

## Acting on Knowledge

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### Abstract

This paper develops and refines the analogy between knowledge and action (intentional doing) in *Knowledge and its Limits*. The general schema is: knowledge is to belief as action is to intention. The analogy reverses direction of fit (mind to world, world to mind). The knowledge/belief side of the analogy corresponds to the inputs to practical reasoning, the action/intention side to its output. Insofar as desire is an input to practical reasoning, it belongs to the former side (the desire-as-belief thesis is considered sympathetically). When all goes globally well with practical reasoning, one acts on what one knows. Beliefs play the same local role as knowledge, and intentions the same local role as action, in practical reasoning. This is the appropriate setting in which to understand knowledge norms for belief and practical reasoning. Marginalizing knowledge in epistemology is as perverse as marginalizing action in the philosophy of action. Opponents of knowledge-first epistemology are challenged to produce an equally systematic and plausible account of the relation between the cognitive and the practical.