

Overdetermination when Carrying Out an Intention: Ludwig and Bloomberg on the Sole Agency Requirement

Consider the following scenario: agent 007 poisons his nemesis food, Aristotle Kristatos, and unknown to him, 006 poisons Aristotle Kristatos' food as well, and Aristotle Kristatos dies. If 007 says "I killed Aristotle Kristatos" is he saying something true or false? Ludwig (2016, 2019) holds he would say something false. Moreover, Ludwig holds that neither 007, nor 006 executed their intention successfully. He argues that an action intended to be individual, excludes any co-agent (the sole agency requirement). Bloomberg (2019) argues against the sole agency requirement, and that both 007 and 006 executed their intention successfully. I side with Bloomberg and argue that since the example is a case of overdetermination, 007 (and 006) utters something true and both agents carried out their intention successfully. Ludwig (2019) argues that this case is similar with a wayward causal chain. I argue, on the contrary, that it is not and that 007 and 006's causal chains are disjoint. However, I argue that a modal formulation of the sole agency requirement can be compatible with 007 uttering something true and successfully executing his intention. Finally, I consider a critique to the modal formulation of the sole agency requirement and provide an answer to it.