

What is the role of desire in practical deliberation? Can the desire to perform an action justify performing that action? According to the most widely discussed theoretical conception of desires—namely, the *Guise of the Good Theory of Desires* (GG theory)—a desire plays the same role in practical deliberation as the belief, judgement, or perception that the desired action is good. Insofar as the belief, judgement, or perception that an action is good justifies performing said action, GG theory seems to entail that the desire to perform an action may justify performing the desired action. My dissertation attempts to cast doubt on the conception of desire suggested by GG theory by offering an alternative account, according to which the desire to perform an action (an *action-desire*) plays the same role in practical deliberation as being commanded to perform the relevant action. I refer to this account as the *Desire-as-Imperative Thesis*, which I argue is more theoretically and intuitively plausible than GG theory.

Furthermore, I argue that if one is commanded to perform an action, it is not the command itself that justifies performing the commanded action, but rather one's beliefs or judgements about the command (e.g., beliefs about the command's origin or goal). This highlights an important disanalogy between a command and a perceptual experience. While having particular beliefs or judgements about one's perceptual experience may be sufficient to undermine the justification it would otherwise provide (e.g., the belief that one has imbibed a powerful visual hallucinogen may undermine any justification one's visual experience would otherwise provide), it is not the case that having particular beliefs or judgements about one's perceptual experience is typically necessary for said experience to be justifying. For example, an agent does not necessarily have to believe that a particular auditory experience is reliable in order for that experience to provide her with justification. Hence, merely having a certain perceptual experience (in the absence of any beliefs or judgements about said experience) may be sufficient for that experience to be justifying. By contrast, simply being commanded to perform an action (in the absence of any beliefs or judgements about the command) does not seem sufficient to justify performing the commanded action.

Similarly, I maintain that it is not action-desires, but rather our beliefs or judgements about them, which justify performing the desired action. Of course, the beliefs or judgements that justify obedience to a command may be very different from the beliefs or judgements that justify acting on an action-desire. For example, while obedience to a command is typically justified by beliefs about the trustworthiness or authority of the person issuing the command, acting on a desire is typically justified by beliefs about the action desired. Hence, it is evident that an action-desire is like a command in every respect. But ultimately, what action-desires and commands have in common is that neither can justify the relevant action in the absence of particular beliefs or judgements about the desire and command, respectively.