True Contradictions?

Why, and why not

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My Plan

1. Paradoxes
2. Paraconsistent Logic
3. Paraconsistency & True Contradictions
4. JC Beall & his "Contradictory Christ"
5. Tensions & Limitations in the View

1. Paradoxes

(α) It is Monday today.

(β) α is not true.

(λ) λ is not true.

(λ) λ is not true.

1	(1) λ is true.	Suppose This for the moment
1	(2) λ is not true.	That's just what λ says
1	(3) λ is true & λ is not true.	From (1) & (2).
	(4) λ is not true.	We reduced our supposition to a contradiction.
	(5) λ is true.	That is just what λ says
	(6) λ is true & λ is not true.	From (4) & (5)

(λ) λ is not true.

There is no settled orthodoxy around what to do with the semantic paradoxes, except for acknowledging that any account requires some significant reworking of our concepts.

Our everyday rules for reasoning with 'logical' concepts (like 'not', 'if' etc) and the truth predicate don't "play nice" when pushed to their limits.

2. Paraconsistent Logic

One option....

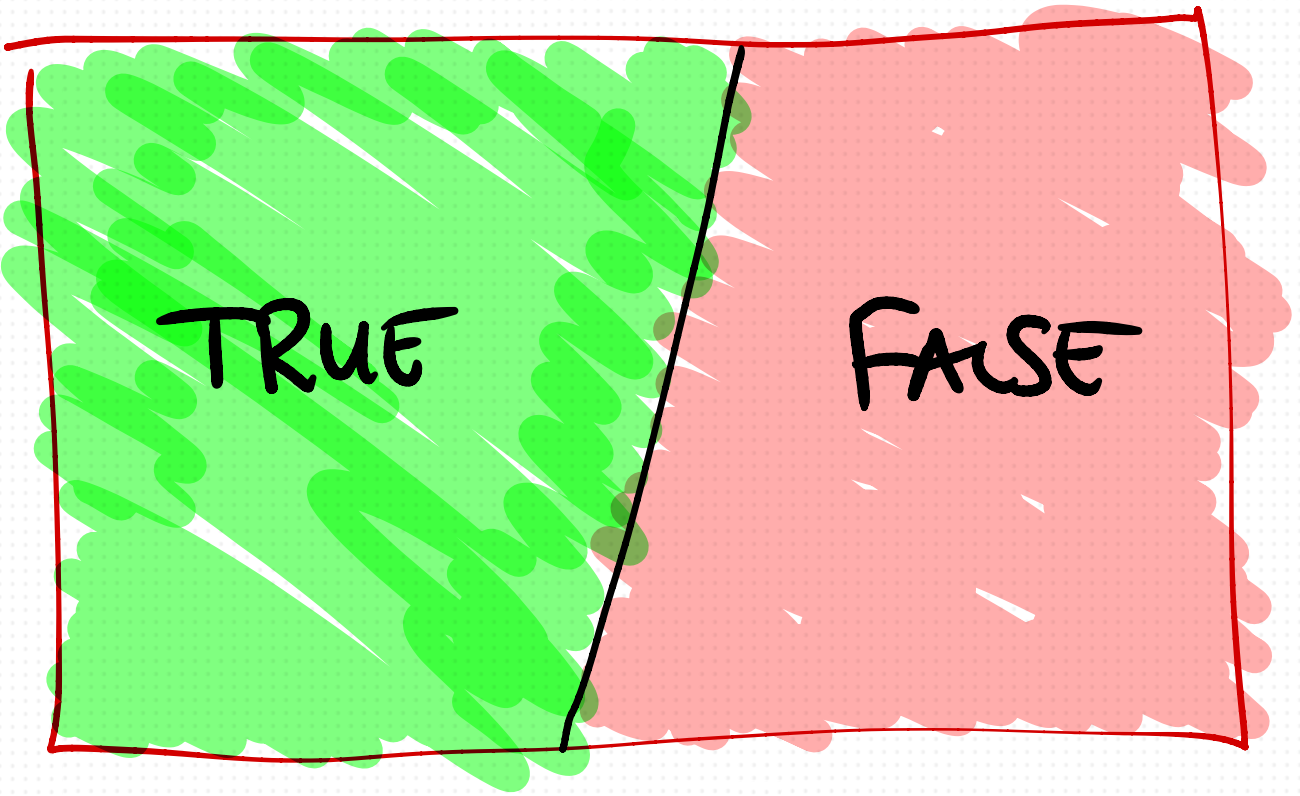
what is so bad about endorsing the contradiction?

λ is true & λ is not true?

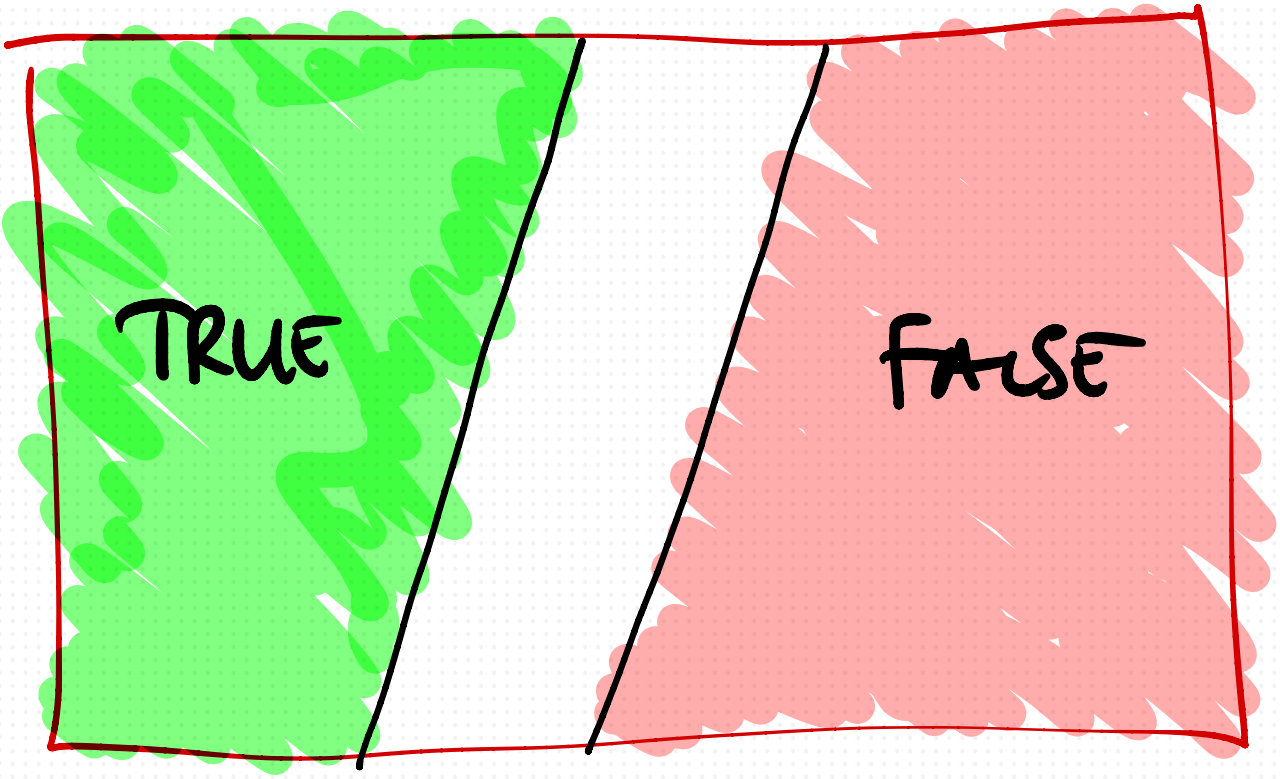
(It's not like any other option is particularly more compelling)

That would require revising our theory of logic.

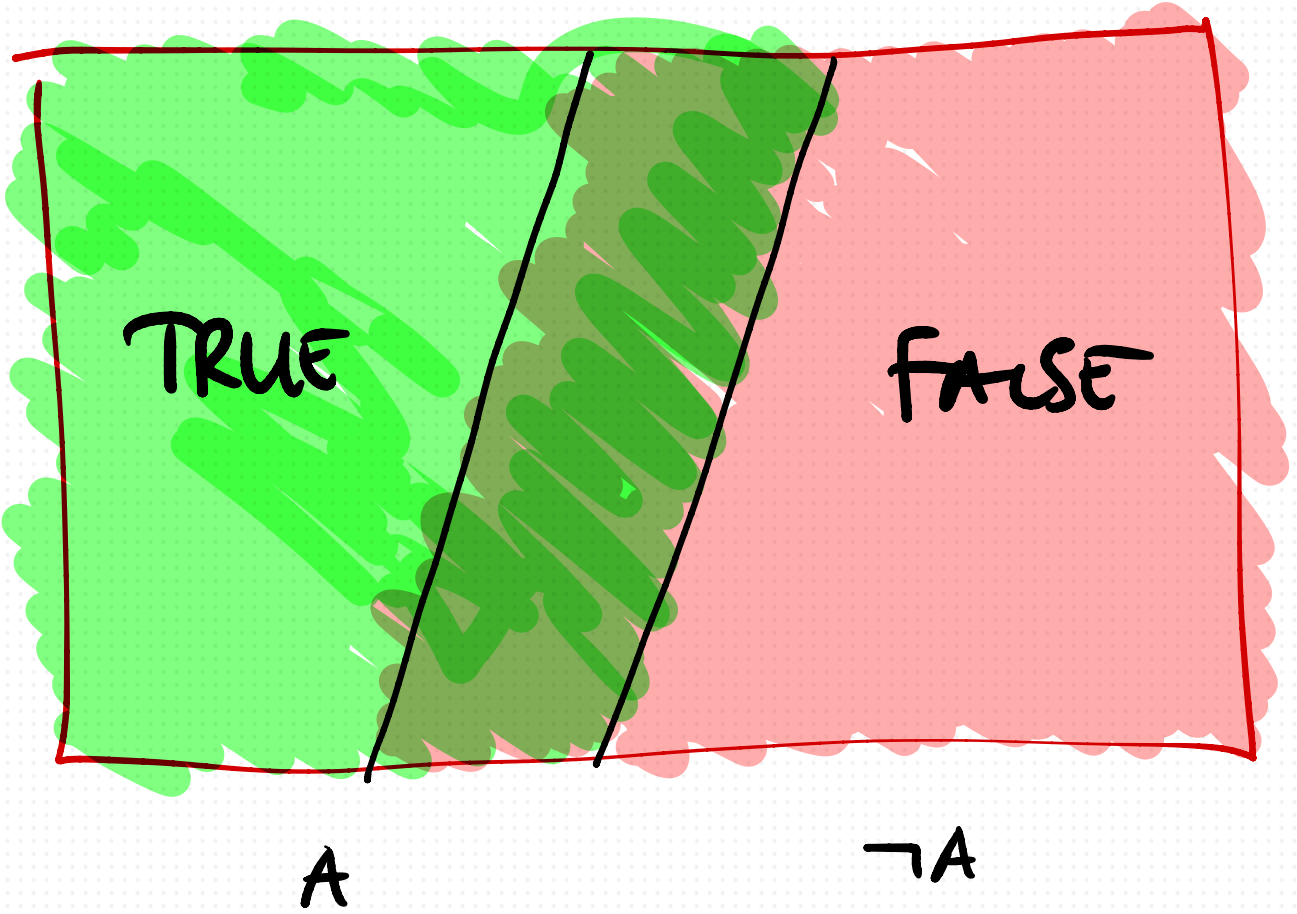
Traditional Two-Valued Logic



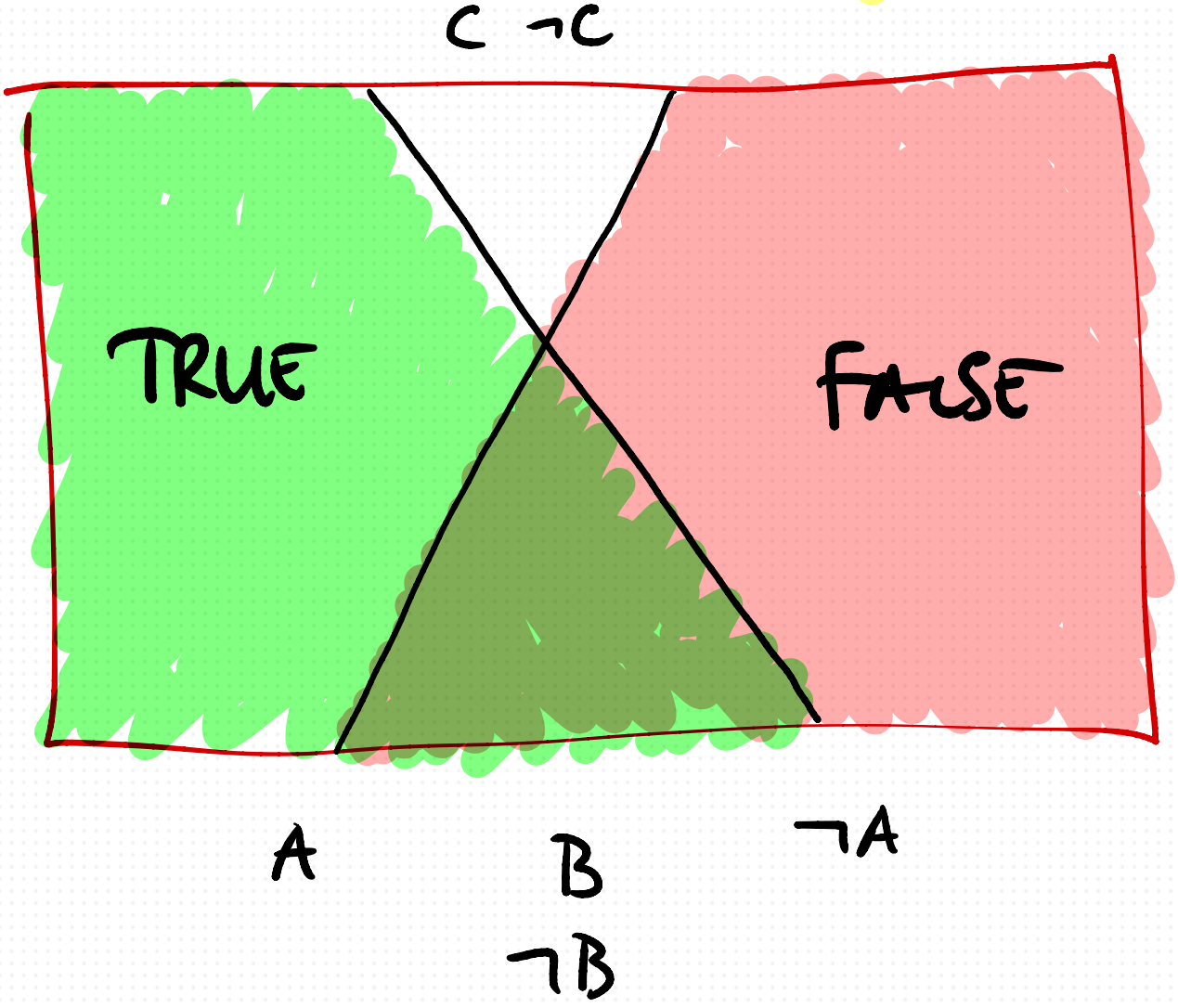
LOGIC WITH TRUTH-VALUE GAPS



LOGIC WITH TRUTH-VALUE GLUTS



LOGIC WITH TRUTH-VALUE GAPS & GLUTS



$A \& B$ is TRUE iff A is TRUE & B is TRUE

$A \& B$ is FALSE iff A is FALSE or B is FALSE

$\neg A$ is TRUE iff A is FALSE

$\neg A$ is FALSE iff A is TRUE

$\forall x A(x)$ is TRUE iff $A(d)$ is TRUE for every $d \in D$

$\forall x A(x)$ is FALSE iff $A(d)$ is FALSE for some $d \in D$

A { TWO-VALUED, GAP, GLUT, GAP & GLUT } INTERPRETATION OF A LANGUAGE ASSIGNS THE VALUES TRUE & FALSE TO EACH ATOMIC SENTENCE

SO THAT EACH GETS { EXACTLY ONE, AT MOST ONE, AT LEAST ONE, ANYTHING GOES } VALUE, & COMPLEX SENTENCES ARE ASSIGNED VALUES USING RULES LIKE WE HAVE SEEN.

LOGICAL VALIDITY

$$P \models C$$

In any interpretation where P is TRUE, so is C.

Interpretations with gaps & with gluts have proved **REALLY USEFUL** in modelling things like

- ~ vague or underdetermined concepts
- ~ inconsistent views of things
- ~ subject matter variance
- ~ ...

$\not\models_{\text{GAPS}} p \vee \neg p$ $\qquad$ $p \not\vdash \neg p \not\models_{\text{GLUTS}} q$ $\qquad$ $p \not\vdash \neg p \not\models_{\text{GAPS \& GLUTS}} q \vee \neg q$

3. Paraconsistency & True Contradictions

PARACONSISTENCY

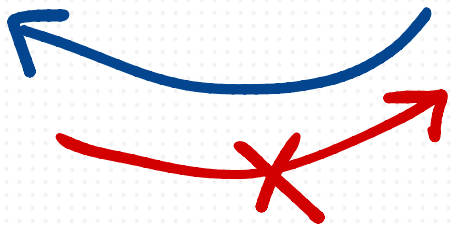
A consequence relation is paraconsistent if negation-contradictory premises do not necessarily entail everything.

$$P, \neg P \not\vdash Q$$

If we use interpretations that allow for gluts, our consequence relation is paraconsistent.

TRUE CONTRADICTIONS

Paraconsistency $\neq$ True Contradictions



It is one thing to use interpretations with gluts to account for inconsistent commitments. It's another thing to take them to represent how things are.

What would it be like
for some contradiction
to be true??

Semantic Paradox

(λ) λ is not true.

(τ) τ is true.

There is very little that hangs on what we say about self-referential sentences like these. They aren't good guides to what it means to endorse a contradiction.

4. Jc Beale & his "Contradictory Christ"

Jc Beall

THE CONTRADICTORY CHRIST

OXFORD

Issues in 'Christology'

Jesus Christ is Divine

- Jesus is impeccable (cannot sin)
- Jesus' divine nature is ...
- Jesus is .....-qua-God

Jesus Christ is Human

- Jesus is peccable (could sin, or could have sinned)
- Jesus' human nature is ....
- Jesus is .... - qua-human.

Beall rejects those 'consistentising' strategies to endorse the contradictions.

He argues that consistentising strategies do undue violence to the everyday meanings of terms like 'human', 'divine', 'can sin', 'cannot sin', etc...

What does this mean?

When we ask "Could he sin?" and the answer is yes & no (without further clarification by disambiguation) what have we learned?

5. TENSIONS & LIMITATIONS in the VIEW

JUST WHAT IS INCONSISTENCY ON JC'S VIEW?

A & B are inconsistent if $A \models \neg B$, or $B \models \neg A$

negation

A & B are inconsistent if $A, B \models \bot$

satisfiability

True together in no models.

true in no interpretations

For Beall, "Jesus is peccable" & "Jesus is impeccable" retain their usual meanings, because they are negation-inconsistent.

However, Beall has revised the everyday meaning of "... is peccable" & "--- is impeccable" because he takes them to be jointly satisfiable.

If something(-one) can be simultaneously peccable & impeccable, exactly what does it mean for something (one) to be impeccable?

If something can be simultaneously F and non-F, what does it mean to be non-F?

ANSWERING this question will involve the same difficult moves as in the old disambiguation strategies, and it's not obvious that this is any easier.

UNANSWERED QUESTION FOR BEALL

How do the separate falsity conditions in these models arise?

A 'MORAL' OF THIS STORY

- The formal possibilities opened up by tools from weird logics are neat & all, ...
- ... but applying them involves a whole host of new questions, which will require more philosophy to answer.

Thank You!