Heidegger agrees with Davidson in denying that all intentional states must be conscious.

The strong emphasis on the necessarily self-referential character of all intentionality serves to sharply distinguish Heidegger from Davidson, however. Davidson believes that nothing can have beliefs and desires which is incapable of having beliefs and desires about itself, as he holds that only linguistic beings have beliefs and desires, and that intentions of the third order are necessary for language. Further, for Davidson all intentional states are and must be states of some person; as mental states only come as a holistic package, and that package amounts to a teleological theory of a person, if there is a mental state, then it is necessarily the state of a person. But, following the German tradition to which he is the heir, Heidegger also holds that the intentionality of *each intentional state* requires an intentional directedness toward the being which has this state, and there is nothing in Davidson which is analogous to this condition.

II Self-reference, Consciousness, and Action

How are we to understand the element of self-reference which Heidegger thinks is essential to all overt intentional action? The paradigm case of intentions directed toward the self are to be discerned in practical intentions which are primarily directed toward entities other than the self. So when it is said that one finds oneself in what one pursues and cares for, what this implies is that while one is working on a pair of shoes, the primary intentional object is the shoes, and not oneself. But nevertheless, insofar as one intends the shoes as products to be produced, the hammer and nails as tools to be used in that productive act, and another person as the customer for whom the shoes are to be made, one is also intending oneself as *shoemaker*. But what is it to intend oneself in that way?

There is a temptation in Heidegger himself to think of the self-reference which he holds to be essential to each intentional state as if it were just like consciousness, except that our self-awareness is horizontal rather than focal, as ordinary objects of consciousness have traditionally been taken to be. Such an understanding of the self-reference of intentionality is a development of the Kantian notion that self-consciousness is to be found in the form of representation rather than as a representation. On this view, for me to be working on the shoes is for me to be consciously *focused* on the shoes, but, given the form of intentionality involved, this focus is only possible if I am aware of myself as well as an aspect of the horizon in which the shoes are focal.

Were we to interpret him in this way, Heidegger would reject Cartesian principles (1), (4), and (5): the mind is not a substance; mental states are not intentional in virtue of being representations; and the content of mental states need not be transparent to the thinker. Heidegger would remain committed, however, to two central aspects of Cartesianism. He would hold that all mental states are conscious and that a state is intentional just in case it is conscious, even though he would have reinterpreted the nature of consciousness. Such an interpretation of Heidegger, in which intentionality remains associated with a nonfocal conscious presence of self to self, cannot be maintained, however.

To see that this interpretation of Heidegger is incoherent we need to go back and look once again at what could be meant by the suggestion that the intentional activity of, for example, producing a widget, is a paradigmatic case of being-in-the-world, and that being-in-the-world is necessary for all intentionality. There are two ways to understand what is meant when one says that someone is attempting to produce a widget. The traditional interpretation is that when one produces a widget one has a representation of a widget in mind and that this representation of the widget guides the act of production. On this view, an act of production is an act of production if it is guided in the right way by an internal widget representation. This view is highly congenial to the Cartesian understanding of the relation between consciousness and intentionality. If an overt act has the intentional directedness it does only if it is related to a certain sort of representation, it is natural to think that that representation must be a conscious one, and that whatever intentionality actions have must be parasitic on the intentionality of conscious thought. So on the traditional view, there is no formal necessity that (attempting to) produce involves the agent actually engaging with entities other than herself. Even if I am in thrall to an evil demon, I can have widget representations which are related to other conscious intentional states of mine in such a way that I can count as attempting to build a widget. But on the traditional view it is formally impossible that I could attempt to produce a widget and not be conscious of that fact.

Alternatively, one can think that a certain behavior is directed in the way it is in virtue of its relations with other behavior. On this view, "Adverting to [mental intentions] to explain action is . . . a way of fitting an action into a [coherent] pattern of behavior."¹⁷ According to this second model, it is not the case that overt behavior counts as directed toward producing a widget in virtue of its relation with some mental representation. Rather, one has internal mental intentions only insofar as they are related in the right way with overt behavior which is rationally coherent in attempting to attain a goal.

Which of these understandings of "producing something" does Heidegger have in mind when he says that being in the world is a necessary condition of intentionality, and that producing something

is a paradigm case of being in? Well, it cannot be the first model. If attempting to produce a widget demands that one has an internal intention that would be intentional even if there were no things other than the thinker for her to act on, then it would be incoherent to say that attempting to produce a widget is a paradigm of being in and there are no intentional states without being in. For in that case there would be such states without being in, precisely those intentional states which are necessary for an overt act to count as an attempt to produce a widget. That is to say, the intentional character of overt acts cannot be explained by appealing to the intentionality of internal mental states if one maintains, as Heidegger does, that those internal states could not be intentional unless there were intentional action. To do so would be to privilege the intentionality of internal mental states at the same time that one is asserting the priority in regard to intentionality of action. So, for Heidegger, the intentionality of overt action cannot be grounded in the intentionality of internal mental states. But it is only for such internal states that one is tempted to link intentionality with consciousness, focal or nonfocal. So one cannot coherently interpret the Heideggerean requirement that every intention directed toward an object is also an intention directed toward the intender as an assertion that every intention involves a nonfocal self presentation.

Thus it is wrong to think that Heidegger is different from Davidson in virtue of his holding that there is a lived experience involved in every intentional state, and that determinate intentionality demands self-presence. Heidegger does indeed think that every intentional state also implicitly intends its intender. It is, however, a mistake to think that Heidegger believes that we should understand this intention of the self in terms derived from the notion of self-consciousness.

III Self Reference and Practical Explanation

Davidson thinks that a state has intentional content just in case it is an act, could play a role in the rational explanation of acts, or is rationally related to states which could play a role in such explanation. Heidegger thinks that only an entity which is in the world in

such a way as to act could have intentional states. On either of these views, the ability of an entity to act is a necessary condition on that entity having any intentional states whatsoever, and what it is for a state to have any intentional content and the content which it has is determined by its relations with actions.

Actions are intentional, in the sense of being directed toward. What they are directed toward is the goal of the act. Most things in nature have no telos, they simply occur. Acts have a point, and that point is their end. For both Heidegger and Davidson one event can have a goal only if it is related in the right way to other events which have a goal. Indeed, for both of them, it is not only the case that there cannot be a single act, it is also the case that there can be no acts unless these acts are related in the right way to other intentional states which are not act events. Both Heidegger and Davidson are holists regarding action: a single act has a goal only if it is properly related to other events that have goals, and to the intentional states of an agent, and an agent has such intentional states only if it is related in the right way to acts which have goals.

But the devil is in the details. What way of being related is the "right" way of being related for events to count as acts? And what sorts of ends do these relations bestow? Davidson's answer to this question adverts to the familiar homilies of belief/desire psychology and instrumental reason. Heidegger, however, thinks that only agents who are in the world act, that the paradigmatic acts of such agents involve tool use, in which the agent intends the tool as a tool, and that all such tool use involves an intention by the agent toward herself, an intention which intends the agent as an agent of some definite sort. Indeed, for Heidegger it is proper to say that action not only involves an intention directed toward the agent's own person, it is also correct to say that the act has a dual end; it is both in order to realize some definite state of affairs within the world and, in addition, for the sake of constituting the agent as an agent of a certain sort. It is this difference in the understanding of action which lies at the center of the important difference between Heidegger and Davidson regarding intentionality. For Davidson, one acts if one has some coherent set of beliefs and desires. But for

Heidegger every act involves in addition an interpretation and constitution of oneself as an agent of some definite type. Let me expand on this difference.

For Davidson, an event is an act if it is part of a pattern of events which are coherent in the sense that they are integrated into a system in which, by and large, the agent does what she should do, given her reasons for action. Those reasons, in turn, are understood in terms of the agent's beliefs and desires. An individual act is rational, in the shallowest sense, if it is an act which the agent should perform given the belief and desire of the agent which explain that act. So it is rational for me to flip the switch if I believe that doing so will turn on the light and I want the light to be on. Conversely, the content of a given state is partially fixed by the normative role of that state in the system of the agent's acts. Roughly, for a state to be the belief that flipping the switch will turn on the light is for it to be a state such that, given that one is in that state, if one also had the desire to turn on the light, then, *ceteris paribus*, one should flip the switch. These relations suggest that one interpret the goal or telos of an act as the realization of a state of affairs which satisfies the desire which rationalizes the act. I believe that flipping the switch will turn on the light, and I want the light to be on, so I should flip the switch. I should flip the switch insofar as the flipping of the switch is an act which is toward the light being on. Thus the content of the desire which is ingredient in the explanation of the act is covariant with the direction or goal of the act itself. The telos or goal of my flipping the switch is that the light be on. That is, the telos of an act is just that the state of affairs which the agent desires be actual.

Understood in this way, it is clear that for Davidson the telos of activity involves a specification of some type of state of affairs which is to be made actual. If acts are events which fit into a pattern which is made coherent in part by specifying the desires which are part of their causes, then the end of the act is typically going to be that some state of affairs obtain that satisfies the desire that motivates the act. The content of the belief which is relevant to an act's explanation would then be that state of affairs, which, if it were actual, would make it rational for the agent to do as she does, given her desire.

The normativity involved in this sort of instrumental rationality ultimately derives from the ends which are specified by the desire of the agent and the means which are sufficient to realize those ends under a variety of possible circumstances. I should do that which in the actual circumstances would realize my desire. And, given the minimal conditions on rationality, I most often do that. But not always. One of the jobs of the concept of belief is to help fill in this gap. Often when I do what I should not, given my ends and the actual situation, I do what I should given my ends and my beliefs. So the content of my belief specifies the state of affairs under which I should have done what I in fact did do in order to realize my end.

From the perspective of the contrast between Davidson and Heidegger, what is striking about this account of the character of rational explanation and the goals of acts is the way in which it specifies those goals, and articulates the nature of reasons, in ways in which intentions directed toward the agent herself do not appear. The end of an act is that some state of affairs obtain; and there is no necessity that that state of affairs involve the agent. It is the case that the goal of the act covaries with the agent's desire, but what is desired may very well be that something other than the agent have some property. So Davidson does not emphasize that "The self is there for Dasein itself without reflection and without inner perception."¹⁸ And it is this claim which distinguishes Heidegger from Davidson.

But just *how* is the self there for Dasein itself? As in Davidson, so in Heidegger, the character of intentional comportments must be understood through the character of intentional action, and the character of intentional action must be understood by way of the reasons for that action. In the place where a Heideggerean theory of action should stand, however, we find an articulation of the being of tools and the being of the world in which these tools, and we ourselves, have our being. Why is this the case?

Action which involves equipment displays a characteristic type of normativity which is different in kind from that displayed by non-equipmental action. If I want water in the desert and believe that water is at the oasis then I should walk in the direction of the oasis; if I believe the oasis is west I should walk west; and if I believe that the sun sets in the west, the sun is setting over there, and that the

oasis is in the west, then I should also believe that water is over there. If I do or believe something which I should not, that I should not depends on the relation between what I believe or do and what I want. The only sense in which I should not do or believe something which is instrumental to one of my ends is that realizing that end might be incompatible with some further end of my own. There is a sense, however, in which a tool can be used incorrectly, even when it is used successfully to achieve some end of the agent. A hammer can be used successfully as a paperweight, but insofar as it is indeed a hammer, to use it in this way is to fail to use it as it should be used. It is to miss the fact that it *is* a hammer and not a paperweight; or, as Heidegger would put it, it is to fail to understand the being of the hammer. So, insofar as human action involves using tools as tools, that is, as to be used in certain characteristic ways, human action involves a kind of normativity which is foreign to the nontool using animal kingdom.

What is it for something to be a tool? Characteristically, Heidegger approaches this ontological question by way of a discussion of the related issue of what it is to intend something as a tool. And, for Heidegger, the primary manner in which we intend equipment as equipment is through using it as equipment: "The less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is—as equipment."¹⁹

But what is it to use something *as a tool*? One might think that to use, for example, a hammer as a hammer is to act out of a desire to make a nail fast and a belief that the nail could be made fast if one moves this object in just this, hammering, way. But Heidegger thinks that this is too simple. Tools are not merely things which *can* be used so as to achieve certain ends in certain circumstances. In fact, defective tools can be tools even if they are not capable of being used to achieve their characteristic ends: something is a defective *x* only insofar as it is to be used as an *x*. And objects which are capable of being so used need not be tools. Rather, tools are things which are to be used in certain ways, or should be used in certain ways. To intend something as a hammer is to intend it as an entity which *it is correct to use* in certain normatively described situations, with certain

other types of tools to achieve certain normatively described types of ends.

This "to be used" character of equipment cannot be derived from the ends of the agent. Indeed, this normative character of tools is rooted in the distinction between the ends for which the tool can be used and the ends for which it is to be used.

This distinction between merely instrumental and humanly equipmental types of normativity opens up two questions: (1) How, in practice, is genuine tool use, which involves taking something as equipment by using it as a thing which it is correct to use in a certain way, different from merely using an object instrumentally to achieve some desired actual state of affairs? (2) How do intentions directed toward a single tool involve intentions directed toward that tool's normative relations with other tools, and with Dasein itself, and thereby involve intentions directed toward Dasein?

While the first question is certainly important, in the present context it is more important to remind ourselves of Heidegger's answer to the second question:

The specific *thisness* of a piece of equipment, its *individuation*, if we take the word in a completely formal sense, is not determined primarily by space and time in the sense that it appears in a determinate space- and time-position. Instead, what determines a piece of equipment as an individual is in each instance its equipmental character and equipmental contexture. What then is it that constitutes the specific equipmental character of a piece of equipment? Equipmental character is constituted by what we call *Bewandtnis*, *functionality*. The being of something we use, for instance a hammer or a door, is characterized by a specific way of being put to use, of functioning. This entity is "in order to hammer", "in order to make leaving, entering, and closing possible". Equipment is "in order to".²⁰

But the "in order to" of a hammer, which is constitutive of its being a hammer, involves a necessary reference to other "in order tos", other normative tool types which together form a functionality whole, and I can treat this thing as a hammer, as something which it is appropriate to use in some definite way, only if I somehow intend the context of functional relations in which *anything* can count as a hammer. "The contexture of the what-for and in-order-to is a whole

of functionality relations. . . . The functionality whole, narrower or broader . . . is the prius, within which specific beings, as beings of this or that character, are as they are and exhibit themselves correspondingly. . . . A specific functionality whole is *pre-understood*."²¹

So for Heidegger I act in a human fashion insofar as I use tools as tools; I use tools as tools only if I use them as having characteristic ways in which it is correct or appropriate to use them; I intend a tool as having a correct way to be used only if I also intend the functional whole in which this normative characterization occurs. But Heidegger also holds that insofar as one intends such a functionality contexture, one also intends oneself as a certain *kind* of person. "In understanding a context of relations such as we have mentioned, Dasein has assigned itself to an 'in-order-to', and it has done so in terms of a potentiality-for-Being for the sake of which it itself is."²²

For Heidegger, when one of us uses a tool as the tool which it is, and thereby intends it to be correctly used in a certain way, we also intend ourselves as a certain type of person. When the shoemaker uses his equipment as shoemaker equipment he interprets himself as a shoemaker, for to be a shoemaker is to act as shoemakers are supposed to act, and shoemakers are supposed to act as they do when they use their tools as to be appropriately used in the correct situation along with other correctly used tools to achieve the appropriate ends of shoemaker activity. When I treat the shoemaker's equipment as to be used as shoemakers are supposed to use it, I acknowledge the norms which establish the being of shoemakers. Since shoemakers are nothing but agents who act as shoemakers act, for the reasons they act, every time I act as a shoemaker, that is, acknowledge the shoemaker's tool kit as to be used in the way shoemakers should use it, I also make myself *be* a shoemaker. It is not *my* ends which fix the manner in which the shoemakerly equipment is to be used, it is the ends which are definitive for being a shoemaker which do that. And when I treat those tools as having a correctness of use which is constituted by the shoemakerly ends, I identify myself as a shoemaker, for things have for me the significance which they have for those of us who are shoemakers. Thus my act, while it is correctly described as having the end of realizing some shoemakerly state of

affairs, such as there being a new pair of shoes, also has the telos of making me be a shoemaker; it is for the sake of some possibility of my human being:

The shoemaker is not the shoe; but shoe gear, belonging to the equipmental contexture of his environing world, is intelligible as the piece of equipment that it is only by way of the particular world that belongs to the existential constitution of the Dasein as being in the world. In understanding itself by way of things, the Dasein understands itself as being in the world by way of the world. The shoemaker is not the shoe but, existing, he is his world.²³

IV Conclusion

And this is why Heidegger is not Davidson, and why he offers something unique to the tradition. What Heidegger has to offer philosophy are two important insights having to do with the normative character of intentionality. The first is the insight that the normativity of human intentionality is different in kind from merely teleological action. Human action is tool using action, a tool is an object which is a tool insofar as it is appropriate to use it in some definite way, and one can use it as a tool only if one can use it as having some appropriate use. From this insight and the further premise that human action is the necessary foundation of human intentionality it follows that all human intentionality rests on a normative foundation of appropriate action. This first insight is not exclusive to Heidegger, however. One can surely find it in both Wittgenstein and Sellars, for example.

What is unique to Heidegger is the second insight. Tool using action is action which involves accepting proprieties of action, and acceptance of such proprieties at the same time is an acceptance of a certain style of human being. So to use an object as it is appropriate to use it according to a certain style of norm is also to choose, intend, and constitute oneself as one of those who accept that style of norm. The end of my act is at once that the environment come to be in some definite way and that I be a certain definite kind of person. My acting in a professorial manner has the dual telos of realizing an external end and constituting me a professor. I write

this chapter in order to publish it, but for the sake of my being a philosopher.

From this insight, together with the premise that all intentionality is rooted in relations with intentional action it follows that every intention involves a self-referential component, although this component need not be conscious. It is this appreciation of the essentially self-referential character of human intentionality which explains why it is that Heidegger isn't just Davidson in deep disguise.