COMMONSENSE AND CONSISTENCY

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Most of us intuitively understand consistency to be an important epistemic virtue. In part, this is because inconsistency can hamper decision-making and action. One cannot both drink one's coffee and not drink one's coffee at the same time without risking a spill. Thus, if we are interested in decisions that inform our actions, we will be interested in consistency. Even the most ardent advocates of instrumental rationality accept that it is governed by at least the norm of consistency.

But what exactly is consistency andjohn how does it relate to action and commonsense reasoning? This paper explores the role of consistency in agency. Agents can only participate in certain kinds of social institutions, for example, market economies by maintaining some commitment to the ideal of consistency. The paper briefly explores the idea of concealing intransitive preferences before touching on the fundamental question: Why be rational?

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