

# Overriding Normative-Work and the Collapse of Logical Pluralism

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April 7, 2023

# Outline

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# Introduction

How many correct logics are there?

# Some Concepts

## Logical Monism

There is exactly one correct logic.

## Logical Pluralism

There is more than one correct logic.

## Strict Strongness

$L_1$  is strictly stronger than  $L_2$  iff  $L_1$  validates all but not only what  $L_2$  validates.

# The General Collapse Argument

- 1 **Work:** All logics do normative work.
- 2 A logic does normative work iff \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ logic(s) meet those conditions.
- 4 Therefore, **Only One Works:** Only one logic does normative work.

# What Might Go in the Blanks?

## Ecumenical Normative-Work

A logic does normative work iff it makes an ecumenical normative-difference.

## Ecumenical Normative-Difference

A difference to what an agent is obligated, entitled, or has reason to do.

## Strongest

Only the strongest logic makes an ecumenical normative-difference.

# Blake-Turner's Collapse Argument

- ① All logics do normative work.
- ② **Ecumenical Normative-Work:** A logic does normative work iff it makes an ecumenical normative-difference.
- ③ **Strongest:** Only the strongest logic makes an ecumenical normative-difference.
- ④ Therefore, only one logic does normative work.

Blake-Turner argues against **Strongest**.

# When The Logics Agree on Validity

I promise to go to your party. Since I have promised, all else equal, I'm obligated to go. Beyoncé is also coming to your party. This gives me a reason to go to your party that I wouldn't otherwise have, though it doesn't affect my obligation.

My promise is analogous to validity in the stronger logic. Beyoncé's presence at your party is analogous to validity in the weaker logic.



# When The Logics Disagree on Validity

I promise to go to your party. Since I have promised, all else equal, I'm obligated to go. I win a ticket to a Beyoncé concert that's at the same time as your party, but elsewhere. This gives me a reason to not go to your party, but it's not enough to override my obligation.

My promise is analogous to validity in the stronger logic. My concert ticket is analogous to validity in the weaker logic.

# Is This the Right Way?

Even if this is the case, this isn't the right way to fill in the blanks.

What matters most here is what I actually ought to do.

# Against Ecumenical Normative-Work

What Beyoncé is doing is independent of whether I've promised to go to your party. My party-going entitlements and obligations are generated independently.

Validity in the pluralist's weaker logic is not independent of validity in the stronger logic. If something is invalid in the stronger logic, it's also invalid in the weaker. My belief-basing entitlements and obligations are not generated independently.

# Undefeated Obligations 1

I promise to go to your party, but later win a concert ticket like before. For each person that attends the concert, a charity will receive a large sum of money which they'll use to do a lot of good. This, plausibly, gives me an overriding reason to not go to your party, but to the concert instead.

Invalidity in the weaker logic, however, does not override the obligations generated by validity in the stronger logic.

## Undefeated Obligations 2

I promise not to go to your party, but I later learn that if I break my promise, Beyoncé will make a charitable donation like before. This, plausibly, gives me an overriding reason to go to your party instead of staying at home.

The weaker logic can't give me such a reason, since anything that's invalid in the stronger logic is also invalid in the weaker.

# Forced Agreement

I'm working for my boss, Tony, who tells me what I should or shouldn't do. However, Tony has his own boss: Jeannie. Jeannie tells Tony what he should or shouldn't do, which he then tells me. If Jeannie wants us to not do something, Tony agrees. If Jeannie wants us to do something, Tony tells me—even if he disagrees—and we do what Jeannie says. We only ever actually do (or don't do) what Jeannie says.

Jeannie's orders are analogous to validity in the stronger logic. Tony's own opinions are analogous to validity in the weaker logic.

# Why Override?

When I consult my ethical theory about what I ought to do, I care most about what I ought to do all-things-considered.

When I consult my logic(s) about what I ought to believe, I care most about what I ought to believe all-things-considered.

# What Should Go in the Blanks

## Overriding Normative-Work

A logic does normative work iff it makes an overriding normative-difference.

## Overriding Normative-Difference

A difference to what an agent should actually do.

## Override (Strongest\*)

Only the strongest logic makes an overriding normative-difference.



# My Collapse Argument

- 1 All logics do normative work.
- 2 **Overriding Normative-Work:** A logic does normative-work iff it makes an overriding normative-difference.
- 3 **Override (Strongest\*):** Only the strongest logic makes an overriding normative-difference.
- 4 Therefore, only one logic does normative work.

# Conclusion

If I'm correct that overriding normative-differences are what matter to whether a logic does normative work, then the pluralist still faces collapse.

# Thanks

Thank you!

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