Philosophy of Language.
Metavocabularies of Reason:
Pragmatics, Semantics, and Logic
https://sites.pitt.edu/~rbrandom/Courses

Recap:

There are five important bits of conceptual machinery that I put on the table last week that I want to build on this time:

a) The idea of a *pragmatic* metavocabulary. This is a metalanguage for talking about what one is *doing* in *using* linguistic expressions. It contrasts for instance with *semantic* metavocabularies (typically using terms such as 'true' and 'refers') that talk about the *meanings* of linguistic expressions.

b) The idea that an adequate pragmatic metavocabulary must make essential use of *normative* vocabulary.

c) The idea of using a normative pragmatic MV that is deontically irreducibly *two-dimensional*, by contrast to merely *binary* deontic statuses: appropriate/inappropriate, correct/incorrect, assertible/nonassertible. I suggested commitment/entitlement (or responsibility/authority) as genuinely two-dimensional.

d) In terms of commitment/entitlement (and the closely related responsibility/authority), I described the intimate relations between speech acts of *asserting* and those of *defending* and *challenging*, offering and demanding *reasons*. Without these, we cannot make sense of the disjunction between commitment and entitlement that is required to understand the central *testimonial* authority of assertions. Here I sang the praises of the *default-and-challenge* structure of commitment and entitlement, for its *epistemological* consequences.

e) The Harman point, distinguishing practices of inferring as a *doing*, reasoning *practices*, from reason *relations* of implication.

The central issue for this week is how to understand the *relations* between the two things Harman obliges us to distinguish.

i. Practices of asserting (premises and conclusions) and inferring (*defending* and *challenging* assertings, by producing more assertings), the positions and moves of practices of reason*ing*, and

ii. Reason relations, paradigmatically implication or consequence relations between assertibles = claimables, as I will say, the *contents* expressed by the *sentences* asserted.

<u>Plan</u>:

Do this in two pieces.

First consider how to understand reason *relations* in terms of *practice* of asserting-and-reasoning, specified in a normative pragmatic metavocabulary. This corresponds to the first arrow on the Mandala of Metavocabularies of Reason, from the Pragmatics vertex to the central Reason Relations triangle. This in turn will be done in two parts:

    A) Consider Restall's and Ripley's normative bilateralist pragmatic explanation of the fundamental reason relation of implication.

    B) Show how we can add a further level of fine-structure to that account by rendering it in a deontically *two-dimensional* normative pragmatic MV of <u>commitment</u> and <u>entitlement</u>.

Part 2 then explores the sense in which those reason relations can be understood to *normatively govern* practices of reason*ing*. Here we look at John MacFarlane's setting of criteria of adequacy for an account of reason relations as appropriately *normatively governing* reasoning *practices*.

Part 1 A:

The basic idea of Restall-Ripley bilateralism can be put in two parts:

    1. There is a fundamental bipolarity or *bivalence* of speech acts: there is not only *assertion*, but *denial*.

    2. That bivalence is the key to understanding the reason *relation* of implication.

More specifically, that bipolarity corresponds to the two *sides* of the implication relation.

The bilateralist master idea is that one can offer a pragmatics-first explanation of the reason relation of implication by

    i.   treating assertion (acceptance) bivalently: as one of a *pair* of speech acts (attitudes), along with denial (rejection), and

    ii.   understanding the implication turnstile relating assertibles/deniables (accepables/rejectables) contents *bilaterally*, i.e. with assertion on the LHS and denial on the RHS, and

    iii.   using a *global* or *holistic* normative status of out-of-boundness, impropriety, or exclusion-of-entitlement (you are not permitted to be in this position) that governs the *whole* position indicated by the bilaterally considered, two-sided implication relation.

$\Gamma|{\sim}A$ says that *asserting* (accepting) all of Γ and *denying* A is normatively *out-of-bounds* (=bad).
$\Gamma|{\sim}\Delta$ says that *asserting* (accepting) all of Γ and *denying* all of Δ is normatively *out-of-bounds*.

Part 1 B:

The key concept of a more fine-grained, explicitly deontically two-dimensional version of the bilateralist pragmatic account of reason relations in terms of <u>commitment</u> and <u>entitlement</u> is <u>incompatibility</u>.

Definition: A and B are *incompatible* (symbolically, A#B) =df. *commitment* to A *precludes entitlement* to B (and *vice versa*).

Bipolarity of Reason Relations Claim:
Incompatibility is a reason relation among claimables that is as fundamental and irreducible as *implication*.

- *Implication* codifies the relation of **being a reason *for*** that is appealed to in rational *defenses* of entitlement to doxastic commitments.
- *Incompatibility* codifies the relation of **being a reason *against*** that is appealed to in rational *challenges* to entitlement to doxastic commitments.

Q: What does *this* bipolarity have to do with the bivalence of acts/attitudes between assertion/denial or acceptance/rejection?

Connection to bilateralism:
Being a reason *for* is being a reason to *accept*.
Being a reason *against* is being a reason to *reject*.

<u>Proposal</u>:
Γ|~A says that
Commitment to accept all of Γ precludes entitlement to commitment to *reject* A.
Γ#A says that
Commitment to accept all of Γ precludes entitlement to commitment to *accept* A.

Definition of "pragmatically *implicit* commitments to attitudes":
To be *precluded from entitlement* to (commitment to) *reject* A is to be **implicitly** *committed* to *accept* A.
To be *precluded from entitlement* to (commitment to) *accept* A is to be **implicitly** *committed* to *reject* A.

Part 2:

MacFarlane: "[I]t turns out to be surprisingly hard to say how facts about the validity of inferences relate to norms for reasoning."

"We need a bridge principle of the following form:
BRIDGE PRINCIPLE:
If A,B |= C, then (normative claim about believing A, B, and C).

The question is what the consequent should look like. We can generate a nice set of options by varying three parameters:
1. *Type of deontic operator.* Do facts about logical validity give rise to strict *obligations*, *permissions*, or (defeasible) *reasons* for belief?
2. *Polarity.* Are these obligations/permissions/reasons *to believe*, or merely *not to disbelieve*? [BB Note: in MacF's usage "disbelief" is not just not believing. It is rejecting or denying.]
3. *Scope of deontic operator.* These norms are in some sense conditional: what one ought/may/has reason to believe with respect to C depends somehow on what one believes, or ought/may/has reason to believe, with respect to A and B. Does the deontic operator govern the *consequent* of the conditional (P $\rightarrow$ O : Q), or both the antecedent and the consequent (O : P $\rightarrow$ O : Q), or the whole conditional(O : (P $\rightarrow$ Q))?

Table 1: If A,B |= C, then . . .
C Deontic operator embedded in consequent.
o Deontic operator is strict obligation (ought).
Co+ if you believe A and you believe B, you ought to believe C.
Co− if you believe A and you believe B, you ought not disbelieve C.
p Deontic operator is permission (may).
Cp+ if you believe A and you believe B, you may believe C.
Cp− if you believe A and you believe B, you are permitted not to disbelieve C.
r Deontic operator is "has (defeasible) reason for."
Cr+ if you believe A and you believe B, you have reason to believe C.
Cr− if you believe A and you believe B, you have reason not to disbelieve C.
B Deontic operator embedded in both antecedent and consequent.
o Deontic operator is strict obligation (ought).
Bo+ if you ought to believe A and believe B, you ought to believe C.
Bo− if you ought to believe A and believe B, you ought not disbelieve C.
p Deontic operator is permission (may).
Bp+ if you may believe A and believe B, you may believe C.
Bp− if you may believe A and believe B, you are permitted not to disbelieve C.
r Deontic operator is "has (defeasible) reason for."
Br+ if you have reason to believe A and believe B, you have reason to believe C.
Br− if you have reason to believe A and believe B, you have reason not to disbelieve C.
W Deontic operator scopes over whole whole conditional.
o Deontic operator is strict obligation (ought).
Wo+ you ought to see to it that if you believe A and you believe B, you believe C.
Wo− you ought to see to it that if you believe A and you believe B, you do not disbelieve C.
p Deontic operator is permission (may).

`Wp+` you may see to it that if you believe A and you believe B, you believe C.
`Wp-` you may see to it that if you believe A and you believe B, you do not disbelieve C.
`r` Deontic operator is "has (defeasible) reason for."
`Wr+` you have reason to see to it that if you believe A and you believe B, you believe C.
`Wr-` you have reason to see to it that if you believe A and you believe B, you do not disbelieve C.
`-k` (As suffix to one of the above:) antecedent of bridge principle is "If *you know that* A,B |= C . . . ."
Adding the "knowledge" condition *k* turns these 18 alternatives into 36.

His considerations for assessing the different bridge principles are these:

1. EXCESSIVE DEMANDS. `Wo+` implies that you ought either to cease believing the
      axioms of Peano Arithmetic or come to believe all the theorems as well.
2. THE PARADOX OF THE PREFACE.
3. THE STRICTNESS TEST. Broome 2000 argues that "The relation between believing
p and believing q [a logical consequence of p] is strict. If you believe p but not q, you
are definitely not entirely as you ought to be" (85). The `Wr`'s do not capture this strictness.
They allow that one might believe p but not its logical consequence q and still be just as one
ought to be.
[Skip (4), which is about knowledge.]
5. LOGICAL OBTUSENESS. Suppose someone believes A and believes B but just
refuses to take a stand on their conjunction, A ^ B. Intuitively, there is something wrong
with her: she is being illogical.

MacF's conclusion:
My own temptation is to go for a combination of `Wo-` and `Wr+`.
`Wo-` you ought to see to it that if you believe A and you believe B, you do not disbelieve C.
`Wr+` you have reason to see to it that if you believe A and you believe B, you believe C.

Conclusion:
Compare and contrast that conclusion with the views of Restall-Ripley bilateralism and the more
fine grained deontically two-dimensional bilateralist account in terms of commitment and
entitlement.
Wo- is recognizably a version of our definition of explicit implication.
Wr+ is recognizably a version of our definition of implicit implication.
Our account also extends to incompatibility.