

NON-PARADOXICAL PARADOXES?

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1. It is commonly said that, whatever the exact nature of Lewis' paradoxes of strict implication, the only sense in which strict implication is paradoxical is the sense in which 'implies' means 'entails'. Critics of the *identity-thesis*, the thesis, namely that strict implication and entailment are one and the same, have not wanted to deny that Lewis' four puzzle-theorems are true of, or hold for, *material* and *strict* implication. On this view, if you interpret therein the main connective, ' \rightarrow ', as 'materially implies' or 'strictly implies' (*as opposed to 'entails'*) the air of paradox vanishes (Von Wright [8], p. 172). What they resist is construing the main connective of these theorems to be the entailment-connective. Fundamentally, they take the occurrence of the paradoxes conclusively to show that strict implication (for which the paradoxes are true) is not the same relation as entailment (for which the paradoxes are false).

Here is one version of what we might call the *no-conflict hypothesis*. On the present version of it, we are entitled to say both that the paradoxes are true (and their proofs sound) and that our intuitions (on the basis of which we reject the paradoxes) about entailment are true; the tension between paradox and intuition is only apparent. The paradoxes reveal facts about strict implication; whereas our intuitions reflect truths about entailment. It is only when the facts about strict implication revealed by the paradoxes are thought to be facts about entailment, and when the truths about entailment reflected by our intuitions are thought to be truths about strict implication, that the illusion of incompatibility is created. But once it is recognized that we have in strict implication and entailment two distinct, albeit similar, relations, and that what holds for the one does not, in all respects, hold for the other, the illusion of conflict evaporates. We may therefore, without further anxiety, continue to hold that it is a law "of any reasonable modal logic that an impossible proposition strictly implies any proposition whatever, and that a necessary proposition is strictly implied by any proposition whatever."¹

1. See also E. J. Nelson ([7], p. 270). "I do not mean that the *systems* of material and of strict implication are as such absurd: I mean only that I am convinced of the falsity of the view that either strict or material implication is the true analysis of implication."