explicating logical truth, and, thus, also consequence and inconsistency.

Let C_1 and C_2 be distinct moral codes formulated in English. Let C_1 contain a norm N and C_2 its negation. The moral relativist is saying that if both codes are consistent, then, in the strongest sense of correctness applicable to moral norms, they are also both correct in the sense that they contain only correct moral norms. Consider the same thing said of physical theories: 'Let T_1 and T_2 be two consistent physical theories. Let T_1 contain a statement S and T_2 its negation. Then, in the strongest sense of correctness applicable to physical statements, both theories are correct in the sense of containing only correct physical statements.' If we believe that the physical statements of English are true in English we will reject the second claim. We will hold that the strongest sense of correctness applicable to physical statements is not system-relative.

The moral relativist denies that there is any corresponding sense of correctness applicable to moral norms. That is, there is no notion of moral correctness which is not system-dependent. This position may not be true, but there is no strictly logical basis for refuting it.

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'OUGHT TO HAVE' AND 'COULD HAVE'

By Walter Sinnott-Armstrong

MANY arguments concerning practical reasoning assume that 'ought' implies 'can'. More specifically, most such arguments depend on the assumption that this implication is a semantic implication, such as an entailment or a semantic presupposition, rather than a pragmatic implication, such as Gricean conversational or conventional implicature [1]. If the implication is only pragmatic, it can be true that an agent ought to do something even if he or she cannot do it. Thus, any argument from the premise that an agent cannot do something to the conclusion that it is not true that an agent ought to do it is invalid unless the implication from 'ought' to 'can' is semantic.

There are, however, several reasons for denying that 'ought' semantically implies 'can'. I have given counterexamples elsewhere (see [2]). In this article, I will give a more technical argument for the same conclusion.

Semantic implications relate only sentences or propositions. I will speak of sentences, but my arguments do not depend on this. Thus, the claim that one operator semantically implies another operator must be short for the claim that sentences with one operator semantically imply sentences with the other operator. When tenses occur in sentences with operators, the tenses can apply either to the operator itself or to the sentence inside the scope of the operator.

If sentences with one operator semantically imply sentences with another operator, then the implication must hold even when the sentences within the scope of the operators are about the past. For example, 'knows' entails 'believes', so

(KD) John knows that Bill has a dog

entails

(BD) John believes that Bill has a dog,

so (prefixing 'P' to what is past)

(KPD) John knows that Bill had a dog

entails

(BDP) John believes that Bill had a dog.

However, (KPD) does not entail

(PBPD) John believed that Bill had a dog

or

(PBD) John believed that Bill now has (or would have) a dog.

Present knowledge of the past does not entail past belief. Thus, semantic implications between operators hold for sentences about the past without requiring the past tense to apply to the entailed or presupposed operator.

The relation between 'ought' and 'can' is not like this, because the past tense usually must apply to the operator 'can' when the past tense does not apply to 'ought' but to the sentence inside the scope of 'ought'. For example,

(X) I ought to have mowed your grass

can be interpreted either as

(OPM) I now ought to have mowed your grass in the past

or as

(POM) It was true in the past that I ought to mow your grass.

These interpretations differ in whether the past tense applies to the operator or to the sentence inside the scope of the operator. This difference makes these interpretations true in different circum-

stances. For example, suppose I promise on Monday to mow your grass by Saturday. (POM) is still true on Thursday and on all future days, because it was true on Tuesday that I ought to mow your grass by Saturday. In contrast, (OPM) is not true on Thursday, because it is not yet true that I ought to have mowed your grass in the past (before Thursday), since I promised only to mow it by Saturday. Since it does not seem true to say (X) on Thursday, and (POM) is true but (OPM) is not true on Thursday, (OPM) seems more plausible as an interpretation of (X) at least in this situation on Thursday.

If 'ought' semantically implied 'can', 'ought to have' would semantically imply 'can have', so (X) would semantically imply

(Y) I can have mowed your grass.

'Can have' seems odd, but that supports what I will say. (Y) can be interpreted either as

(CPM) I now can bring it about that I did mow your grass

or as

(PCM) It was true in the past that I could mow your grass.

These interpretations differ in whether the past tense applies to the operator or to the sentence inside the scope of the operator. (CPM) and (PCM) are not true in the same circumstances. For example, suppose on Saturday I have the ability to mow your grass on Saturday, but I do not mow your grass on Saturday. (PCM) is true on Sunday (and all future days), since on Saturday I had the ability to mow your grass on Saturday. In contrast, (CPM) is not true on Sunday, because it is too late to change the fact that I did not mow your grass on Saturday (or ever in the past).

These distinctions make it clear that (OPM) can be true in situations where (CPM) is false. For example, suppose I promise on Monday to mow your grass by Saturday, and you do not cancel my obligation, and I have no excuse or justification for not mowing your grass by Saturday, but I do not mow your grass by Saturday. (OPM) is true on the following Sunday, because I ought to have mowed your grass by Saturday and thus before Sunday. However, (CPM) is not true on Sunday, because I cannot on Sunday do anything that will bring it about that I did mow your grass by Saturday. Since (OPM) can be true when (CPM) is false, 'ought' does not semantically imply 'can'.

An opponent might respond that (OPM) might still semantically imply (PCM). However, this implication is not like the semantic implications discussed above. Furthermore, the claim that (OPM) semantically implies (PCM) is not enough for many of the arguments that assume that 'ought' implies 'can', because this claim allows the possibility that an agent ought to do something that the agent (now) cannot do.

A second possible response is that (OPM) implies (PCM) rather than (CPM) only because nobody can change the past, so no judgment like (CPM) can ever be true. This explains why 'can have' seems odd. However, some judgments like (CPM) might be true if actions are bodily movements. For example, if I shot someone a few minutes ago, and whether or not my victim will die depends on whether or not I now call a doctor, and I can now call a doctor or not, then I can now determine whether or not my past act will be describable as an act that caused the victim's death, so I can now bring it about that I did or did not kill the victim. Thus, a judgment like (CPM) seems to be true. However, even if judgments like (CPM) are never true, this would support rather than refute my main argument. It is the fact that 'ought' often does operate on past tense sentences to produce a truth but 'can' usually does not operate on past tense sentences to produce a truth that shows that 'ought' does not semantically imply 'can'.

A third possible response is that judgments like (OPM) are never true. However, such a universal claim cannot be justified without begging the question. Furthermore, it often seems natural to say that someone ought to have done something, even if he or she did not do it. We need to be able to make present judgments about what ought or ought not to have been done in the past in order to justify present punishment for past acts or failures to act. The correct interpretation of such judgments cannot have the form of (POM), because judgments like (POM) are true in many cases where punishment is not justified, such as when it was no longer true at the time at which the agent did the act that he or she ought not to do it. Thus, it must be judgments like (OPM) that seem natural and needed.

A final response is that, even if 'ought' is used to make judgments like (OPM), and even if judgments like (OPM) do not semantically imply judgments like (CPM), such judgments use 'ought' in one sense, but there is still a different sense in which 'ought' semantically implies 'can'. A move like this can always be tried to escape arguments against semantic implications. Even if I argue for the obvious conclusion that 'father' does not semantically imply 'married'. an opponent can respond that my arguments show only that one sense of 'father' does not semantically imply 'married', but there is still another sense of 'father' that does semantically imply 'married'. Such moves are not plausible unless there is enough independent justification for distinguishing the supposedly different senses. In the case of 'ought', an opponent might argue that 'ought' is used for different speech acts when it is followed by a past infinitive and when it is followed by a present infinitive. A speaker can advise by saying what the audience ought to do but often cannot advise by saying what the audience ought to have done. However, this difference in possible speech acts does not prove any difference between the senses of 'ought' when it is followed by

infinitives of different tenses. In the absence of any other justifica-
tion for distinguishing such senses of 'ought', it seems simpler and
better not to multiply the senses of 'ought'. This leaves no escape
from the conclusion that 'ought' does not semantically imply 'can'.

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DELIBERATING ABOUT THE INEVITABLE

By BRUCE N. WALLER

IF I believe that I shall inevitably perform a certain act — that it is
uniquely determined that I shall perform a certain act — can I
deliberate about what act to perform? A crucial step in Peter van
Inwagen's argument for universal belief in free will (*An Essay on
Free Will*, Oxford 1983, pp. 153-61) requires a negative answer to
that question. I shall argue for the affirmative.
    Briefly, van Inwagen's argument: first, 'One cannot deliberate
about whether to perform a certain act unless one believes it is
possible for one to perform it.' (For van Inwagen, to believe that it
is *possible* to perform an act is to believe that one is deciding
between or among 'various incompatible courses of action' (p. 154;
also pp. 30, 68-9) and that each of those courses of action could
actually be selected and put into practice. Also the *possibility* of
performing a certain act is not merely a conditional possibility: I
could have done X *if* I had wanted to, had had different desires, had
chosen differently, etc. Van Inwagen rejects this 'conditional analysis
of 'could have acted differently' in his superb critique of com-
patibilism, pp. 114-26.) Two, if one believes determinism to be
true, then one believes that one's future acts are inevitable (and that
no other acts are really possible). Three, we do deliberate about
whether to perform certain acts. Therefore, we cannot believe in
determinism.