A. I. Melden gave the following statement of what has come to be known as the 'Logical Connection Argument' (LCA):

Acts of volition are alleged to be direct causes of certain bodily phenomena... just as the latter are causes of the raising of one's arm. ... But no account of the alleged volitions is intelligible that does not involve a reference to the relevant bodily phenomena. And no interior cause, mental or physiological, can have this logical feature of acts of volition. Let the interior event which we call 'the act of volition' be mental or physical..., it must be logically distinct from the effect. Yet nothing can be an act of volition that is not logically connected with that which is willed.¹

Presented in a simpler form, Melden's argument runs:

(1) A cause must be logically distinct from its effect.
(2) Acts of volition are not logically distinct from the actions which are the objects of those volitions.
(3) Therefore, acts of volition are not causes of actions.

If this argument were valid, we could construct equally compelling arguments for reasons, intentions, desires, etc.

Donald Davidson has replied to the LCA in the following way:

In any case there is something very odd in the idea that causal relations are empirical rather than logical. What can this mean? Surely not that every true causal statement is empirical. For suppose 'A caused B' is true. Then the cause of B = A; so, substituting, we have 'The cause of B caused B', which is analytic. The truth of a causal statement depends on what events are described; its status as analytic or synthetic depends on how the events are described.²

Davidson's point was that two distinct events can be causally related, and yet a statement that one causes the other may be 'analytic'. What is required for causal relations is that the cause and effect be numerically distinct. Whether or not a description of the cause will be, in Melden's terms, "logically distinct" from the description of the effect depends on how the events are described. Since logical relations are linguistic rela-
tions, it seems that, *against the LCA as stated by Melden, the reply by Davidson is decisive.*

Let us consider the following argument employed by Charles Taylor:

...we could not say that the intention was the causal antecedent of the behaviour. For the two are not *contingently connected* in the normal way. We are not explaining the behaviour by the 'law', other things being equal, intending $X$ is followed by doing $X$, for this is part of what we mean by 'intending $X$', that, in the absence of interfering factors, it is followed by doing $X$. I could not be said to intend $X$ if, even with no obstacles or other countervailing factors, I still didn't do it. Thus my intention is not a causal antecedent of my behaviour.\(^3\)

This is, *prima facie*, a 'logical connection' argument much like that advanced by Melden; hence, Davidson might object, in a parallel manner, that whether or not a given statement is contingent depends on the descriptions used. Thus, he might claim 'The cause of $B$ caused $B'$ is a necessary truth. However, such a reply would be incorrect if we were to follow Saul Kripke\(^4\) in analyzing the modal terms occurring in Taylor's argument. For on Kripke's analysis, a statement can be both *apriori* and contingent.\(^5\)

'The cause of $B$ caused $B'$ is a paradigm of an *apriori* truth.\(^6\) But it is not a necessary truth: that event which in fact did cause $B$ might not have caused $B$. There are counterfactual situations in which an event $C$ is realized such that the presence of the event which in fact *did* cause $B$ in conjunction with $C$ does not cause $B$. Thus, though 'The cause of $B$ caused $B'$ is an *apriori* truth, it is nevertheless true that the cause of $B$ might not have caused $B$.\(^7\) Furthermore, 'The cause of $B$ did not cause $B'$ is true even in some counterfactual situations in which no counteracting force such as $C$ is present. Assume 'A occurred in circumstances $S$, and $A$ caused $B'$ is true.\(^8\) Then 'The cause of $B$ occurred in the circumstances the cause of $B$ occurred in, and the cause of $B$ caused $B'$ is true and, moreover, *apriori* true. But it is contingently true, since $A$ (=the cause of $B$) occurring in $S$ (=the circumstances $A$ occurred in) will not cause $B$ in those logically possible worlds in which the causal laws differ from the causal laws in the real world.

These considerations give us a clue as to how the LCA can be revised. It can at least be argued, in a manner similar to the first of the above cases, that the connection between intention and action is contingent. There are counterfactual situations in which countervailing factors or obstacles are present which are not present in the real world, and in their presence the intention to do $X$ is not followed by doing $X$. If the LCA is to stand, this