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Title	Logical Framework for Normative Systems
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Description	SOCREAL 2010: 2nd International Workshop on Philosophy and Ethics of Social Reality. Sapporo, Japan, 2010-03-27/28. Session 2: Normative Systems
Citation	SOCREAL 2010: Proceedings of the 2nd International Workshop on Philosophy and Ethics of Social Reality, 280-325
Issue Date	2010
Doc URL	https://hdl.handle.net/2115/43239
Type	conference paper
File Information	Yasuo.sli.pdf, Slides

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Logical Framework for Normative Systems

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Logical Framework for Normative Systems

- In this presentation, I propose a new logical framework that can be used to analyze normative phenomena in general.
- I call this framework a Logic for Normative Systems (LNS).
- I also demonstrate how to solve some paradoxes of Standard Deontic Logic (SDL).
- A characteristic of LNS is its dynamic behavior. LNS is flexible, hence it can be applied to describe complex normative problems including ethical problems.

Overview of my talk

1. Definition of Normative Systems
2. Paradoxes of Deontic Logic and Their Solutions
3. Conflicts in Normative Systems
4. Dynamic Aspects and Future Orientation of LNS
5. Conclusions

1. Definition of Normative Systems

Propositional Systems and Propositional Contexts

- A normative system can be defined as follows, where □ means the inference in the first-order logic:

(1a) Let *T* and *OB* be sets of sentences. A pair <*T*, *OB*> consisting of *propositional system T* and *obligation space OB* is called a *normative system* (NS).

(1b) A sentence p belongs to the *propositional context* of normative system <*T*, *OB*> iff *T* □ *p*.

1. Definition of Normative Systems

Obligation Contexts

(1c) A *sentence* p *belongs to the obligation context* of normative system $<T, OB>$ (abbreviated as $\mathbf{O}_{<T, OB>}\, p$) iff $T \cup OB \vdash p$ & not($T \vdash p$) & not($T \cup OB \vdash \bot$) .

(1d) A sentence p belongs to the *prohibition context* of normative system $<T, OB>$ (abbreviated as $\mathbf{F}_{<T, OB>}\, p$) iff $\mathbf{O}_{<T, OB>} \neg p$.

(1e) A sentence p belongs to the *permission context* of normative system $<T, OB>$ (abbreviated as $\mathbf{P}_{<T, OB>}\, p$) iff not($T \cup OB \cup \{p\} \vdash \bot$) & not($T \vdash p$) .

1. Definition of Normative Systems

(Normative) Power

(1f) A group G has *(normative) power* of doing act_1 in $<T, OB>$ iff

$T \square \forall x\, (member(x,G) \rightarrow agent(x))$ &

$\mathbf{P}_{<T, OB>}\ \forall x\, (member(x,G) \rightarrow do(x, act_1))$ &

$\mathbf{F}_{<T, OB>}\ \forall x\, (\neg\, member(x,G) \rightarrow do(x, act_1))$.

– The notion of (legal) *power* plays an essential role in Hart (1961). This shows that this notion is inevitable for describing legal systems. According to definition (1f), a group G has power of doing act_1 *iff* all members of G and only members of G are allowed to perform act_1.

1. Definition of Normative Systems

(Normative) Power: Example

- According to definition (1f), a group G has power of doing act_1 *iff* all members of G and only members of G are allowed to perform act_1.

- The chairman of a session has (normative) power of opening and closing the session. Only the chairman may close the session.

1. Definition of Normative Systems

Presuppositions of NSs

- These definitions presuppose that we insert *what we believe to be true* into the propositional system and *what we believe ought to be done* into the obligation space.
    - *T* consists of *what we believe to be true.*
    - *OB* consists of *what we believe ought to be done.*

1. Definition of Normative Systems

Obligation Implies Permission

- From these definitions immediately follow the following three fundamental characterizations for LNS.

(2a) If $\mathbf{O}_{<T,\,OB>}\,p$, then $\mathbf{P}_{<T,\,OB>}\,p$.

  – This characterization corresponds to an axiom of SDL, namely $\mathbf{O}p \rightarrow \neg\,\mathbf{O}\neg\,p$. However, within LNS the iteration of normative sentences is not possible. This is no failure of LNS, because many normative systems in our ordinary life are expressible without iterative normative expressions. It is interesting that LNS fulfills the principle of deontic contingency required by Von Wright (1951). Because of (1c), we can easily prove that no tautology belongs to an obligation context.

1. Definition of Normative Systems

Three Fundamental Characterizations

(2a) If $\mathbf{O}_{<T,\,OB>}\,p$, then $\mathbf{P}_{<T,\,OB>}\,p$.

(2b) If $\mathbf{F}_{<T,\,OB>}\,p$, then not $\mathbf{P}_{<T,\,OB>}\,p$.

(2c) The propositional context of a NS is independent of its obligation space, while the obligation context depends on the propositional system.

1. Definition of Normative Systems

How LNS Works: An Example

- To see how LNS works, let us consider an example.

(3)

You should not kill any human beings.

Peter is a human being.

So you should not kill Peter.

1. Definition of Normative Systems

Analyzing Example (3)

- According to our presupposition mentioned before, the first sentence in (3) expresses the content of one component of OB_1 and the second sentence expresses the content of one component in T_1 of normative system $<T_1, OB_1>$:

(4a) $\forall x\ \forall y\ (agent(x) \wedge human(y) \rightarrow \neg\ kill(x,y))$ is an element of OB_1.

(4b) $human(Peter)$ is an element of T_1.

(3) You should not kill any human beings.

Peter is a human being.

So you should not kill Peter.

1. Definition of Normative Systems

Analyzing Example (3)

- From (1a), (1c), and (4a) immediately follow (4c) and (4d), where (4c) corresponds to the conclusion of (3).

(4c) $\mathbf{O}_{<T_1, OB_1>} \forall x\, (agent(x) \rightarrow \neg\, kill(x,Peter))$.

(4d) For any agent A, $\mathbf{O}_{<T_1, OB_1>} \neg\, kill(A,Peter)$.

(3) You should not kill any human beings.

Peter is a human being.

So you should not kill Peter.

1. Definition of Normative Systems
Analyzing Example (3)

(3) You should not kill any human beings.

Peter is a human being.

So you should not kill Peter.

(4e) If $\{human(Peter), agent(A)\} \subseteq T_1$ &

$\{\forall x\, \forall y\, (agent(x) \wedge human(y) \rightarrow \neg\, kill(x,y))\} \subseteq OB_1$,

then

$\mathbf{O}_{<T_1, OB_1>}\, \forall x\, (agent(x) \rightarrow \neg\, kill(x,Peter))$ &

$\mathbf{O}_{<T_1, OB_1>}\, \neg\, kill(A,Peter)$ & $\mathbf{F}_{<T_1, OB_1>}\, kill(A,Peter)$.

1. Definition of Normative Systems

Analyzing Example (3)

- This result can be summarized as follows:

(4e) If $\{human(Peter), agent(A)\} \subseteq T_1$ &

$\{\forall x\, \forall y\, (agent(x) \wedge human(y) \rightarrow \neg\, kill(x,y))\} \subseteq OB_1$,

then

$\mathbf{O}_{<T_1, OB_1>}\, \forall x\, (agent(x) \rightarrow \neg\, kill(x,Peter))$ &

$\mathbf{O}_{<T_1, OB_1>}\, \neg\, kill(A,Peter)$ & $\mathbf{F}_{<T_1, OB_1>}\, kill(A,Peter)$.

- In this way, the informal reasoning in (3) can be formally justified within LNS.

Ross's paradox

- In this section, I propose how to solve some paradoxes of SDL. First, let us consider Ross's paradox (Ross (1941), McNamara (2006) sec. 4.3, Aqvist (2002) sec. 6):

(5a) It is obligatory that the letter is mailed.

(5b) It is obligatory that the letter is mailed or the letter is burned.

2. Paradoxes of Deontic Logic and Their Solutions

Ross's paradox

- Within SDL, (5b) seems to follow from (5a), because $\mathbf{O}m \rightarrow \mathbf{O}(m \vee b)$ is a theorem of SDL, where $\mathbf{O}p$ means "It is obligatory that p".
- However, it seems rather odd to say that an obligation to mail the letter entails an obligation that can be fulfilled by burning the letter. Within LNS, a similar inference is valid:

(6*) If $\mathbf{O}_{<T,\, OB>}\ p$ & not($T \square\ p \vee q$),
then $\mathbf{O}_{<T,\, OB>}(p \vee q)$.

Ross's paradox

- The source of the paradoxical appearance of this example consists in ignoring the incompatibility among two types of actions. In this case, it will be appropriate to assume that mailing a letter is incompatible with burning it. This fact justifies to accept that $\forall x\ (letter(x) \rightarrow \neg\ (mailed(x) \wedge burned(x)))$ is a component of the propositional system of the given normative system $<T_2, OB_2>$.

(6a) $mailed(l_1)$ is an element of OB_2. (From (5a))

(6b) not(T_2 □ $\neg\ (mailed(l_1) \vee burned(l_1))$. (Observation)

(6c) $letter(l_1)$ and $\forall x\ (letter(x) \rightarrow \neg\ (mailed(x) \wedge burned(x)))$ are elements of T_2. (Observation)

(5a) It is obligatory that the letter is mailed.

Ross's paradox

(6d) If $\{letter(l_1),\ \forall x\,(letter(x) \rightarrow \neg\,(mailed(x) \wedge burned(x)))\} \subseteq T_2$ & $\{mailed(l_1)\} \subseteq OB_2$ &

not(T_2 □ $(mailed(l_1) \vee burned(l_1))$),

then T_2 □ $\neg(mailed(l_1) \wedge burned(l_1))$ &

$\mathbf{O}_{<T_2,\, OB_2>}\ mailed(l_1)$ &

$\mathbf{O}_{<T_2,\, OB_2>}\,(mailed(l_1) \vee burned(l_1))$ &

$\mathbf{O}_{<T_2,\, OB_2>}\,\neg\, burned(l_1)$ & $\mathbf{F}_{<T_2,\, OB_2>}\, burned(l_1)$.

2. Paradoxes of Deontic Logic and Their Solutions

Ross's paradox

- From these conditions follows that $\neg\, burned(l_1)$ belongs to the obligation context of $<T_2, OB_2>$ (see (6d)). Thus, it is forbidden to burn the letter.
  - Belnap et al (2001) also discusses how to solve Ross's paradox within Stit logic (p. 84f). Stit logic can take future developments into consideration and they solve Ross's paradox using this property of Stit logic. They demonstrate that $[\alpha\ stit : p \vee q]$ does not follow from $[\alpha\ stit : p]$, where $[\alpha\ stit : p]$ is an abbreviation of $[\alpha$ sees to it that $p]$.
  - One of the reviewers pointed out my misinterpretation of Ross's paradox in the first draft of this paper. According to him, Ross's paradox is $\mathbf{O}m \rightarrow \mathbf{O}(m \vee b)$ itself. In this case, I will state that (6*) is not so bad, because realizing p remains still as an obligation after realizing q.

Good Samaritan Paradox

- The Good Samaritan Paradox pointed out by Prior (1958) can be solved in a similar way. Let us consider the following sentences:

(7a) It ought to be the case that John helps Smith who has been robbed.

(7b) John helps Smith who has been robbed *iff* John helps Smith and Smith has been robbed.

- $\mathbf{O}(h \wedge r) \rightarrow \mathbf{O}(r)$ is a theorem of SDL. Thus, if we represent sentence (7a) as $\mathbf{O}(h \wedge r)$, (7c) follows from (7a) and (7b). However, (7c) seems hardly right.

(7c) It ought to be the case that Smith has been robbed.

2. Paradoxes of Deontic Logic and Their Solutions

Good Samaritan Paradox

- Within LNS, (7a) can be analyzed as the combination of two conditions (8a) and (8c), where (8c) follows from (8a) and (8b).

(8a) $agent(John)$ and $robbed(Smith)$ are elements of T_3.

(8b) $\forall x\, \forall y\, (agent(x) \wedge robbed(y) \rightarrow help(x, y))$ is an element of OB_3.

(8c) $\mathbf{O}_{<T_3, OB_3>}(robbed(Smith) \rightarrow help(John, Smith))$.

(7a) It ought to be the case that John helps Smith who has been robbed.

2. Paradoxes of Deontic Logic and Their Solutions

Good Samaritan Paradox

(8d) If $\{agent(John), robbed(Smith)\} \subseteq T_3$ &
$\{\forall x\, \forall y\, (agent(x) \wedge robbed(y) \rightarrow help(x, y))\} \subseteq OB_3$, then
$\mathbf{O}_{<T_3, OB_3>}(robbed(Smith) \rightarrow help(John, Smith))$ &
$\mathbf{O}_{<T_3, OB_3>}\, help(John, Smith)$.

- From (8a) and (8c), follows that "John helps Smith" belongs to the obligation context of $<T_3, OB_3>$ ((8d)). This result means that *It ought to be the case that John helps Smith*, which is the result we sought.

2. Paradoxes of Deontic Logic and Their Solutions

Good Samaritan Paradox

- Note that a normative system can express explicitly who the bearers of an obligation are, where we assume that they always try to fulfill their obligations, if they accept them:

(9a) Given a normative system $<T, OB>$, "Teachers should prepare for their lectures" can be expressed as follows:

$$\mathbf{O}_{<T,\, OB>} \forall x\, \forall y\, (agent(x) \wedge teacher(x) \wedge lecture\text{-}of(y, x)) \rightarrow prepare(x, y)).$$

(9b) Given a normative system $<T, OB>$, " Students should study hard" can be expressed as follows:

$$\mathbf{O}_{<T,\, OB>} \forall x\, (agent(x) \wedge student(x) \rightarrow study\text{-}hard(x)).$$

3. Conflicts in Normative Systems

Two Kinds of Contradictions

- In normative system $<T, OB>$, two kinds of contradictions are distinguished:

  the contradiction in propositional system T and that in $<T, OB>$.

- *T is inconsistent as the propositional system of $<T, OB>$ iff T* is inconsistent.
- However, $<T, OB>$ is *inconsistent iff* $T \cup OB$ is inconsistent.

3. Conflicts in Normative Systems

Violation of the Presupposed Obligations

- A characteristic of NSs is the property that any violation of the presupposed obligations produces inconsistency in NSs. Let us consider the following example:

(10a) It ought to be that Jones does go (to the assistance of his neighbors).

(10b) Jones doesn't go.

- This situation can be represented as follows:

(10c) $\{agent(Jones), \neg go(Jones)\} \subseteq T_4$ & $\{go(Jones)\} \subseteq OB_4$.

3. Conflicts in Normative Systems

Significance of a NS

- This kind of violation of obligations could threaten the significance of a NS. If people perform their actions without respecting a given NS, that system can lose its significance.
- However, a small violation of a NS can sometimes be managed through taking the dynamic aspect of the reality into consideration (see section 4).

3. Conflicts in Normative Systems

Conflicts in an Obligation Space

- Next, let us consider a case of conflicts in an obligation space. Suppose that Tom is required to do act_1 as a member of group A. Furthermore, suppose that he is also required not to do act_1 as a member of group B.
- This situation produces inconsistency in the presupposed normative system $<T_5, OB_5>$:

(11) If $\{agent(Tom), member(Tom,A), member(Tom,B)\} \subseteq T_5$ &

$\{\forall x\ (agent(x)\ member(x,A) \wedge \ \rightarrow do(x, act_1)),$

$\{\forall x\ (agent(x)\ member(x,B) \wedge \ \rightarrow \neg\, do(x, act_1))\} \subseteq OB_5$,

then $\mathbf{O}_{<T_5, OB_5>}\, do(Tom, act_1)$ & $\mathbf{O}_{<T_5, OB_5>} \neg\, do(Tom, act_1)$.

3. Conflicts in Normative Systems
One Possible Solution

- One possible solution for Tom is to drop out from one of these groups. In that case, this decision reproduces a consistent NS.
- For example, if Tom drops out from group *B*, he need no more consider the prohibition of doing act_1.

4. Dynamic Aspects and Future Orientation of LNS

Conversational Score

- A normative system $<T, OB>$ can function like a conversational score proposed by David Lewis (1979).
  - A normative system can be updated to describe a development of a situation.
- Let us reconsider the case of a violating action described in (10a) and (10b). To describe the shift of time, we introduce here the past-tense operator P. Then, we can consider the shift of time and update normative system $<T_4, OB_4>$ and create $<T_{4up}, OB_4>$:

(12a) $\{agent(Jones), \neg go(Jones)\} \subseteq T_4$ & $\{go(Jones)\} \subseteq OB_4$.

(12b) $T_{4up} = (T_4 - \{\neg go(Jones)\}) \cup \{P(\neg go(Jones))\}$.
(Information updated)

(10a) It ought to be that Jones does go.

(10b) Jones doesn't go.

Recovering the Consistency

(12a) $\{agent(Jones), \neg go(Jones)\} \subseteq T_4$ & $\{go(Jones)\} \subseteq OB_4$.

(12b) $T_{4up} = (T_4 - \{\neg go(Jones)\}) \cup \{P(\neg go(Jones))\}$.
(Information updated)

- This example shows that a violated NS can sometimes automatically recover its consistency when its propositional system is updated.

4. Dynamic Aspects and Future Orientation of LNS

Change of a Situation

- Next, let us consider a case where an obligation becomes applicable through a change of the given situation.

(13a) We should help suffering neighbors.

(13b) Mary, who is a neighbor of John, was not suffering, but is now suffering.

(13c) So John should help Mary now.

Explanation of an Informal Inference

- Within LNS, the informal inference " (13c) follows from (13a) and (13b)" can be explicitly described as the inference of (13f) from (13d) and (13e):

(13d) $\{agent(John), neighbor(Mary, John)\} \subseteq T_6$ & $\{\forall x\ \forall y\ (agent(x) \wedge neighbor(y, x) \wedge suffering(y) \rightarrow help(x, y))\} \subseteq OB_6$.

(13e) $T_{6up} = T_6 \cup \{suffering(Mary)\}$. (Information updated)

(13f) $\mathbf{O}_{<T_{6up}, OB_6>}\ help(John, Mary)$.

Future Orientation of LNS

- Normative sentences are normally future oriented. Some problems can be solved by considering this property. Consider the following sentences:

(14a) It should be the case that from now on any two countries have peaceful relations.

$$\{\forall t\ \forall x\ \forall y\ (t_{now} \leq t \wedge country(x) \wedge country(y) \wedge x \neq y \rightarrow peaceful(x, y, t))\} \subseteq OB_7$$

(14b) A and B are countries.

$$\{country(A) \wedge country(B)\} \subseteq T_7$$

Future Orientation of LNS

(14c1) A and B have now peaceful relations.

$$\{peaceful(A, B, t_{now})\} \subseteq T_7$$

(14c2) A and B have always peaceful relations.

$$\{\forall t\ peaceful(A, B, t)\} \subseteq T_7$$

(14d) It should be the case that from now on A and B have peaceful relations.

$$\mathbf{O}_{<T_7, OB_7>} \forall t\ (t_{now} \leq t \rightarrow peaceful(A, B, t))$$

Future Orientation of LNS

- Within LNS, (14d) follows from (14a), (14b), and (14c1), while (14d) does not follow from (14a), (14b), and (14c2).
- However, the second invalidity can be justified, because (14c2) expresses that the goal of (14d) has been already satisfied.
  - As this section shows, LNS can deal with interactions between deontic states and temporal developments. Thus, LNS can be seen as a framework that satisfies the following requirements mentioned in Aqvist (2002): " for any serious prepuces of application, the expressive resources of deontic languages must be enriched so as to include temporal and quantificational ones" (p. 150).

5. Conclusions

Theoretical Difficulties of SDL

- It is well known that SDL has many theoretical difficulties (Aqvist (2002), McNamara (2006)).
- Recently, Stit logic was proposed and researchers have shown many interesting results (Belnap et al (2001), Horty (2001)).

5. Conclusions

Explicitness of LNS

- LNS is an alternative framework that can explicitly express both propositional and normative constraints.
- This property of explicitness makes LNS applicable to numerous classes of normative problems.
- For example, a legal system could be described as a normative system in the sense of LNS.
- The method developed in this paper can be modified to explain inferences among speech acts. However, this remains a future task.

5. Conclusions

How to Express Speech Acts

- Instead of obligations, we may use imperatives or intentions.

$$\mathbf{O}_{<T,\ OB>}$$

$$\mathbf{COMMAND}_{<T,\ IMP>}$$

$$\mathbf{INTEND}_{<T,\ INT>}$$

  - As these cases show, the method presented here is quite general.

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