

Propositional Logics

The Semantic Foundations of Logic

THIRD EDITION

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with the assistance and collaboration of

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Dedicated to

Peter Eggenberger

Harold Mann

and

Benson Mates

with gratitude for their encouragement and guidance

Contents

Preface

Preface to the Third Edition

Acknowledgements

I The Basic Assumptions of Propositional Logic

A. What is Logic?	1
B. Propositions	
1. Sentences, propositions, and truth	2
2. Other views of propositions	3
C. Words and Propositions as Types	5
D. Propositions in English	7
• Exercises for Sections A–D	7
E. Form and Content	9
F. Propositional Logic and the Basic Connectives	10
• Exercises for Sections E and F	12
G. A Formal Language for Propositional Logic	
1. Defining the formal language	13
2. Realizations: semi-formal English	14
• Exercises for Section G	16

II Classical Propositional Logic

– PC –

A. The <i>Classical Abstraction</i> and the <i>Fregean Assumption</i>	20
B. Truth-Functions and the <i>Division of Form and Content</i>	20
C. Models	24
• Exercises for Sections A–C	25
D. Tautologies and Semantic Consequence	
1. Forms and truth: tautologies	26
2. Semantic consequence	28
• Exercises for Section D	30
E. The Logical Form of a Proposition	
1. On logical form	31
2. Criteria of formalization	31
3. Other propositional connectives	33
F. Examples of Formalization	
1. Ralph is a dog or Dusty is a horse and Howie is a cat <i>Therefore:</i> Howie is a cat	34
2. Ralph is a dog and George is a duck and Howie is a cat	34
3. Ralph is a dog or he's a puppet	34
4. Ralph is a dog if he's not a puppet	35

5.	Ralph is a dog although he's a puppet	35
6.	Ralph is not a dog because he's a puppet	35
7.	Three faces of a die are even numbered Three faces of a die are not even numbered <i>Therefore:</i> Ralph is a dog	36
8.	Ken took off his clothes and went to bed	36
9.	The quotation marks are signals for you to understand what I mean; they are not part of the realization	36
10.	Every natural number is even or odd	37
11.	If Ralph is a dog, then Ralph barks Ralph barks <i>Therefore:</i> Ralph is a dog	37
12.	Suppose $\{s_n\}$ is monotonic. Then $\{s_n\}$ converges if and only if it is bounded	37
13.	Dedekind's Theorem	38
•	Exercises for Sections E and F	38
G.	Further Abstractions: The Role of Mathematics in Logic	41
H.	Induction	44
•	Exercises for Sections G and H	45
J.	A Mathematical Presentation of PC	
1.	The formal language	46
•	Exercises for Section J.1	49
2.	Models and the semantic consequence relation	50
•	Exercises for Section J.2	52
3.	The truth-functional completeness of the connectives	52
4.	The choice of language for PC	54
5.	Normal forms	54
6.	The principle of duality for PC	55
•	Exercises for Sections J.3–J.6	56
7.	The decidability of tautologies	57
•	Exercises for Section J.7	58
8.	Some PC -tautologies	59
•	Exercises for Sections J.8	60
K.	Formalizing the Notion of Proof	
1.	Reasons for formalizing	61
2.	Proof, syntactic consequence, and theories	62
3.	What is a logic?	66
•	Exercises for Section K	67
L.	An Axiomatization of PC	
1.	The axiom system	68
•	Exercises for Section L.1	69
2.	A completeness proof	70
3.	The <i>Strong Completeness Theorem</i> for PC	73
•	Exercises for Sections L.2 and L.3	73
4.	Derived rules: substitution	74
•	Exercises for Section L.4	75

M. Other Axiomatizations and Proofs of Completeness of PC	
1. History and Post's proof	75
2. A constructive proof of the completeness of PC	76
• Exercises for Sections M.1 and M.2	77
3. Schema vs. the rule of substitution	78
4. Independent axiom systems	78
5. Proofs using only rules	79
Exercises for Sections M.3–M.5	79
6. An axiomatization of PC in $L(\neg, \rightarrow, \wedge, \vee)$	80
7. An axiomatization of PC in $L(\neg, \wedge)$	81
• Exercises for Sections M.6 and M.7	82
8. The positive fragment of PC	83
• Exercises for Section M.8	85
N. The Reasonableness of PC	
1. Why classical logic is classical	86
2. The paradoxes of PC	87

III Relatedness Logic: The Subject Matter of a Proposition

– S and R –

A. An Aspect of Propositions: Subject Matter	90
B. The Formal Language.	93
C. Properties of the Primitive: Relatedness Relations	93
D. Subject Matter as Set-Assignments	96
• Exercises for Sections A–D	98
E. Truth and Relatedness-Tables	99
F. The Formal Semantics for S	
1. Models based on relatedness relations	100
2. Models based on subject matter assignments	102
• Exercises for Sections E and F	103
G. Examples of Formalization	
1. If the moon is made of green cheese, then $2 + 2 = 4$	103
2. $2 + 2 = 4$ <i>Therefore:</i> If the moon is made of green cheese, then $2 + 2 = 4$	104
3. If Ralph is a dog and if $1 = 1$ then $1 = 1$, then $2 + 2 = 4$ or $2 + 2 \neq 4$	104
4. If John loves Mary, then Mary has 2 apples If Mary has 2 apples, then $2 + 2 = 4$ <i>Therefore:</i> If John loves Mary, then $2 + 2 = 4$	105
5. If Don squashed a duck and Don drives a car, then a duck is dead <i>Therefore:</i> If Don squashed a duck, then if Don drives a car, then a duck is dead	106
• Exercises for Section G	106
H. Relatedness Logic Compared to Classical Logic	
1. The decidability of relatedness tautologies	106
2. Every relatedness tautology is a classical tautology	107
3. Classical tautologies that aren't relatedness tautologies	107
• Exercises for Section H	108

J. Functional Completeness of the Connectives and the <i>Normal Form Theorem</i> for S	109
• Exercises for Section J	111
K. An Axiom System for S	
1. S in $L(\neg, \rightarrow)$	112
• Exercises for Section K.1	114
2. S in $L(\neg, \rightarrow, \wedge)$	115
3. Substitution	115
4. The <i>Deduction Theorem</i>	116
• Exercises for Section K.2–K.5	117
L. Nonsymmetric Relatedness Logic, R	119
• Exercises for Section L	119
M. Historical Remarks	120

A Summary and Overview 121

IV Dependence Logics

– D, Dual D, Eq, DPC –

A. Dependence Logic	
1. The consequent is contained in the antecedent	125
2. The structure of referential content	127
3. Set-assignment semantics	129
4. Relation-based semantics	131
• Exercises for Sections A.1–A.4	132
5. The decidability of dependence logic tautologies	133
6. Examples of formalization	
1. Achmed doesn't drink	
<i>Therefore:</i> If Achmed drinks, then everyone drinks	134
2. Not both Ralph is a dog and cats aren't nasty	
<i>Therefore:</i> If Ralph is a dog, then cats are nasty	134
3. If Ralph is a bachelor, then Ralph is a man	135
4. If dogs barks and Juney is a dog, then Juney barks	
<i>Therefore:</i> If dogs bark, then if Juney is a dog, then Juney barks	135
5. If dogs bark, then Juney barks	
If Juney barks, then a dog has scared a thief	
<i>Therefore:</i> If dogs bark, then a dog has scared a thief	136
6. If Ralph is a dog, then Ralph barks	
<i>Therefore:</i> If Ralph doesn't bark, then Ralph is not a dog	136
7. Dependence logic compared to classical logic	136
8. Functional completeness of the connectives	138
• Exercises for Sections A.5–A.8	138
9. An axiom system for D	139
• Exercises for Section A.9	142
10. History	142
B. Dependence-Style Semantics	144
• Exercises for Section B	145

C. Dual Dependence Logic, Dual D	145
• Exercises for Section C	147
D. A Logic of Equality of Contents, Eq	
1. Motivation	148
2. Set-assignment semantics	149
3. Characterizing Eq-relations	150
4. An axiom system for Eq	152
• Exercises for Section D	154
E. A Syntactic Comparison of D , Dual D , Eq , and S	154
F. Content as Logical Consequences	155
• Exercises for Section F	157

V Modal Logics

– S4, S5, S4Grz, T, B, K, QT, MSI, ML, G, G* –

A. Implication, Possibility, and Necessity	
1. Strict implication vs. material implication	160
2. Possible worlds	161
3. Necessity	162
• Exercises for Section A	163
B. Logical Necessity	
1. The formal language and semantics	164
2. Necessity and possibility in the formal language	165
• Exercises for Sections B.1 and B.2	166
3. Semantic consequence	167
4. Iterated modalities	169
• Exercises for Sections B.3 and B.4	171
C. Examples of Formalization	
1. If roses are red, then sugar is sweet.	171
2. If Ralph is a bachelor, then Ralph is a man.	171
3. If the moon is made of green cheese, then $2 + 2 = 4$	172
4. If this paper is white, it must necessarily be white.	172
5. If Obama was elected president, then he must have received the most votes	172
6. A sea fight must take place tomorrow or not	173
7. It is contingent that US \$1 bills are green.	173
8. A dog that likes cats is possible.	173
9. Example 2 of Chapter II.F is possible.	174
10. Example 10 is not possible.	174
11. Socrates was Greek. So it's necessary that Socrates was Greek.	174
• Exercises for Section C	175
D. Different Notions of Necessity	
1. Different notions of accessibility and accessibility relations	175
• Exercises for Section D.1	177
2. The formal framework for differing notions of necessity	177
• Exercises for Section D.2	181
E. Examples of Formalization	
1. If Juney was a dog, then surely it's possible that Juney was a dog	182

2. If it's possible that Juney was a dog, then Juney was a dog	183
3. If it is necessary that Juney is a dog, then it is necessary that it is necessary that Juney is a dog	183
4. It is possible for Richard L. Epstein to print his own bank notes	183
5. If there were no dogs, then everyone would like cats	184
6. It is permissible but not obligatory to kill cats	184
7. Ralph knows that Howie is a cat	184
• Exercises for Section E	185
F. Some Modal Logics	
1. Characterizing certain frames	185
• Exercises for Section F.1	187
2. K –all accessibility relations	187
• Exercises for Section F.2	189
3. T , B , S4 , and S5	189
4. Decidability and the finite model property	191
• Exercises for Section F.4	193
G. Syntactic Characterizations of Modal Logics	
1. The general format	193
2. Axiomatizations and completeness theorems in $L(\neg, \wedge, \Box)$	194
3. Axiomatizations and completeness theorems in $L(\neg, \rightarrow, \wedge)$	198
• Exercises for Sections G.1– G.3	199
4. Consequence relations	
a. Without necessitation, $\vdash_{\mathbf{L}}$	200
b. With necessitation, $\vdash_{\mathbf{L}^{\Box}}$	202
• Exercises for Section G.4	202
H. Quasi-normal modal logics	203
• Exercises for Section H	204
J. Set-Assignment Semantics for Modal Logics	204
1. Semantics in $L(\neg, \rightarrow, \wedge)$	
a. Modal semantics of implication	205
b. Weak modal semantics of implication	207
2. Semantics in $L(\neg, \wedge, \Box)$	208
• Exercises for Sections J.1 and J.2	209
3. Connections of meanings in modal logics: the aptness of set-assignment semantics	209
4. S5	211
• Exercises for Section J.4	213
5. S4 in collaboration with Roger Maddux	213
• Exercises for Section J.5	215
6. T	216
7. B	218
• Exercises for Sections J.6 and J.7	218
K. The Smallest Logics Characterized by Various Semantics	
1. K	219
2. QT and quasi-normal logics	220
3. The logic characterized by modal semantics of implication	220
• Exercises for Section K	221

L. The Choice of Language for a Modal Logic	222
M. Modal Logics Modeling Notions of Provability	
1. ‘ \Box ’ read as ‘it is provable that’	222
2. S4Grz	224
3. G	225
4. G*	227

VI Intuitionism

– **Int** and **J** –

A. Intuitionism and Logic	231
• Exercises for Section A	234
B. Heyting's Formalization of Intuitionism	
1. Heyting's axiom system Int	235
2. Kripke semantics for Int	236
• Exercises for Section B	238
C. Completeness of Kripke Semantics for Int	
1. Some syntactic derivations and the Deduction Theorem	239
2. Completeness theorems for Int	242
• Exercises for Sections C.1 and C.2	245
3. On completeness proofs for Int , and an alternate axiomatization	246
• Exercises for Section C.3	247
D. Translations and Comparisons with Classical Logic	
1. Translations of Int into modal logic and classical arithmetic	247
2. Translations of classical logic into Int	248
3. Axiomatizations of classical logic relative to Int	252
• Exercises for Section D	253
E. Set-assignment Semantics for Int	254
1. The semantics	255
2. Observations and refinements of the set-assignment semantics	257
• Exercises for Section E.1 and E.2	260
3. Bivalence in intuitionism: the aptness of set-assignment semantics	261
F. The Minimal Calculus J	
1. The minimal calculus	263
2. Kripke-style semantics	264
3. An alternate axiomatization	266
4. Kolmogorov's axiomatization of intuitionistic reasoning in $L(\neg, \rightarrow)$	266
• Exercises for Sections F.1–F.4	268
5. Set-assignment semantics for J	269
• Exercises for Section F.5	271

VII Many-Valued Logics

– **L₃**, **L_n**, **L_κ**, **K₃**, **G₃**, **G_n**, **G_κ**, **S5** –

A. How Many Truth-Values?	
1. History	273
2. Hypothetical reasoning and aspects of propositions	274

B. The Łukasiewicz Logics	275
1. The 3-valued logic \mathbf{L}_3	
a. The truth-tables and their interpretation	276
• Exercises for Section B.1.a	280
b. An axiomatization of \mathbf{L}_3	282
• Exercises for Section B.1.b	285
c. Wajsberg's axiomatization of \mathbf{L}_3	286
d. Set-assignment semantics for \mathbf{L}_3	286
• Exercises for Section B.1.d	289
2. The logics \mathbf{L}_n and \mathbf{L}_κ	
a. Generalizing the 3-valued tables	289
b. An axiom system for \mathbf{L}_κ	290
c. Set-assignment semantics for \mathbf{L}_κ	291
• Exercises for Section B.2	292
C. Kleene's 3-Valued Logic	
1. The truth-tables	293
2. Set-assignment semantics	295
• Exercises for Section C	296
D. A General Definition of Many-Valued Semantics	297
E. Logics Having No Finite-Valued Semantics	
1. General criteria	298
2. Infinite-valued semantics for the modal logic $\mathbf{S5}$	299
F. The Systems \mathbf{G}_n and \mathbf{G}_κ	300
• Exercises for Section F	303
G. A Method for Proving Axiom Systems Independent	303
• Exercises for Section G	305

VIII Some Paraconsistent Logics – \mathbf{J}_3 , ParaS, ParaD, ParaEq –

A. Paraconsistent Logics	306
B. The Paraconsistent Logic \mathbf{J}_3	
<i>with the collaboration of Itala M. L. D'Ottaviano</i>	
1. The Semantics of \mathbf{J}_3	
a. Motivation	308
b. The truth-tables	309
• Exercises for Section B.1	313
2. Definability of the connectives	314
3. The relationship between \mathbf{J}_3 and classical logic	315
• Exercises for Section B.3	317
4. Consistency versus paraconsistency	
a. Definitions of completeness and consistency for \mathbf{J}_3 theories	317
b. The status of negation in \mathbf{J}_3	319
5. Axiomatizations of \mathbf{J}_3	
a. \mathbf{J}_3 as a modal logic	320
b. \mathbf{J}_3 as an extension of classical logic	323
• Exercises for Section B.5	325

6. Set-assignment semantics for \mathbf{J}_3	325
7. Truth-default semantics for \mathbf{J}_3	328
• Exercises for Sections B.6 and B.7	329
C. Paraconsistent Relatedness and Dependence Logics	
1. Paraconsistent \mathbf{S}	330
2. Paraconsistent \mathbf{D}	333
3. Paraconsistent Dual D and Paraconsistent Eq	335
• Exercises for Sections C.1–C.3	337
4. Semantic consequence and content	337

IX A General Framework for Semantics for Propositional Logics

A. Aspects of Sentences	
1. Propositions	341
2. The logical connectives	342
3. Two approaches to semantics	343
• Exercises for Section A	343
B. Set-Assignment Semantics	
1. Models	344
• Exercises for Section B.1	347
2. Abstract models	348
3. Semantics and logics	349
4. Semantic and syntactic consequence relations	350
• Exercises for Sections B.2–B.4	352
C. Relation-Based Semantics	352
• Exercises for Section C	353
D. Semantics Having a Simple Presentation	353
• Exercises for Section D	355
E. Some Questions	
Q1. Simply presented semantics	356
Q2. <i>The Deduction Theorem</i>	356
Q3. Functional completeness of the connectives	357
Q4. Representing the relations governing the truth-tables within the formal language	358
Q5. Characterizing the relations governing the truth-tables in terms of valid schema	358
Q6. Translating other semantics into the general framework	358
Q7. Decidability	359
Q8. Extensionally equivalent propositions and the rule of substitution	359
F. On the Unity and Division of Logics	
1. Quine on deviant logical connectives	360
2. Classical vs. nonclassical logics	361
G. A Mathematical Presentation of the General Framework <i>with the collaboration of Walter Carnielli</i>	
1. Languages	362
2. Formal set-assignment semantics	363

3.	Formal relation-based semantics	364
•	Exercises for Sections G.1–G.3	365
4.	Specifying semantic structures	
a.	Set-assignments and relations for \mathcal{SA}	365
b.	Relations for \mathcal{RB}	366
•	Exercises for Sections G.4	367
5.	Tautologies of the general framework	367
6.	Valid inferences of the general framework	
a.	Examples	367
b.	The subformula property	368
c.	Axiomatizing valid inferences in $L(\neg, \rightarrow, \wedge)$	369
d.	Valid inferences with disjunction	370
•	Exercises for Sections G.5 and G.6	371
H.	Extensions of the General Framework	371
1.	Wholly intensional connectives	372
2.	Truth-default semantic structures	
a.	The general framework	373
b.	Truth- and falsity-default many-valued semantics	375
•	Exercises for Sections H.1 and H.2	375
3.	Taking account of content in semantic consequences	376

X Translations Between Logics

A.	Translations	
	<i>in collaboration with Stanisław Krajewski</i>	
1.	A formal notion of translation	378
•	Exercises for Section A.1	380
2.	Examples	380
•	Exercises for Section A.2	384
3.	Logics that cannot be translated grammatically into classical logic	384
•	Exercises for Section A.3	387
4.	Translations where there are no grammatical translations:	
	$\mathbf{R} \leftrightarrow \mathbf{PC}$ and $\mathbf{S} \leftrightarrow \mathbf{PC}$	387
•	Exercises for Section A.4	391
B.	Semantically Faithful Translations	391
1.	A formal notion of semantically faithful translation	392
•	Exercises for Section B.1	395
2.	Some examples of semantically faithful translations	396
3.	The archetype of a semantically faithful translation: $\mathbf{Int} \rightarrow \mathbf{S4}$	397
4.	The translations of \mathbf{PC} into \mathbf{Int}	398
•	Exercises for Section B.4	399
5.	The translation of \mathbf{S} into \mathbf{PC}	400
6.	Different presentations of the same logic and strong definability of connectives	401
•	Exercises for Section B.6	402
7.	Do semantically faithful translations preserve meaning?	402

XI The Semantic Foundations of Logic 403

Summary of Logics

Classical Logic	
PC	410
Relatedness and Dependence Logics	
S	413
R	416
D	417
Dual D	418
Eq	419
DPC	420
Paraconsistent Relatedness and Dependence Logics	
Para S, Para D, ParaDualD, ParaEq	421
Classical Modal Logics	
S4, S5, S4Grz, T, B, K, QT, MSI, ML, G, G*	422
Intuitionistic Logics	
Int	429
J	432
Many-Valued Logics	
L₃	433
L_n, L_κ	435
K₃	437
G₃, G_n, G_κ	438
Paraconsistent J₃	440
<i>Bibliography</i>	443
<i>Index of Examples</i>	456
<i>Glossary of Notation</i>	459
<i>Index</i>	463

Preface

If logic is the right way to reason, why are there so many logics?

Viewing logics as formalizations of how we do or should reason, we can find a structural and conceptual unity based on common assumptions about the relation of language, reasoning, and the world. What we pay attention to in reasoning determines which logic is appropriate.

In order for you to understand this I have retraced my steps: from the concrete to the abstract, from examples to general theory, and then to reflections on the significance of the work. In doing so I have had to begin at the beginning: What is logic? What is a proposition? What is a connective? If much seems too well known to be of interest, then plunge ahead. The chapters can be read more or less independently, which explains the occasional repetitions.

Chapter I is devoted to assumptions about the nature of propositions and what forms of propositions we will study. In Chapter II we then have the simplest symbolic model of reasoning we can devise given those assumptions. In classical logic a proposition is abstracted to only its truth-value and its form, relative to the propositional connectives. This provides a standard of reference for other logics.

In Chapter II I also present a Hilbert-style formalization of the notion of proof and syntactic deduction that I use throughout the book. The metalogical investigations that I concentrate on concern the relation between the semantic and syntactic notions of consequence, and whether or how those can be represented in terms of theorems or valid formulas by means of a deduction theorem.

Chapter III sets out the simplest example of a logic that incorporates some aspect of propositions other than truth-value into the semantic analysis. Taking the subject-matter of a proposition to be a primitive notion, we get the archetype of how to incorporate differing aspects of propositions into semantics.

Following Chapter III is a Summary and Overview which serves as an introduction to all that follows. The succeeding chapters present examples of many different logics based on differing semantic intuitions all of which can be understood within a general framework that is presented in Chapter IX. That framework arises from the view that each logic, except for classical logic, incorporates into the semantics some aspect of propositions other than truth-value and form. Each logic analyzes an ‘if . . . then . . .’ proposition classically if the aspects of antecedent and consequent are appropriately connected, while rejecting the

PREFACE

proposition otherwise. As we vary the aspect, we vary the logic. I have argued for this bivalent falsity-default analysis of semantics throughout this volume, in part by presenting a wide variety of logics in that form, and I have used that analysis further in *Epstein, 1992* and *Epstein, 2012A*.

The general form of semantics is not intended to replace other semantics. For example, under certain assumptions possible-world semantics are a good explanation of the ideas of modal logics. But providing uniform semantics that are in reasonable conformity with the ideas on which various logics are based allows for comparisons and gives us a uniform way in which to approach the sometimes overwhelming multiplicity of logics.

In particular, the overview of the general framework allows Stanisław Krajewski and I to consider in Chapter X the extent to which one logic or way of seeing the world can be reduced to another. We present a general theory of translations and try to characterize what we mean when we say that a translation preserves meaning.

The semantic framework I set out in Chapter IX is a very weak general form of logic that becomes usable only upon the choice of which aspect of propositions we deem significant. But then is logic relative to the logician? Or does a notion of necessary truth lie in this general framework? In Chapter XI I discuss how our agreements about how we reason determine our notion of objectivity.

Throughout I have tried to find and then make explicit those assumptions on which our reasoning and logic are based. I have repeated the statement of certain of those assumptions in different places, partly because I want the chapters to be as self-contained as possible but also because it is important to see those assumptions and agreements in different contexts and applied differently to be able to grasp their plausibility and pervasiveness.

What I am doing here can be seen as founding logic in ordinary language and reasoning. When nonconstructive assumptions are used to apply mathematics to logic to prove theorems about our formalizations we can see precisely where they are needed. Those assumptions I treat as abstractions from experience. However, they need not be viewed that way, and I have attempted to provide alternate readings of the technical work based on the view that abstract things such as propositions are as real or more real than the objects we daily encounter. Most of the discussion of these matters is in Chapter I and in the development of classical logic in Chapter II, particularly Section II.G. In Chapter IX I point out specific nonconstructive, infinitistic abstractions of the semantics that we usually make in pursuing metalogical investigations. This general approach to modeling and theories is explored more fully in my essays in *Reasoning in Science and Mathematics*, while the issue of whether logic is prescriptive or descriptive is explored in my book *Prescriptive Reasoning*.

I have included many exercises, some of them routine, many requiring considerable thought, and some which are open questions (marked 'Open').

Depending on the choice of which are assigned, this book can serve as a text in an undergraduate course, a text for a graduate course, or as the basis for research.

There are important subjects in the study of propositional logics that I do not deal with here. I have not discussed the algebraic analyses of propositional logics, for which you can consult *Rasiowa, 1974* and *Blok and Pigozzi, 1989*. I have made no attempt to connect this work with the categorial interpretation of logic, for which you can consult *Goldblatt, 1979*. Nor have I dealt with other approaches to the notion of proof in propositional logics. And there are many propositional logics I have not discussed, quite a few of which are surveyed also in *Marciszewski, 1981* as well as in *Haack, 1974*, and *Gabbay and Guentner, 1989*, which also discuss philosophical issues.

This is not the story of all propositional logics. But I hope to have done enough to convince you that it is a good story of many logics that brings a kind of unity to them.

In the discussions of the wise there is found unrolling and rolling up,
convincing and conceding; agreements and disagreements are reached.
And in all that the wise suffer no disturbance. —Nagasena

Come, let us reason together.

Preface to the third edition

In 1992 I was asked to publish *Predicate Logic*, the second volume of this series *The Semantic Foundations of Logic*. I suggested also doing a second edition of *Propositional Logics*. There were a few corrections that colleagues had pointed out, and I thought I could clean up the text a bit. It turned out that a lot of corrections were needed, both to the technical work and the exposition. For that edition I revised the entire text, with more changes than I could easily list here. Among the most significant are the correction or simplification of many axiomatizations, the addition of examples of formalization of ordinary reasoning, and the addition of exercises to make the text more suitable for individual or classroom use.

In 2011 Esperanza Buitrago-Díaz came to the Advanced Reasoning Forum at Dogshine as an ARF Student Fellow to work through the second edition of this text with me. Her questions and comments, difficulties and insights led me to prepare this new edition. The most notable differences from the second edition are:

- The chapter on the general framework now follows the development of the examples of logics rather than preceding them.

PREFACE

- In the chapter on modal logics the logic of logical necessity is developed before accessibility relations are introduced
- In the chapter on paraconsistent logics a new approach to paraconsistency is introduced by modifying the notion of semantic consequence.

In my recent studies I have tried to place formal logic in the larger context of a general theory of inference. The first presentation of that was in my *Five Ways of Saying "Therefore"*. The mature version can be found in my series of books *Essays on Logic as the Art of Reasoning Well*. It would have been too large a project to modify this text to fully take account of that work, although I have made some changes in Chapters I and II to reflect those ideas.

There is, after all, no end but only a continual beginning.