

TRUST I

The pervasiveness of trust, both in interpersonal interactions, and towards institutions and their representatives.

Simple accounts (e.g. Hardin): to trust someone is simply to rely on them.. But trust doesn't seem to be the same thing as reliance. Reliance is primarily a behavioural notion: I rely on someone to ϕ insofar as I base my behaviour on the supposition that they will ϕ . This doesn't involve believing that they will ϕ , although someone might think that it requires that the expected utility of acting on the supposition that they will ϕ is greater than the expected utility of not so acting.

Reliance without trust: attitudes towards machinery; attitudes towards certain kinds of agent (Baier's would-be poisoner).

BAIER

When I trust someone I rely on their goodwill towards me (p. 234)

Trust is accepted vulnerability to another's possible but not expected ill will (or lack of good will) toward one. (p. 235)

How should we understand this? Is relying on someone's goodwill relying on them because one believes that they have goodwill? If so, how substantial is the notion of goodwill?

JONES

To trust X I have :

- (i) an attitude of optimism about X's goodwill
- (ii) the confident expectation that X will be directly and favourably moved by the thought that I am counting on her.

Condition (i) is not supposed to be a simple belief. Rather Jones says it is an affective (i.e. emotional) attitude: a distinctive attitude akin to blinkered vision. (What is *affective* about this?)

Supposed advantages

- (1) characterizes trust and distrust as contraries but not contradictories;
- (2) trust cannot be willed
- (3) trust gives rise to beliefs that are abnormally resistant to evidence.

Worries

- (a) how do we make sense of (i)? And is it too strong? Is it more to do with an on-going trusting relationship than with a one-off case of trust? (Compare two and three place relations: I trusted X; I trusted X with Y/to)
- (b) is (ii) over intellectual? What about a young child's trust? Does it help explain unwelcome trust?
- (c) is it true that trust cannot be willed? The sweetshop example.
- (d) don't we need some reliance in the picture?

AN ALTERNATIVE ACCOUNT

Trust is reliance that is invested with a certain attitude; to trust someone to is to rely on them to , and to invest that reliance with a certain attitude; an general (two place) attitude of trust is a readiness to trust for a large range of .

What is the attitude? Consider what happens when trust is let down: we feel betrayal. Perhaps the best way of characterizing the attitude is to see it in these terms. It becomes one of Strawson's reactive attitudes.

Worries

Does this get the idea that we can decide to trust?

Does this capture the idea that trust and distrust are not contradictories?

Does this capture the idea that trust gives rise to beliefs that are resistant to the evidence? If not, should we add something like Jones's condition (i)?

Is this account sufficiently informative?