METAPHYSICS

Making Things Collectively

RESEARCH

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ubiquity press

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I examine two different kinds of production processes, *mass production* and *collaborative production*. While both production processes intuitively seem like collective actions, the established views about collective action fail to treat them as collective action due to the common issue: the lack of shared intention. As an alternative, I propose *the artifactual view of action*, according to which collective action is possible even when there is no shared intention among agents. Motivated by Evnine's (2016) view about action, the artifactual view of action claims that we can have other people's actions as *matter* out of which we create our own action. I argue that the artifactual account of action can successfully explain mass production as collective action. Furthermore, it provides a way for the intention-dependent views about artifacts to better understand how mass-produced artifacts come into existence.

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KEYWORDS:

Collective Action; Artifacts; Social Ontology

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Paek, C. 2023. Making Things Collectively. *Metaphysics*, 6(1), pp. 1–12. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/met.91

DOI: 10.5334/met.91

1. INTRODUCTION

Most of the things we use and consume everyday are produced by many agents. It takes a number of factory workers, designers, and engineers for a car to be produced. A box of paper clips is produced by automated factory production process and factory workers who operate the machinery. Houses, cellphones, toothbrushes are only some of the examples of artifacts that are produced by multiple agents working together. Intuitively, such activities seem like cases of collective action, that is, actions performed by multiple agents together. But despite the plausibility of this claim, some of the most influential views about collective action, such as Bratman (1992, 2014), Gilbert (1989, 1990, 2006), and Searle (1990, 2010), cannot classify these cases of making things together as collective action.

In this paper, I provide an alternative view about collective action that can count these cases as collective action, which I call *the artifactual view of action*. In what follows, I first distinguish two production processes involving multiple agents, *mass production* and *collaborative production*. Then I examine how established views about collective action fail to treat mass production and collaborative production as collective action due to the lack of shared intention. I then develop the artifactual view of action as an alternative by arguing that we can have other people's actions as *matter* out of which we create our own action. The artifactual view can avoid the issues raised by the lack of shared intention and successfully count mass production and collaborative production as collective action. Moreover, by using Evnine's (2016) view about artifacts, I argue that the artifactual view provides a way for the intention-dependent views about artifacts to better understand mass-produced artifacts.

2. IS MAKING THINGS TOGETHER COLLECTIVE ACTION?

Let me distinguish two kinds of making things together: *mass production* and *collaborative production*. Paradigmatic cases of mass production involve assembly lines and automated processes, in which workers are given highly compartmentalized tasks and asked to follow highly specified instructions on how to carry out their tasks. For instance, some workers in a Ford factory may only be in charge of fastening some bolts on the door frames, while some workers in the same factory may only be in charge of checking whether the machines that put the doors on the body frames are working fine. Even though they are in the vicinity of each other, they do not need to communicate with each other to make sure that the whole production process is going well; that is a job for another group of workers. They do not even need to know exactly how their works contribute to the production of the final products. As long as they do their jobs as specified in the given set of instructions, the whole production process would work fine.

In many cases, workers in mass production are alienated from what they produce together. Each worker's task is so highly compartmentalized that one may not need to fully understand how the whole production process works or exactly how the final products should look and function. As long as each worker completes their task, the final products will be produced, even when no worker on the assembly lines has any interest or knowledge about what the final product should be. For instance, workers in the slaughtering line of a meat plant may not know nor care much about how the meats then will be classified and processed into different sorts of packaged meat products. Nevertheless, as long as they all follow the instructions and do their portion of the whole production process, various packaged meat products will be produced without a hitch.

On the other hand, *collaborative production* is what is in the middle between mass production and artisanal production. By 'artisanal production,' I mean a production process involving one or a few agents who have a clear grasp of what they intend to make and actually work on the matter to create the artifacts in question. In mass production, workers need not care about what is being created in what process, whereas in artisanal production, the artisan determines what is being created in what process. In collective production, each worker or a group of workers determines what is being created and how, but only about a specific part(s) of the final product. A paradigmatic case of collaborative production is *building a house*. Once a group of architects comes up with the

DOI: 10.5334/met.91

blueprint of the house, they relegate the job of actually building the house to several groups of other professionals for specific tasks, such as framing, plumbing, exterior works, interior works, etc.

In such a process, each group of professionals does what it is asked to do in the way that a group of artisans would. Ideally, each team of workers would be dedicated to creating that part of the house in the best way possible. They are fully in charge of what they create, and in this respect, may genuinely care and take pride in what they create. For instance, a group of electricians may take pride in how most of the houses they took part in building have never failed to have perfectly working electrical systems and try their best to keep their winning streaks. In this respect, collaborative production is different from mass production in an important way; workers would feel more connection between what they do and what they create. That is, workers are less likely to be alienated from the whole production process and the final products.

But collaborative production is similar to mass production in terms of how the production process is compartmentalized. While mass production divides the production process into the smallest possible units to make each task as simple as possible, collaborative production divides the production process into large chunks for specific groups of professionals. But just as each factory worker does not need to communicate nor know about what others do to make the final products together, each team of professionals does not need to communicate nor know much about what other teams do in collaborative production. For instance, a group of construction workers who are working on the foundation of the house may not even know who would work on the interior of the house and whether they would do a good job or not. In this respect, the collaborative production process as a whole resembles much less automated mass production with more autonomy allowed for each group of professionals.

Most material things we use or consume are results of collaborative production or mass production. But if we accept that human labor may bring about products that are not concrete, what any corporate does could be construed as mass production or collaborative production. Each department does its job without having to correspond with the other departments, and all of their works as a whole achieve the annual goal of the corporate. For instance, a big tech company, such as Apple or Facebook, increasing its revenue even at the height of the pandemic[1] could be the final product of collaborative production if we broadly construe products of one's labor to include concrete *and* not concrete things.

Intuitively, both types of production seem to be cases of collective action. In both mass and collaborative production, multiple agents achieve the goal together by doing their own parts, just as multiple agents achieve the goal together by doing their own parts in a paradigmatic collective action case, such as two people dancing the tango together. However, mass production and collaborative production do not fit into the traditional frame of collective action, laid out by philosophers such as Bratman (1992, 1999, 2014), Searle (1990, 2010), or Gilbert (1989, 1990, 2006). Let me briefly explain why that is the case for each view.

Suppose that you and I plan a trip to Portland from Boston together. Without any planning or even knowing each other, by some strange coincidence, it is possible that we happen to be on the same flight to Portland, visit the same places at the same time in Portland, and take the same flight back to Boston. But this would not be the case of us going to Portland *together*. According to Bratman, in order for us to go to Portland together, we must intend that we go to Portland together. The jointly sufficient conditions for you and I to share this intention are the following (Bratman 2014: 60):

(1) We each intend that we go to Portland.

(2) We each intend the following: we go to Portland by way of the intentions of each that we go to Portland.

(3) We each intend the following: we go to Portland by way of meshing sub-plans of each of our intentions in favor of going to Portland.

(4) There is common knowledge among us of (1)–(3).

1 https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/technology/big-tech-pandemic-economy.html.

DOI: 10.5334/met.91

In this account, the shared intention to go to Portland together is ultimately reducible to individual intentions that we go to Portland and having 'meshing' sub-plans, i.e., sub-plans that are compatible with each other. When we co-plan and coordinate our actions to achieve this shared goal, we go to Portland together. But when we fail to meet one of the conditions above, e.g., you make a sub-plan of driving to Portland but I make a sub-plan of taking a flight, we fail to share the intention of going to Portland together.

On the other hand, Gilbert (1989, 1990, 2006) argues that collective intention cannot be reduced to individual intentional states. According to her, you and I can go to Portland together only when we form a plural subject. When we express our readiness to commit to a shared goal, namely, going to Portland together, and when this becomes common knowledge among us, we jointly commit to the shared goal and form a plural subject. Here, joint commitment is analyzed as obligation and entitlement each agent has on other agents in the group. For instance, we jointly commit to the goal of going to Portland together when each must promote the shared goal and is equally entitled to request each other to commit herself in promoting the shared goal.[2] In this respect, a plural subject can be brought about only when all the individual agents involved are equal creators and equal parts of the plural subject. Suppose that I prefer taking a flight to taking a car to Portland, but cannot get flight tickets without paying an absurd amount of money (and you would not want to take a trip that would cost you too much). For the sake of the obligation to promote the shared goal, I should give up on my own preference. If I do not, then we would fail to form a plural agent and thus fail to perform a collective action of taking a trip to Portland together.

Searle (1990, 2010) argues neither plural subjects nor meshing sub-plans are needed for collective action. According to him, a collective intention is fundamentally different from an individual intention in its mode. Thus, in order for there to be a collective action of us going to Portland together, there should be a *we-mode* of intention, in the form of <we intend that we go to Portland together>, not the set of interrelated individual intentions. But since Searle believes that 'the only intentionality that can exist is only in the heads of individuals,' (2010: 55) this we-mode of intention is possessed not by a plural subject but by an individual agent. Furthermore, he argues that one does not need to know what other agents intend to do as their parts to achieve the goal together. So, when (a) we each are in the context in which one can assume that the other shares the same goal and (b) we each have a we-intention that we go to Portland together and do one's part based on the assumption that the other is doing their part as a way of going to Portland together (Searle 2010: 51–54), we succeed in going to Portland together.[3]

All three accounts introduced above focus on collective action involving small groups of individuals who can communicate and observe to coordinate or reliably assume what others intend and do. Bratman cautiously conjectures that a theory of small-scale collective action may 'with due adjustment and further additions, be extended to such larger social organizations.' (2014: 8) But while such an assumption could turn out to be true for certain types of collective action, I believe mass production and collaborative production would remain difficult cases to explain for these views.

To examine why the established views would have difficulties explaining mass production as collective action, let us think about an example. Suppose that there are two workers who work side by side in a sneakers factory. Sam is a worker whose job it is to cut out the insoles of the sneakers, and Tyler is a worker whose job it is to sew the size labels on the insoles. Although Sam and Tyler work right by each other, Sam does not care how well Tyler does his job, and Tyler does

2 For details on how each agent comes to be obligated to do her part and entitled to request to do the same to the others, see Gilbert (1997).

3 What is characteristic of Searle's account, compared to Bratman's and Gilbert's, is that to perform a collective action with others, each agent intends and acts based on the *assumption* about what the other agents may intend, but not based on any obligations or knowledge about their intentions. For instance, according to Searle, you and I can take a trip to Portland together without being obligated to each other to carry out the shared plan or having a common knowledge that we share the same intention or have meshing sub-plans. As long as I (a) have a we-mode of intention to go to Portland, along with (b) I-mode of intentions on what I should do to go to Portland together, and (c) I am in the context that allows me to *assume* that you also have such intentions (perhaps by having some conversations about the trip), we are ready to take the trip together.

DOI: 10.5334/met.91

not care how well Sam is doing her job. And even though they work in a sneakers factory together and their works are essential parts of producing sneakers, neither Sam nor Tyler may intend to create sneakers, for creating sneakers is never their job. So, when she comes to work, Sam intends to cut out a certain number of insoles and nothing more than that, while Tyler intends to sew the same number of labels on the insoles and nothing more than that.[4]

This alienation from other workers and the overall project makes mass production a particularly tricky case for Bratman's view. Workers in many mass production processes may not track other agents' plans or what they do to achieve a common goal. In the end, they do not really share a goal together. And arguably, that is the very point of mass production; organizing a tightly knit group in which people communicate and coordinate to pursue one and the same goal is time-consuming and costly. But once you implement a highly detailed and compartmentalized production process, each worker only needs to do well on one very specific task (which is often easy enough for anyone to learn in a day or two). In such a system, it does not make sense for all workers to share the same goal, and they are not encouraged to do so. Given that the agents involved in a mass production process may not even share the intention that we *S*, mass production falls short of satisfying Bratman's conditions of collective action.

A similar problem arises for Searle's view. Although Searle rejects the idea that agents can and should take what others intend and believe into account when they cooperate, agents should have a we-intention to achieve the common goal. But in mass production cases, each worker may only have an I-intention to finish her task in a given time without a we-intention that the 'we', i.e., the factory workers, achieve a shared goal together. Likewise, Gilbert's framework cannot explain why mass production should count as collective action, for workers involved in a mass production case would fail to bring about a plural subject. For there to be a plural subject, all agents should play equal parts in creating and maintaining the plural subject, including the process of setting the goal and the plans to achieve the goal. But given that only some or even no agent would share the goal in mass production, mass production cannot be a collective action.

On the other hand, in a collaborative production case, agents in each group of professionals may share a goal and the plans to achieve the goal together in a way that satisfies Bratman's and Searle's conditions of collective action. However, the same problem persists when we consider the relation between each group that works on a specific part(s) of the production process. For instance, builders who work on the plumbing and electrical systems of the house may not communicate with people who work on the exterior of the house and vice versa, in the same way that Sam and Tyler do not care about each other's work because they do not need to do so. In this respect, although certain parts of collaborative production may fit Bratman's and Searle's frameworks to some degree, similar worries could be raised with many collaborative production cases. Since various teams involved in a collaborative production process respectively focus on creating what they are asked to create but not on what they do *together*, Gilbert's view would also have a problem explaining why collaborative production is collective action.

3. MAKING ACTIONS COLLECTIVELY

3.1. THE ARTIFACTUAL VIEW OF ACTION

Intuitively, mass production and collaborative production seem to be some sort of collective action. Given that the established views offer little help in explaining why and how that is the case, we need an alternative view that could do that job. The view I propose here is *the artifactual view about collective action*, which is motivated by Evnine's (2016) view about individual action.

In his book, *Making Objects and Events* (2016), Evnine claims that artifacts are brought into existence by the maker's *creative intention* and *the act of imposing that intention upon the matter*. In extending his view to various types of objects, he points out that actions can also be treated as artifacts under his view since 'one makes or brings into existence an artifact by working on the

4 For the discussion of how mass production raises questions about the epistemic and semantic status of artifacts, see Kornblith (2007).

DOI: 10.5334/met.91

matter with certain intentions' (Evnine 2016: 221) and this is what we do when we intentionally do something. Let me elaborate on how his view about artifacts applies to actions with an example.

Suppose that I sense that it is getting dark outside, so I intend to turn on the light. In planning to turn on the light, I realize that the switch needs to be flipped and that to flip the switch, I need to move my fingers in a particular way. I flip the switch by moving my fingers in a certain way and thereby turn on the light. Evnine analyzes this case from his viewpoint in the following way.

> In our scenario, the agent *makes* an action of switch-flipping *out of* a deliberate movement of the finger, and makes an action of turning on the light out of the action of switch-flipping. In general, when an agent A's by B-ing, there is an action of kind A and an action of kind B, the former is made out of the latter, and the latter is the *matter* of the former. (2016: 220, my emphasis)

According to Evnine, the agent performs an action, *A*, when she intends to *A* and makes *A* out of more basic action(s) by performing more basic actions that she needs to do in order to *A*. The example above considers a case in which several actions are generated out of one bodily movement in virtue of the agent's intentions. But as Evnine points out, 'if an agent can make one action out of another, she can also make one action out of a plurality of others' (2016: 221). I can, for instance, make an action of *cooking a lasagna* out of my more basic actions, such as cooking the pasta, making the sauce, assembling the pasta and the sauce, and baking the lasagna.

Evnine focuses on analyzing an individual agent's actions as an artifact, and it seems that Evnine may have some reservations about extending his view to collective action. In Evnine (2016: 234), he compares our ability to make an action with mere intention with God's ability to create *ex nihilo* with mere intention. According to him, the analogy holds because an agent and God are making something out of things that are completely at their disposal. But other agents' actions are not at our disposal, for although we can will our own actions into existence, we cannot will other agents' actions into existence.

However, I propose that the idea of treating action as artifact made out of more basic action can be extended to cases involving multiple agents. The gist remains the same; action is to be analyzed as something that an agent *makes* out of more basic actions with the intention to create a certain action out of those actions. What is supplemented is that an agent can make a particular action out of *other agents' actions* with the intention to create that action. But it is not (and should not be) the case that anyone can freely make an action out of others' actions under any conditions. Evnine points out that the reason why we can freely make an action out of our own actions is that our actions are entirely at our disposal:

> Because I can intentionally bring it about that my finger moves in just the right way, nothing more besides the right intentions is required from me for the occurrence of the actions of moving my finger, flipping the switch, and turning on the light. [...] With objects, we must work with what is already there. We therefore have to adapt it to the requirements that must be satisfied if the hylomorphically complex entities our intentions aim at are to exist (2016: 233).

In the same manner, one can make an action out of other agents' actions only when she is in the position to treat other agents' actions as if they are completely at her disposal. That is, an agent can make an action out of other agents' actions only when she is in a position, in a given social context, to freely will others' actions into existence with her intention. This would happen when an agent is granted the authority to set the goal and the means to achieve the goal for other agents in the given social context. Since setting the means to achieve the goal include knowing what actions are needed to make the intended action and how to bring about these actions, being conferred the authority to set the goal and the means to achieve the goal allows one to order or control what other members in the group do in the given context.

It should be noted that 'the social context' is meant to be understood liberally. It may include being in a group with a structured set of rules that grant certain people authority to control or

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order other people, but it can also include being in a group without any structured set of norms.[5] For instance, the head of the financial department of Facebook is in a position to set the goal for the whole department and order what others in the department should do to achieve the goal, simply by taking the job and thereby implicitly accepting her position in the hierarchical structure and the set of norms related to that structure. On the other hand, other workers implicitly grant the head of the department the authority to make an action out of their actions by accepting their positions in the hierarchical structure and the related norms. But a group of friends can decide to grant one of them the authority to set the goal for them and determine and order what they should do to achieve the goal based on their implicit or explicit agreement, even though there is no hierarchical structure implemented in the group.[6]

One additional thing to note is that while the artifactual view regards individual actions to be similar to collective actions in many aspects, it is not the case that the view draws a perfect analogy between these two kinds of actions. According to the artifactual view, the structure of an action made out of multiple agents' actions resembles that of an action made out of a single agent's basic action by herself. In both cases, the action in question is brought about by the agent with the proper control over the matter—that is, more basic actions or the actions of other agents—and the agent's intention to make such an action. However, the types of action over which the agent can exercise her authority may differ.[7]

When an agent makes an action out of her own actions, she has direct control over her body parts. This makes the basic building block of individual action to be bodily movements. My action of making a cup of tea, for instance, is ultimately made out of my bodily movements, such as moving my fingers in certain ways (to pick up a cup), moving my hands and arms in certain ways (to pour boiling water in the cup), etc. On the other hand, when an agent makes an action out of others' actions, the agent in charge may not (and need not) have direct control over the other agents' bodily movements.[8] This prevents bodily movements from being the basic building block of collective action in many cases under the artifactual view.

Suppose that I work as a head chef at a restaurant, and I make an action of serving dinner for customers out of other cooks' actions. My position at the restaurant, along with line cooks' implicit conferral, would grant me the authority to make such an action out of their actions. However, my authority would not allow me to treat how line cooks move their bodies in doing their parts successfully. As a sous-chef, for instance, I do not (and need not) have direct control over how a line cook at the grill station should move her fingers in certain ways when she holds kitchen tongs.

This difference between individual and collective action may give rise to further questions, such as: would individual actions and collective actions have different modal profiles? Exactly over what can an agent exercise her authority when given permission to control or order other agents? While these are interesting questions that are worth pursuing, for the scope of this paper, I will put a

5 For a similar view focused on cooperation in organized groups, see Ritchie (2020).

6 There is one account of collective action similar to the artifactual view: Shapiro (2014) points out that Bratman's view fails to account for what he calls a "massively shared activity"; that is, a shared activity that involves a lot of agents. After pointing out how Bratman's view fails to explain massively shared activity as collective action, he proposes a view according to which agents engage in a shared activity together by committing to a shared plan. Specifically, a group G engages in a shared activity S when (a) G has a shared plan to S, (b) each member of G intentionally does her part in the shared plan to S, (c) members of G resolve conflicts or tensions in a peaceful manner, (d) it is common knowledge among G that (a)-(c), and (e) S is brought about in virtue of (a) and (b) (Shapiro 2014: 277). The main difference between my view and Shapiro's is that while his view seems to presuppose that collective action must be cooperative in nature, my view does not share this assumption; the artifactual view, in fact, would say that collective action is possible under coercion or manipulation.

7 I want to thank the anonymous reviewer for pushing me to explore more details about the metaphysical differences between individual and collective action.

8 One might argue that an agent may exercise direct control over other agents' bodily movements in some cases, such as hypnosis. For instance, a hypnotist may make an action of making tea for her and her customer by hypnotizing her customer and then having her move her body parts in certain ways. While (a) the hypnotist in such a case does seem to have full control over her customer's body and (b) I do not wish to take a firm stand about this, I want to point out that it seems dubious whether this should count as a collective action; for the customer does not seem to exercise her agency in a proper way.

pin on these questions for now. Let me, then, examine how the artifactual view can explain mass production and collaborative production as collective action.

3.2. THE ARTIFACTUAL VIEW AND COLLECTIVE PRODUCTION

The lack of shared intention (and shared goal as well, in many cases) prevents many of the existing views about collective action from counting mass production and collaborative production as collective action. The artifactual view, on the other hand, can explain why and how mass production and collaborative production are collective activities. Let me first examine mass production from the artifactual point of view. In mass production, there is someone(s)—the general manager(s) or plant manager(s)—whose job is to oversee the whole production process and make sure they produce a certain number of commodities. Once someone takes the position as the manager, she is endowed with the authority to make an action out of the factory workers' actions. Likewise, the factory workers implicitly agree to grant the manager the authority to order and control what they do, and thereby to make an action out of theirs, when they take a position as a factory worker.

Once she is bestowed the authority, the manager can set a specific goal (e.g., producing a certain number of products in a month), which cannot be achieved with her actions alone but does not need to be shared among all agents involved. Instead of rallying all workers so that they could genuinely commit to this goal together, the manager will simply divide the necessary works into small parts and assign a specific task for each worker. When all workers do what they are assigned to do, the manager can make an action of achieving the goal out of the workers' actions with the intention to achieve the goal. So, even though the goal of producing a certain number of commodities is not shared among all workers, by (i) implicitly granting the manager(s) the needed authority, (ii) the manager having the intention to make the action of achieving the goal out of other workers' actions, and (iii) achieving the goal, they engage in a collective action of producing a certain number of commodities.

In a similar manner, the artifactual view can also explain collaborative production as collective action. From the artifactual point of view, the only difference between mass production and collaborative production is that the latter may involve several layers of creation of actions. In collaborative production, the one who takes the job of overseeing the whole project would make an action of completing the project out of others' actions. But collaborative production involves several groups of professionals who specialize in creating a certain part of the project. So, within each group, there could be the one who sets the goal and oversees the process for that group, who then makes an action of creating a specific part of the final product out of other members' actions.

Let me examine one example of collaborative production from the artifactual viewpoint: building a house. In building a house, the architect(s) would be the one who is in the position to set the goal and oversee the whole project by creating a blueprint and commissioning various companies to create specific parts of the house. Here, once again, her position in the whole production process grants her authority, and she will be the one who indeed makes the action of creating the house she designed out of others' actions. But in each group of professionals who focus on creating a specific part of the house—the exterior, plumbing system, etc.—there may be a hierarchical structure and set of norms that grants one member the authority to set the goal and oversee the whole process. Then within each group, that person would make an action of creating the commissioned part of the house out of other members' actions; and it is such actions that the architect ultimately uses in making an action of building the house. So, collaborative production may be more complicated in its structure than mass production, but they are explained in the same way by the artifactual view. Both mass production and collaborative production are collective actions, not because all agents share the goal; they are collective actions because it takes multiple agents and their agreement to achieve the intended goal.

There are two points worth mentioning here. The first is that the workers' agency does not need to be denied in mass production or collaborative production from the artifactual point of view. When the workers follow the instructions or commands of their bosses to do their parts in mass production or collaborative production, they are agents of their own actions. It is still up to each

DOI: 10.5334/met.91

worker to decide whether to follow the instructions or not, and she can exercise her agency in deciding to follow suit and doing her part. Furthermore, one can also argue that workers are the agents of the (implicit) conferral of the authority upon the person in charge of the whole project. In this respect, even though the workers may have to follow her commands or instructions, they are still exercising some degree of agency towards the agents of their own actions. What is added to the picture is that their actions are used as the 'matter' of someone else's complex action.

The second point is that this artifactual explanation shows how the workers could achieve the goal together without sharing a goal *nor* bearing equal responsibility, praise, or blame about the final result of the production process. In both types of production, when something goes right or wrong, the one who manages the whole production process often takes the most praise or blame; the artifactual view can make sense of why this is often true, even though the production itself is the result of collective effort.

4. THE ARTIFACTUAL VIEW OF ACTION AND MASS-PRODUCED ARTIFACTS

The artifactual view can, but some of the established views cannot, analyze mass production and collaborative production as collective action because such activities lack the shared intention to create the final product. The existing views about collective action argue that all the agents involved must share the same intention for them to engage in the same collective action. Given that most cases of mass production and collaborative production happen on a large scale involving many agents and that these agents do not need to communicate or even know each other to do their parts in the production process, the established views cannot easily explain how mass production or collaborative production can be collective action.

On the other hand, the artifactual view allows there to be a collective action when there is the overarching intention of the agent with the necessary authority to bring about the intended action out of other agents' actions. This enables the artifactual view to analyze mass production or collaborative production as collective action, but at the same time, it also opens up many important questions, such as: what kinds of social complexities can affect the attempt to make one's action out of others' actions? How can the cases of manipulation or enslavement be explained according to such a view? Given the scope of this paper, I will bracket these issues for now.

But the artifactual view also has an interesting implication for certain views about artifacts, namely, the kind of views according to which an artifact of kind K metaphysically depends on the intention to create a K in question.[9] Evnine's account of artifacts is one of such views. According to Evnine (2016), an artifact of kind K is brought into existence when the maker has the intention of creating an artifact of kind K and imposes the concept of K on some matter. Here, the maker imposes the concept by working on the matter.[10,11] Without such intentional imposition of concept on matter, an artifact cannot be brought into existence. For instance, a piece of wood may resemble a wooden chopping board made by a local woodworker, but it would not be a chopping board, for there has been no intentional act of making.

Evnine's theory provides a compelling way to understand the nature of artifacts that are created by artisanal production processes. However, in most cases of mass production or collaborative production, the agents who work on the matter do not have the intention to create an artifact that is the kind of the final product of the whole production process. It would very often be the case that they do not have the concept of the kind of the final product. For instance, a factory worker

9 For the intention-dependence of artifacts, see Hilpinen (1992), Dipert (1993), Bloom (1996), Thomasson (2003, 2007, 2009, 2014), Levinson (2007), Baker (2007), and Evnine (2016). For the defense of intention-dependence of artifacts from potential objections, including the objection based on mass production, see Juvshik (2021).

10 For details on Evnine's basic metaphysics of artifacts, see Chapter 3 of Evnine (2016).

11 I want to thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing out the difference between the concept of the artifact of kind K and the maker's intention to create kind K in question.

DOI: 10.5334/met.91

who works at a Tesla factory may fail to have a substantive concept of an electric car, even though she is working on some crucial parts of their cars.

Evnine (2016: 97–103, 2019) acknowledges and addresses the issues raised by mass-produced artifacts. Since his view suggests that 'the act of production is supposed to be sufficient (and necessary) for the identity of the object or objects produced' (2016: 100), it seems that the products resulting from the same, single act of making share the exact same identity conditions. As a result, Evnine worries, mass-produced artifacts that came out of the same assembly line would be classified by the theory as one single object. In 'Mass Production' (2019), Evnine responds to this worry by simply accepting that the mass-produced items that are from the 'same batch' may share the exact same essential properties. They may be distinguished numerically and would have different historical properties as they are sold and used in separate contexts. However, they would not be distinguished from each other based on their essential properties since they are made by the very same action.

Evnine's original account explains some important metaphysical differences between mass-produced artifacts and artisanally produced artifacts well. However, I believe by accepting the artifactual view, Evnine can provide a more comprehensive explanation of mass-produced *and* collaboratively produced artifacts. Here is what the artifactual view can offer. One prominent characteristic of Evnine's view about artifacts is that there is a tight connection between the maker's intention, the act of making, and the artifact. While he claims that '[T]he labor may also be distributed across more than one person' (2016: 70),[12] it is not so clear exactly how the concept of a mass-produced or collaboratively produced artifact can be imposed on matter by workers who do not have any grasp on that very concept. So, it seems that in mass production cases, the connection between the final products, the act of making, and the creative intention (which includes the concept of the kind of the final products) becomes quite murky.

The artifactual view can fill in this gap for Evnine. In mass production, the concept of the kind of final product is imposed by the collective action made out of the workers' actions with the designer(s)'s intention. Suppose that I am the head designer of a new Tesla model. I not only have the concept of an electric car but a complete picture of how this model should function. By being a head designer at Tesla, I am granted the authority to control and order the workers to realize the creative intention I have in mind. The factory workers may not have the concept of the final product to impose on matter, but by entering the contract with the company, they implicitly give their permission for me to use their actions as matter in the context of producing this new model. By following the instructions authorized by me and working on the materials, factory workers engage in the action of making the new Tesla model cars, even though they do not have the concept of an electric car or have any knowledge about the final products of their labor. In a different way, I also engage in the same action of making the new Tesla model cars by exercising my authority in various ways, e.g., overseeing the whole production process, authorizing changes on certain production lines, etc.

This picture restores the strong connection between the maker's creative intention, the act of making, and the artifact. In both mass production and artisanal production, the creative intention is imposed by the act of making the artifact in question. It is just that in mass production, the act of making is not an individual action but a collective action. And while the artifactual view works best with Evnine's view for obvious reasons, its application does not need to be restricted to Evnine's account of artifacts. The artifactual view provides one explanation of how mass-produced or collaboratively produced artifacts can keep the direct connection with the genuine creative intention, which could be helpful for other intention-dependence views about artifacts.

Let me sum up. In this paper, I examined two types of collective action that play an important role in shaping and maintaining our social world; mass production and collective action. Although our intuition strongly suggests that these are collective action cases, the established views fall short of explaining how or why this could be the case. I proposed the artifactual view as an alternative

12 I want to thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing out that Evnine seems to endorse a somewhat similar picture as I propose here and for pressing me to clarify what I add to his original account.

approach to understanding what collective action is. According to the artifactual view, collective action is something an agent(s) makes out of the actions she is authorized to treat as the matter of her action. Because the artifactual view allows collective action without shared intention, it can explain mass production and collaborative production as collective action. Furthermore, I believe it also offers a way for the intention-dependence views about artifacts, such as Evnine's view, to better explain the relation between the creative intention and artifacts in mass production and collaborative production cases.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Alejandro Pérez Carballo, Ernesto Garcia, Ned Markosian, Keehyuk Nahm, Sam Schechter, Jun Young Kim, and two anonymous reviewers at *Metaphysics* for their valuable comments and criticisms.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:
Paek, C. 2023. Making Things Collectively. *Metaphysics*, 6(1), pp. 1–12. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/met.91

Submitted: 31 May 2022
Accepted: 04 November 2022
Published: 17 February 2023

Metaphysics is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by Ubiquity Press.