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Reviewed Work: Obligation and Modal Logic

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H. N. CASTANEDA. *Obligation and modal logic. Logique et analyse*, n.s. vol. 3 (1960), pp. 40-48.

Deontic logic, it is argued, cannot be adequately formalized as a mere part of, or reduced to a system of, ordinary modal logic. Anderson's conditions for a normal deontic logic (see reference in preceding review) are viewed as not sufficient to insure that 'P', 'O', and 'F' when interpreted will have the intended correspondence to the meanings of 'permissible,' 'obligatory,' and 'forbidden.' A counter-example is given to show that some restriction upon the interpretation of the propositional constant 'B' is required. Otherwise, from 'There is a blue book which may have failed to be blue' it is possible by the definitions and interpretations of 'S' and 'F' to conclude 'It is forbidden that there is a blue book.'

Three possible interpretations of 'S', declared to be the only ones that will do, are considered; and grounds for rejecting each, presented. Not considered, however, is the interpretation of 'S' as 'There is a violation,' an alternative that does not seem objectionable in the manner of the rejected three.

A more persuasive case is made against deontic systems in which 'COpLOp' is provable (those based upon S4 or stronger systems). That true statements formulating obligations are all logically true is viewed by the author as absurd.

It is argued that the ' $\Box(\sim p \supset S) \supset Op$ ' part, i.e., ' $Pp \supset \Diamond(p \& \sim S)$ ', of Anderson's 'OM7. $Op \equiv \Box(\sim p \supset S)$ ' is false in the deontic interpretation proposed, but then what purports to be a counter-example of ' $\Diamond(p \& \sim S) \supset Pp$ ' is presented. The proposed counter-example errs in interpreting 'S' as a single particular sanction, rather than as Anderson's disjunction of all sanctions.

Anderson's deontic systems are charged with committing Moore's "naturalistic fallacy" in the sense of confusing goodness with a non-ethical property, good in the sense of ought (to exist).

Finally, it is alleged to be error to prefix deontic operators to descriptions of states of affairs; but aside from merely asserting that these must be prefixed to descriptions of acts, no reasons are given why the Anderson approach is unacceptable.

The issues raised about (1) restrictions upon the interpretation of 'B' and (2) the provability of 'COpLOp' seem to the reviewer to require either some further explanation or some refinement of the proposed deontic systems or their interpretation.

Misprint: page 44, line 38, for ' $p \supset S$ ', read ' $\sim p \supset S$ '.

LAYMAN E. ALLEN