Part 1 - If one single thing in the universe is morally permissible, then the use of deadly force by victims of repeated domestic abuse is also morally permissible. This is proven via Ross’s Free Choice Permission Paradox. Two premises:

PREMISE 1: if either clause of an OR statement is true, the entire statement is true. Schulz -

“You may read it now or later: A Case Study on the Paradox of Free Choice Permission” — Master Thesis — Master of Logic Program/ ILLC Katrin Schulz supervised by Prof. Dr. F. Veltman.

 However, this seems to be not at all a simple task. Traditionally, ‘**or ’ receives the same semantics (the same truth conditions) as the corresponding logical operator** ∨ **in classical logic: for two sentences ‘A’ and ‘B’, ‘A or B’ is true in case at least one of the both sentences holds.** This truth function is called an interpretation as inclusive disjunction. 6

Now take an example statement “Z”: . “A victim of repeated domestic abuse may take action X or a victim of repeated domestic abuse may use deadly force against their abuser”.

Statement Z is an OR statement composed of two clauses: Clause A: “A victim of repeated domestic abuse may take action X” and Clause B: “a victim of repeated domestic abuse may use deadly force against their abuser”. As I just demonstrated , if either clause of an OR statement is true, the whole thing is true. So if it’s true that either A: A victim of repeated domestic abuse may take action X or B: “a victim of repeated domestic abuse may use deadly force against their abuser”. Then statement Z: “A victim of repeated domestic abuse may take action X or a victim of repeated domestic abuse may use deadly force against their abuser” would also be true.

PREMISE 2: If a permission statement with a conjunction is true, both clauses are also true. Thus if the statement Z “A victim of repeated domestic abuse may take action X or a victim of repeated domestic abuse may use deadly force against their abuser” is true, then both clauses are also necessarily true – Schulz 2

The phenomenon investigated is free choice permission. As has often been observed (e.g von Wright [1969] and Ross [1941]) that **an** **utterance of** (1a **[You may take an apple or a pear.] ) intuitively entails** (1b **[You may take an apple.] ) and** (1c[**You may take a pear]): on hearing** (1a **[You may take an apple or a pear.]** **) we will conclude that the addressee is allowed to take an apple and she is allowed to take a pear (although not both at the same time). She has free choice between both fruits**. 5

Let’s say I’m wrong and that the truth of the statement: “it is permissible to do X or Z” does not imply that both X and Z are both permissible. That would imply that it is permissible for someone to choose to do an impermissible thing, since it would grant them authority to choose either of two actions, one of which could be impermissible. That would be asserting that it is permissible to choose to do something impermissible, a logical contradiction.

 A summary: If it’s permissible to take action X, the statement “A victim may take action X or they may use deadly force” would also be true given simple rules of logic – if one clause of an or statement is true, then the entire statement is true. However if the statement “A victim may take action X or they may use deadly force” was true, then both of the clauses would also have to be true – if I say it is permissible to do X or Y, that also implies that it is permissible for you to do either one. For example, I couldn’t say – pick a red apple or a green apple, if you weren’t allowed to pick both of them. So the chain of logic shows that proving a single action is permissible would prove that the conjunction, it is permissible to do that action or the resolution, would be true, which in turn means that the resolution would be true. Thus the negative burden is to demonstrate nothing is permissible.

Part 2- there must be some permissible action.

SUB POINT A – Given deontic logic, Permissible and Impermissible are mutually exclusive exhaustive descriptions of the ethical status of actions. McNamara explains the division between different ethical statuses for actions:

Paul McNamara. “Deontic Logic” SEP 2010.

In addition to the TDS, **it was traditionally assumed that the** following, call it “**The Traditional Threefold Classification (**TTC)” **holds**:



Here too, **all propositions are divided into three jointly exhaustive and mutually exclusive classes: every proposition is obligatory, optional, or impermissible, but no proposition falls into more than one of these three categories**. Furthermore, **the permissible propositions are those that are either obligatory or optional,** **and the omissible propositions are those that are impermissible or optional**. The reader can easily confirm that **this natural scheme** **is** also perfectly **analogous to the threefold classification we gave** above **for** the alethic **modal notions.**

McNamara 2 explains the conditions for calling things permissible or impermissible

**OP***p* ↔ (~**OB***p* & ~**OB**~*p*).[[5](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/logic-deontic/notes.html%22%20%5Cl%20%225)]

These assert that **something is permissible** iff (**if and only if**) **its negation is not obligatory**, **[and] impermissible** iff **[if and only if] its negation is obligatory**, omissible iff it is not obligatory, and optional iff [if and only if] neither it nor its negation is obligatory. **Call this “The Traditional *Definitional* Scheme** (TDS)”. If one began with **OB** alone and considered the formulas on the right of the equivalences above, one could easily be led to consider them as at least candidate defining conditions for those on the left. Although not uncontestable, **they are natural, and this scheme is still widely employed**. Now if the reader looks back at our use of the necessity operator in defining the remaining four alethic modal operators, it will be clear that **that definitional scheme is perfectly analogous to the deontic one** above. From the formal standpoint, the one is merely a syntactic variant of the other: just replace **OB** with □, **PE** with ◊, etc.

This means an action X is permissible if and only if its negation is not obligatory and the action X is impermissible if and only if its negation is obligatory. All deontic statements have to be either permissible or impermissible – they are mutually exclusive. Therefore, in order to prove that actions cannot be permissible, the negative would have to prove that that action is impermissible.

SUB POINT B – According to my evidence, something is impermissible only when its negation is obligatory. That means in proving that actions are impermissible, the negative would also be proving that the negations of those actions are obligatory – there’s no way for the negative to deny that an action X is morally permissible, without also endorsing that the negations of X would be obligatory. That is problematic for the negative because according to my evidence, if something is obligatory then it is also permissible. Thus it is definitionally true that something is permissible under ethics and you affirm.

To summarize this section: actions are either morally permissible or morally impermissible – thus in order to meet the burden, the negative would have to demonstrate that at least some actions are morally impermissible. But by saying that something is morally impermissible, they would also be saying that the negation of that act is obligatory and thus permissible, proving that there is such a thing as a permissible option, and then you affirm.