

It Takes Two to Tango – Individual and Collective Admissibility in Deontic Games

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(based on joint work with Allard Tamminga and Hein Duijf)

Deontic games are a specific class of strategic games in which, for any given combination of actions (also known as an *action profile*), all agents receive the same payoff, and this payoff is either 0 or 1. According to a standard interpretation in deontic logic, payoff 1 indicates that the action profile in question is permissible (for the group of all agents), whereas payoff 0 indicates that it is forbidden. While arguably too simple from the viewpoint of real life coordination problems, these games provide a useful tool to investigate common conceptions in the debate on individual and group responsibility.

In this talk, we will first show how individual and collective admissibility can be defined over deontic games and present a formal language that can be interpreted in an exact way, using such games. The language and semantics are inspired by Horty's seminal work on utilitarian deontic logic (Horty 2001) and more abstract, game-theoretic reformulations of it (Kooi & Tamminga 2008, Tamminga 2013, Tamminga & Duijf 2017). Next, we will show that, using these formal logic tools, one can test formal counterparts of philosophical claims concerning logical and methodological individualism. Finally, we will discuss the issue of responsibility gaps, and consider various sufficient conditions for the absence of such gaps in deontic games.

References

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