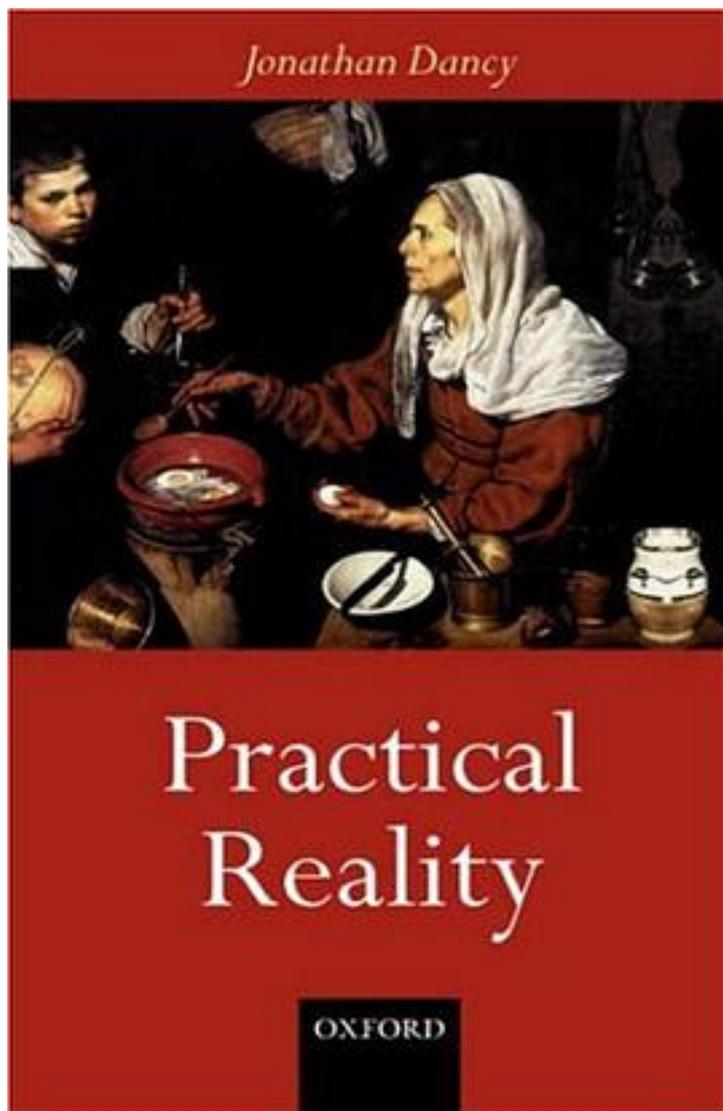


Practical Reality



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Practical Reality is about the relation between the reason why we do things and the reasons why we should. It maintains that current philosophical orthodoxy bowdlerizes this relation, making it impossible to understand how anyone can act for a good reason. In order to understand this, Dancy claims, we have to abandon current conceptions of the reasons why we act (our 'motivating' reasons) as mental states of ourselves. Belief/desire explanations of action, or purely cognitive accounts in terms of beliefs alone, drive too great a wedge between the normative and the motivational. Instead, we have to understand a motivating reason as the sort of thing that could be a good reason: for instance, that the eggs are ready - this, rather than my believing that they are ready, must be my reason for taking them off the cooker. Most contemporary philosophers think that this view cannot be true. Dancy aims to demonstrate that things can be as he thinks they must be. By giving a fresh account of values and reasons, he finds a place for normativity in philosophy of mind and action, and strengthens the connection between these areas and ethics.

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