Comment on Restall

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Abstract

This is a brief comment on Restall (201+) concerning my use of non-montonic logics.

In a number of publications I have endorsed the use of the non-monotonic paraconsistent logic LPm.[1] Beall (2012) objected that this use is not satisfactory since the consequence relation need not preserve truth. I replied (2012) that a good inference engine does not need to preserve truth, as is shown by other non-monotonic inferences engines, such as those involved in inductive and default inferences.

Restall (201+) takes me to task for saying there that, by definition, non-monotonic consequence is not truth-preserving. He is right. The remark was incautious. You can define notions of truth and consequence in such a way that, for these notions, the consequence relation is non-monotonic and yet preserves truth—though these are not the notions within which LPm is meant to operate, as Restall himself notes.

The only point I wish to make here, lest anyone think otherwise, is that Restall's observation is quite irrelevant to my reply to Beall. It remains the case that a good non-monotonic inference relation need not be truth-preserving.[2]

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[1] E.g., Priest 2006: Ch. 16 and Ch. 19, §10.

[2] This is probably obvious to anyone who understands the papers. But my thanks go to the editors of this journal for soliciting a comment.

References

[1] Restall, G. 201+. On Priest on nonmonotonic and inductive logic. *Thought: a Journal of Philosophy*, to appear.

[2] Beall, J. 2012. Why Priest's reassurance is not so reassuring. *Analysis* 72: 517–25.

[3] Priest, G. 2006. *In Contradiction*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[4] Priest, G. 2012. The Sun may not, indeed, rise tomorrow: a reply to Beall. *Analysis* 72: 739-741.