

# Imaginative Hopes and Other Desires\*

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## Abstract

Reflecting on our engagement with fiction has compelled some theorists to expand the domain of the mental. They have posited a novel conative state, so-called “i-desire”. The central thesis of this approach is that i-desire relates to imagination in the same way as desire relates to belief. We formulate principles which are plausible consequences of this thesis. We then put pressure on these principles by focusing on desire concepts such as *hoping*, and show that the imaginative analogues of these concepts—if such there be—do not satisfy the principles. We conclude by considering what our result suggests about the relationship between i-desire and propositional attitude psychology.

## 1 Introduction

We have many desires directed at fictional characters and events while engaging with fiction. Consider how reports like the following may be true of you.

- (1) a. You want Juliet to survive.
- b. You want Tony Soprano to escape the police.
- c. You want Shiv Roy to become the successor to her father’s media empire.

For example, if you are like many viewers, then (1a) will be true when you are watching the scene in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* where Juliet drinks the vial of potion.

There is disagreement over how best to analyse reports such as those in (1). The debate has crystallized around three positions.<sup>1</sup> The first position takes

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<sup>1</sup>For similar ways of framing the debate, see Currie 2010, Langland-Hassan 2020, and Roelofs 2023.

an ascription such as (1a) more or less at face value: on this account (1a) reports that you have a desire with the content that Juliet survives (Kind, 2011, Spaulding, 2015). The second position agrees that (1a) reports that you have a desire, but maintains that its content is that Juliet survives in the play *Romeo and Juliet* (Langland-Hassan, 2020). Finally, the third position denies that (1a) reports that you have a desire; instead, (1a) reports that you have a *sui generis* desire-like imaginative state with the content that Juliet survives.

In this note, we focus on the last position—which we will call the *novel attitude view* since, unlike either of its alternatives, it posits a novel attitude distinct from either desire or (propositional) imagination.<sup>2</sup> Following Doggett & Egan (2007, 2011), we will call this attitude “i-desire”. Our chief tool for probing the novel attitude view involves *emotive doxastics*, which are desire concepts such as hoping, wishing, regretting, etc. The central thesis of the novel attitude view is that i-desire relates to imagination in the same way as desire relates to belief. We formulate principles which are plausible consequences of this thesis, and show that these principles are in tension with positing imaginative analogues of emotive doxastics. We briefly conclude by considering what our result suggests about the relationship between i-desire and propositional attitude psychology.

The paper is structured as follows. After §2 presents the novel attitude view, §3 introduces emotive doxastics as a class of desire concepts. Then in §4 we put pressure on the novel attitude view by considering the behaviour of imaginative analogues of emotive doxastics. Finally, §5 concludes.

## 2 Positing i-desire

Assuming there is such an attitude as i-desire, how should we expect it to work? Proponents of the novel attitude view start from the idea that i-desire is to be understood through its relationship to propositional imagination, which is supposed to mirror the relationship between desire and belief. Propositional imagination is thought of as the imaginative counterpart to, or analogue of, belief.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, i-desire should be conceived as the imaginative counterpart to, or analogue of, desire. I-desire is supposed to interact with imagination much like desire interacts with belief. In a slogan: i-desire stands to imagination as desire stands to belief. That is, the following *I-Desire Thesis* is widely accepted by proponents of the novel attitude view:<sup>4</sup>

*I-Desire Thesis*: I-desire stands to imagination as (regular) desire stands to belief.

Discussions of i-desire have examined various aspects of the analogy encoded in the I-Desire Thesis. For example, some proponents have suggested that i-desire interacts with imagination to produce affect and action appropriate to

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<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Walton 1990, Velleman 2000, Currie & Ravenscroft 2002, Currie 2010, Doggett & Egan 2007, 2011, Roelofs 2023.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Currie & Ravenscroft 2002, ch.1, Nichols & Stich 2003 and Doggett & Egan 2011, 287f.

<sup>4</sup>See, for example, Currie & Ravenscroft 2002, 19, Doggett & Egan 2011, 288, Kind 2016, 165-6, Roelofs 2023, 3332 for statements of the I-Desire Thesis.

fictional engagement and related contexts, in ways that mirror the role of belief-desire pairs in producing more standard cases of affect and action.<sup>5</sup>

We will focus on a different, less explored, aspect of the analogy. More specifically, we will consider the I-Desire Thesis as it pertains to propositional attitudes, and the constitutive connections between them. By “constitutive connections” we mean relations of rational entailment, or relations holding between attitudes held by rational agents. For instance, there is a constitutive connection between *being certain that p* and *finding not-p unlikely*, since for any rational subject *S*, if *S* is certain that *p*, then *S* finds not-*p* unlikely.<sup>6</sup> In particular, we will examine two principles suggested by the I-Desire Thesis. One is a “negative” principle, since it tells us which states i-desire is *not* constitutively connected to, namely belief:

*Negative Principle:* I-desire is not connected to belief, just as desire is not connected to imagination.

The other is a “positive” principle, since it tells us which states i-desire *is* constitutively connected to, namely imagination:

*Positive Principle:* I-desire is connected to imagination, and it is connected to imagination just as desire is connected to belief.

To be clear, proponents of i-desire have not explicitly endorsed the Negative and Positive Principles.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, we suggest that they make precise central features of the analogy encoded in the I-Desire Thesis. If i-desire stands to imagination as desire stands to belief, then we should expect i-desire to stand in whatever constitutive connections to imagination (likewise belief) as desire stands to belief (likewise imagination). Indeed, both principles arguably follow from the popular characterization of i-desire as an imaginative state. As such, it is connected to imagination (the Positive Principle). Moreover, we expect it to resemble imagination in important respects. And since the imagination lacks constitutive connections to belief, we expect the same to be true of i-desire (the Negative Principle). Another way of reaching the principles does so by conceiving of i-desire as the “mental simulation” or “offline” counterpart of regular, “online” desire. It is usually sufficient for a mental state to be online that it be connected to belief (and in turn to action-generating systems). So desire is connected to belief. Together with the I-Desire Thesis, it follows that i-desire is connected to the offline counterpart of belief, namely the imagination

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<sup>5</sup>For discussions of affect, see Currie & Ravenscroft 2002 and Doggett & Egan 2011. For discussions of action, see Velleman 2000 and Doggett & Egan 2007 among others.

<sup>6</sup>See, for example, Ramsey 1926, Christensen 2004, Briggs 2009, Mahtani 2015. Note that it might still be *metaphysically possible* for an agent to be certain that *p* but also fail to find not-*p* unlikely, and similarly for the other constraints on propositional attitudes we consider below—see fn.11 for further discussion.

<sup>7</sup>That said, certain ideas in the literature are highly suggestive of them. For instance, consider Roelofs’s (2023, 3332) characterization of someone’s i-desire as ‘a state that feels and behaves a lot like desire, but that is disengaged from their commitments in the same way as the other imaginings (visual, belief-like, etc.) that let them engage with the [work of fiction] while knowing it’s not real’. Also see the “attitude boxology” of Doggett & Egan (2007, 2011) (see especially their Diagram 2, 2007, 4) which presents i-desire as only being connected to imagination, and not belief or (regular) desire.

(Positive Principle). Likewise we might expect i-desire and other offline mental states to be disconnected from belief (Negative Principle). We thus take these principles to serve as a natural starting point from which to investigate the I-Desire Thesis, and how i-desire constitutively connects to other propositional attitudes.<sup>8</sup>

In the next section, we focus on a certain class of desire concepts—so-called “emotive doxastics”—which enjoy constitutive connections to belief. This lays the groundwork for our examination of imaginative analogues of emotive doxastics in §4. There we show that positing such states—which the novel attitude view seems compelled to do—brings counterexamples to both the Negative and Positive Principles.

### 3 The space of desire

English speakers use the verb ‘want’ to talk about their desires. For instance, (2) is true only if Ann has a desire that is satisfied if Bill wins the race.

- (2) Ann wants Bill to win the race.

However, wanting is but one desire state amongst many. Indeed, an active area of research in philosophy and linguistics involves charting the space of desire concepts, and trying to capture the fine-grained differences between them.<sup>9</sup> Theorists have identified a range of distinct desire states, including those expressed by the following ascriptions:

- (3) a. Ann hopes that Bill wins the race.  
b. Ann wishes that Bill had won the race.  
c. Ann is glad that Bill won the race.  
d. Ann fears that Bill won the race.  
e. Ann regrets that Bill won the race.

Just like (2), each of the ascriptions in (3) reports a desire of Ann’s. For instance, (3a) is true only if Ann has a desire that is satisfied if Bill wins the race; and (3d) is true only if Ann has a desire that is satisfied if Bill doesn’t win the race.

The literature on desire distinguishes a given desire state from others partly by its relationship to doxastic attitudes such as belief. More precisely, theorists have provided a (partial) categorization of desire states in terms of what the presence of such a state implies about the subject’s beliefs.<sup>10</sup> For instance, several authors have argued for the following doxastic constraint on hoping (Blumberg & Hawthorne, 2022, Grano & Phillips-Brown, 2022):

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<sup>8</sup>Thanks to two reviewers for encouraging us to consider at greater length how the principles relate to the standard conception of i-desire that one finds in the literature.

<sup>9</sup>Influential earlier work includes Heim 1992, von Fintel 1999, Levinson 2003. More recent work includes Villalta 2008, Wrenn 2010, Crnić 2011, Lassiter 2011, Rubinstein 2012, Anand & Hacquard 2013, Maier 2015, Condoravdi & Lauer 2016, Pearson 2016, Drucker 2017, Grano 2017, Phillips-Brown 2018, Blumberg & Hawthorne 2022, Blumberg 2023, Pasternak 2019, Phillips-Brown 2021.

<sup>10</sup>See, for example, Heim 1992, von Fintel 1999, Anand & Hacquard 2013, Benton 2019, 2021, Blumberg & Hawthorne 2022, Blumberg 2023, Grano & Phillips-Brown 2022.

*Hope Constraint:*  $S$  (rationally) hopes that  $p$  only if (i)  $S$  doesn't believe that  $p$  and (ii)  $S$  doesn't believe that not- $p$ .<sup>11</sup>

This constraint is supported by examples such as (4a) and (4b):

- (4) a. # Ann believes that Bill lost the race, but she hopes that he won.  
b. # Ann believes that Bill won the race, but she hopes that he won.

These examples are (strikingly) infelicitous (as indicated by the ‘#’ symbol preceding each sentence). This is readily explained by the Hope Constraint. For instance, if Ann believes that Bill lost the race, then condition (ii) of the Hope Constraint isn't satisfied and so Ann cannot hope that Bill won. But then the second conjunct of (4a) will be false, rendering (4a) false, accounting for its infelicity. Similar remarks apply to (4b).<sup>12</sup>

Other commonly cited doxastic constraints include the following, along with some data to motivate them:

- (5) a. # Ann believes that Bill lost the race, but she fears that he won.  
b. # Ann believes that Bill won the race, but she fears that he won.

*Fear Constraint:*  $S$  fears that  $p$  only if (i)  $S$  doesn't believe that  $p$  and (ii)  $S$  doesn't believe that not- $p$ .

- (6) # Ann doesn't believe that Bill lost the race, but she wishes that he had won it.

*Wish Constraint:*  $S$  wishes that  $p$  only if  $S$  believes that not- $p$ .

- (7) # Ann doesn't believe that Bill won the race, but she regrets/is glad that he won it.

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<sup>11</sup>We include the ‘rationally’ here because, as mentioned in §2, we take constitutive connections to be (merely) rational constraints. For instance, we leave open whether it is metaphysically possible for an (irrational) agent to, for example, hope  $p$  but also believe  $p$ . In our formulation of the constraints that follow, we will leave the restriction to rational attitude formation implicit.

<sup>12</sup>Some authors have suggested that ‘believe’ is able to express a “weak” doxastic state that involves a relatively low level of credal commitment (Hawthorne *et al.*, 2016, Dorst, 2019, Dorst & Mandelkern, 2023, Holguin, 2022). For instance, suppose that I am observing a horse race featuring three horses: A, B, and C. Suppose further that I have 0.6 credence that A will win, and 0.2 credence that B/C will win. Then proponents of weak belief maintain that ‘I think/believe horse A will win’ can be true in this context. Granted weak belief, a report like (4a) needn't be infelicitous when ‘believes’ expresses a weak doxastic relation. Thus, proponents of weak belief would do better to frame the Hope Constraint (and others we discuss in the main text below) in terms of a stronger doxastic concept, for example certainty or surety (Beddor, 2020, Goodman & Holguín, 2023). For note that speeches such as ‘Ann is sure that Bill lost the race, but she hopes that he didn't’ sound terrible. According to a variant of the Hope Constraint stated in terms of surety,  $S$  (rationally) hopes that  $p$  only if (i)  $S$  isn't sure that  $p$  and (ii)  $S$  isn't sure that not- $p$ . Our arguments in §4 will go through just as well with ‘surety’-based variants of the Hope and other constraints stated in the main text. This is because connections to the full range of doxastic concepts can be used to investigate the I-Desire Thesis. So, for example, if specific desire-types are connected to surety in some way, then we should expect imaginative analogues of those desire-types to lack such connections to surety (as per the Negative Principle). In fact, it is plausible that allowing ‘believe’ to express a weak doxastic state raises additional challenges for the novel attitude view—see fn.21 for further discussion.

*Regret/Gladness Constraint:*  $S$  regrets/is glad that  $p$  only if  $S$  believes that  $p$ .

We will follow the semantics literature and call desire concepts that carry doxastic entailments *emotive doxastics*.<sup>13</sup>

At first blush, the doxastic constraints presented above—particularly the Fear Constraint—might appear similar to principles discussed in the literature on i-desire, in particular those endorsed by Doggett & Egan (2011, 295-96). These principles place constraints on when it is possible for subjects to rationally feel anxiety or fear. However, since the latter concern emotions or affective responses, they are different from the above constraints, which concern propositional attitudes. Emotions—in the sense of feelings with distinctive phenomenological and neurobiological profiles—are different from the propositional attitudes at issue in the above constraints. You may fear that Arsenal will lose their next match without feeling any fear at all. In the other direction, your dog may feel fear without it standing in the fearing relation to any proposition  $p$ . The distinction between principles such as the Hope Constraint, on the one hand, and principles concerning emotions, on the other, bears emphasis since we do not mean to endorse the latter. In fact, we suspect that they face counterexamples.<sup>14</sup>

## 4 How i-desire connects to imagination and belief

In this section, we use the doxastic constraints on emotive doxastics from §2 to put pressure on the I-Desire Thesis. To make our discussion manageable, we will mostly focus on hoping and the Hope Constraint. But our arguments apply to other emotive doxastics as well, *mutatis mutandis*.

The novel attitude view maintains that the verb ‘want’ does double duty: sometimes it expresses (regular) desires and sometimes it expresses i-desires. For instance, the most natural reading of (1a) (‘You want Juliet to survive’) in the context described in §1 is one on which this report expresses an i-desire. However, it bears mentioning that the view is not committed to the claim that ‘want’ always expresses an i-desire when the complement concerns fictional characters and events. In fact, proponents of the view have tended to say that reports like (1a) can express either type of conative state. While necessary and sufficient conditions for when ‘want’ expresses an i-desire and when it instead expresses a standard desire have not been offered, Doggett & Egan (2007, 15; 2011, 291-2) offer some observations that are suggestive of the following elaboration of the view.<sup>15</sup> I-desires characterize subjects in the grip of, or immersed in, the relevant fictional work (paradigmatically, they are reading or watching it). Standard desires, meanwhile, tend to arise during reflection on the fictional work, perhaps

<sup>13</sup>See for example, Portner 1992, Truckenbrodt 2006, Scheffler 2008, Falaus 2010, Anand & Hacquard 2013.

<sup>14</sup>For relevant discussion, see for example Gendler & Kovakovich 2006. We suspect that the appeal of Doggett & Egan’s (2011, 295-96) principles may even partly lie in their apparent similarity to the principles governing propositional attitudes presented above, but we will not pursue the matter here.

<sup>15</sup>See also Roelofs 2023, 3335-3336.

evaluating its aesthetic merits after reading or viewing (for example when subjects are discussing the work in a literature class or a book club).<sup>16</sup>

We should expect the verb ‘hope’ to behave like ‘want’. That is, ‘hope’ also does double duty: sometimes it expresses regular desires (namely, an emotive doxastic) and sometimes it expresses i-desires. We will call this assumption *Plurality*:

*Plurality*: Just like ‘want’, ‘hope’ is able to express i-desires.

There is good reason for the proponent of i-desire to endorse *Plurality*. To bring this out, consider your mental states when you are watching the end of Season 5 of *The Sopranos* (a central example in Doggett & Egan 2011). Let us suppose that you are imaginatively engaged in the show in whatever way is required for (8a) to be true on a reading where it expresses an i-desire. Then it is natural to think that (8b) is true as well:

- (8) a. You want Tony to get away from the police.  
b. You hope that Tony gets away from the police.

Insofar as one thinks ‘want’ in (8a) expresses an i-desire, one should think ‘hope’ in (8b) does as well. There is no clear sense in which the desire state expressed by (8a) engages the imagination but the state expressed by (8b) does not. Phenomenological evidence provides further support for this conclusion: from the “inside”, your states of mind in (8a) and (8b) do not feel importantly different; both are indicative of the same type of conative state.<sup>17</sup>

It will be helpful to fix terminology. Where  $A$  is a (regular) desire state expressed by a verb  $V$  on its “regular” use,  $i-A$  is the (imaginative) state expressed by  $V$  on its “imaginative” use. Thus,  $i$ -hope is the imaginative analogue of hope, and—we are assuming—is expressed by (8b) on its most natural reading in context.  $I$ -hoping is a species of  $i$ -desire, just as hoping is a species of desire.

## 4.1 Against the Negative Principle

Hoping does not place any constraints on a subject’s imagination. In particular, the following constraint does not hold:<sup>18</sup>

*Hope Imagination*:  $S$  hopes that  $p$  only if (i)  $S$  isn’t imagining that  $p$  and (ii)  $S$  isn’t imagining that not- $p$ .

<sup>16</sup>As far as we can tell, proponents of  $i$ -desire do not take a stand on how the distinct readings of ‘want’ arise, and in particular whether the verb is ambiguous, polysemous, or context-sensitive (for relevant discussion, see Tuggy 1993). We leave it to the proponent of  $i$ -desire to decide which of these options represents the best development of her view. The arguments we put forward below don’t hang on any particular account of how these readings arise.

<sup>17</sup>In fact, at least some proponents of the novel attitude view share our judgment here. Doggett & Egan (2011, 15) use (8b) to describe a case where the subject has an  $i$ -desire that Tony get away, but no corresponding regular desire.

<sup>18</sup>Evidence for this is provided by the felicity of examples such as the following:

- (1) a. Ann hopes that Bill wins the race, and she is imagining that he does.  
b. Ann hopes that Bill wins the race, but she is imagining that he doesn’t.

Recall the Negative Principle from §2:

*Negative Principle:* I-desire is not connected to belief, just as desire is not connected to imagination.

The Negative Principle, together with the fact that Hope Imagination does not hold, implies that the following constraint on i-hoping likewise does not hold:

*I-Hope Belief:* *S* i-hopes that *p* only if (i) *S* doesn't believe that *p* and (ii) *S* doesn't believe that not-*p*.

That is, the Negative Principle implies that a subject can i-hope *p* while at the same time either believing *p* or believing not-*p*:

*Compatibility:* It is possible for there to be a rational subject *S* and a proposition *p* such that: (i) *S* i-hopes that *p* and (ii) *S* believes that *p* or *S* believes that not-*p*.

The problem is that there is significant evidence against Compatibility. Recall the infelicitous conjunctions presented in §3. The patterns they instantiate are fully general: they also apply to conative attitudes directed at fictional states of affairs. For instance, (9a) and (9b) sound awful:<sup>19</sup>

- (9) a. # Bill believes that Juliet died, but he hopes that she survived.
- b. # Bill believes that Juliet survived, and he hopes that she survived.

It is worth emphasizing the status of these examples: they are *robustly* infelicitous. To our ears, and those of our informants, there are simply no good readings of these sentences. But this is surprising given Compatibility. For suppose that the second conjunct in (9a)/(9b) expressed an i-hope of Bill's to the effect that Juliet survives (this is possible given Plurality). Then, given Compatibility, this should be compatible with either Bill believing that Juliet died, or him believing that she survived. Thus, either (9a) or (9b) should be true. Why, then, is it so hard to detect true readings of these sentences?<sup>20</sup>

At this point, the proponent of i-desire might try to make sense of the linguistic data in (9) by rejecting the Negative Principle and endorsing I-Hope Belief. This means that i-hope—a kind of i-desire—is constitutively connected to belief after all. A reviewer wonders how problematic this result is. They suggest that the proponent of i-desire can maintain that i-desire is constitutively connected to belief, so long as they *also* maintain that i-desire is constitutively connected to the imagination. In other words, they submit that of the two principles, the Positive Principle is more central to the novel attitude view than the Negative Principle, and the latter can be rejected without too much cost.

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<sup>19</sup>Similarly, (1a) and (1b) are also infelicitous:

- (1) a. # Bill doesn't believe that Juliet died, but he wishes that she had survived.
- b. # Bill doesn't believe that Juliet died, but he regrets/is glad that she died.

<sup>20</sup>Strictly speaking, Compatibility is only witnessed by *some* subject *S* and proposition *p*, not necessarily Bill and the proposition *Juliet survived*. However, as mentioned, the patterns exhibited in (9) are perfectly general, and hold for any given subject *S* and proposition *p*.



We are less sanguine about this response. For as we argued in §2, the Negative Principle really does seem to be a central commitment of the novel attitude view. For instance, it appears to follow from popular characterizations of i-desire as “imaginative” or “offline”. From this perspective, being forced to maintain that i-desire is constitutively connected to belief is like being forced to accept the clearly problematic claim that propositional imagining is constitutively connected to belief. Moreover, as we show in the next section, imaginative analogues of emotive doxastics put pressure on the Positive Principle as well.

## 4.2 Against the Positive Principle

Recall the Positive Principle from §2:

*Positive Principle:* I-desire is connected to imagination, and it is connected to imagination just as desire is connected to belief.

Given the Hope Constraint, the Positive Principle implies the following I-Hope Constraint:

*I-Hope Constraint:*  $S$  i-hopes that  $p$  only if (i)  $S$  isn’t imagining that  $p$  and (ii)  $S$  isn’t imagining that not- $p$ .

However, to the extent that we have a grip on what i-hoping is supposed to be, this constraint is clearly false. For instance, consider a context where (8b) (‘You hope that Tony gets away from the police’) is true, and the report expresses an i-hope of yours (this is possible given Plurality). Given the I-Hope Constraint, two claims about your imaginative states must be true as well. On pain of irrationality, you can’t be imagining that Tony gets away from the police, and you can’t be imagining that Tony does not get away from the police. But this seems wrong, for speeches such as those in (10) are perfectly acceptable, and appear to describe rational states of mind:

- (10) a. You hope that Tony gets away from the police, and you’re imagining that he does.  
 b. You hope that Tony gets away from the police, and you’re imagining that he doesn’t.

Thus, i-hoping is not connected to imagination in the way suggested by the I-Hope Constraint.

In response, the proponent of i-desire might try to weaken the Positive Principle. They could maintain that i-desire is connected to imagination, but not in the same way that desire is connected to belief. Applied to emotive doxastics, the thought is that imaginative analogues such as i-hope are connected to imagination, but not via principles like the I-Hope Constraint. There are two pressing issues for this response. First, an explanation is needed as to why we should expect a departure from the I-Hope Constraint. Absent explanation, this stance looks *ad hoc*. We wonder whether it is possible to do so in a way that still preserves the guiding analogy encoded by the I-Desire Thesis. The less we model our conception of i-hope on the better understood concept of hope, the

less of a grip we have on it. Moreover, we don't see any obvious way of modifying the Hope Constraint so that it maintains some connection between i-hope and imagination, let alone one that strictly parallels the relationship between hope and belief. For instance, observe that straightforward constraints such as the following won't do:

*I-Hope Constraint, v.2*:  $S$  i-hopes that  $p$  only if  $S$  is imagining that  $p$ .

After all, (8b) can be true without you imagining that Tony gets away from the police; and reports like the following are perfectly acceptable:

- (11) You hope that Tony gets away from the police, but you aren't imagining that he does.

How, then, is i-hoping related to imagination?<sup>21</sup>

## 5 Conclusion

Reflecting on our engagement with fiction has compelled some theorists to expand the domain of the mental. They have posited a novel desire state, so-called "i-desire". The central thesis of this approach is that i-desire relates to imagination in the same way as desire relates to belief. We have tried to clarify this thesis by proposing principles—the Negative Principle and the Positive Principle—which appear to follow from it. We then put pressure on these principles by focusing on emotive doxastic concepts such as *hoping*, and showing that the imaginative analogues of emotive doxastics—if such there be—bring counterexamples to the principles.

We'll end by bringing out two features of our discussion. First, we contrast our argument with a popular line of criticism against i-desire that one finds in the literature.<sup>22</sup> Proponents of the novel attitude view have motivated positing i-desire by maintaining that regular desire—in particular *wanting*—is subject to doxastic constraints, e.g. a subject cannot (rationally) want  $p$  if they believe not- $p$ . It is then claimed that a report such as (1a) ('You want Juliet to survive') can be true even when you know what will happen in the play, and so believe that Juliet will die, i.e. that she will not survive. Proponents of the novel attitude view account for this by maintaining that (1a) expresses an i-desire on its most natural reading, an *i-want*. Moreover, they maintain that i-wanting, unlike regular wanting, does not carry a doxastic constraint.<sup>23</sup> In response, critics of

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<sup>21</sup> An additional problem arises if one opts to frame constraints in terms of certainty or surety (see n.12). The Positive Principle then implies that i-hope is constrained by an imaginative analogue of certainty rather than belief. To make sense of this, it seems that the proponent of i-desire would need to posit an imaginative analogue of credal states. However, it is rather unclear how to understand such a graded imaginative concept (although see Williams & Woodward 2019 for an attempt).

<sup>22</sup>Thanks to a reviewer for very helpful discussion here.

<sup>23</sup>See, for example, Doggett & Egan 2007, 2011.

the novel attitude view have questioned whether regular wanting carries a doxastic constraint in the first place, and thus have claimed that the argument for i-desire from reports such as (1a) is unconvincing.<sup>24</sup>

By contrast, the argument presented in this paper pulls in the opposite direction. It is highly plausible, and widely accepted, that emotive doxastics *do* carry doxastic constraints. Instead, the problem that we articulated is that the analogue of emotive doxastics do not behave as we would expect them to behave given the I-Desire Thesis: for instance, an analogue of the doxastic constraints on hoping does not appear to hold for i-hoping. Thus, the argumentative strategy that we have employed here is novel, and brings to light a distinct set of issues concerning the relationship between desire and belief.

Second, at a minimum our discussion calls for a different account of the constitutive connections between i-desire and other propositional attitudes than that captured by the Negative Principle and the Positive Principle. For those committed to the novel attitude view, this could be an intriguing area of research. However, absent such a specification of the constitutive connections exhibited by i-desire, we are inclined to conclude that considerations from propositional attitude psychology provide little evidence for positing an imaginative analogue of desire, and at least some evidence against doing so. In any case, we hope that the data that we have discussed here will be helpful for future work, and our arguments will provide a basis for further inquiry.

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<sup>24</sup>See, for example, Kind 2011, 2016, Spaulding 2015. It is worth noting that the observation that wanting does not carry straightforward doxastic constraints goes back at least to Heim (1992), and is further developed in von Fintel 1999, Blumberg & Hawthorne 2022, Blumberg 2023, Grano & Phillips-Brown 2022.

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