Examples

The deontic

‘right’, ‘wrong’, ‘ought’,

‘should’, ‘permissible’,

‘impermissible’, ‘forbidden’,

‘required’, ‘must’, ‘duty’,

‘obligation’…

thick
(has some descriptive content)

The evaluative

thin

‘courageous’,

‘admirable’,

‘contemptible’...

‘good’,

‘bad’,

‘neutral’,

‘better’,

‘worse’…

The deontic

- Has no comparative form: ‘more wrong’, ‘more ought’ ? But more *severe* wrong is fine.
- Need not express a *moral* notion:
    - ‘The train should be here now.’ (epistemic ‘should’)
    - ‘You should use a screwdriver to open the safe.’ (instrumental ‘should’)
- Need not be about *actions* or be *action-guiding*:
    - ‘You should not believe everything they tell you.’
    - ‘You ought to feel gratitude.’
    - ‘There ought to be no suffering in the world’ (ought-to-be rather than ought-to-do)

The evaluative

- Has comparative forms: ‘good’ – ‘better’, ‘admirable’ – ‘more admirable’

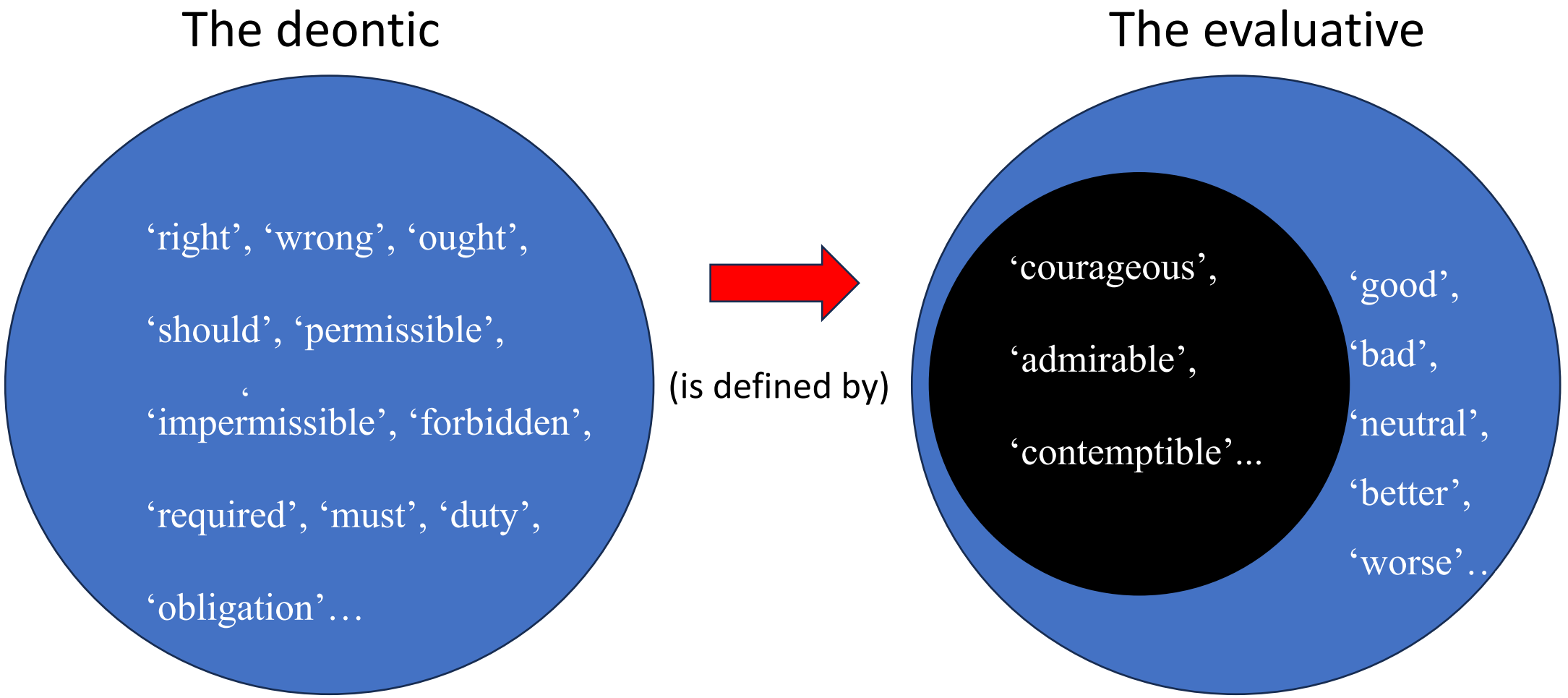
- The thick seems to entail the thin:

    - ‘x is courageous’ entails ‘x is good (in a way)’
    - ‘x is contemptible’ entails ‘x is bad (in a way)’

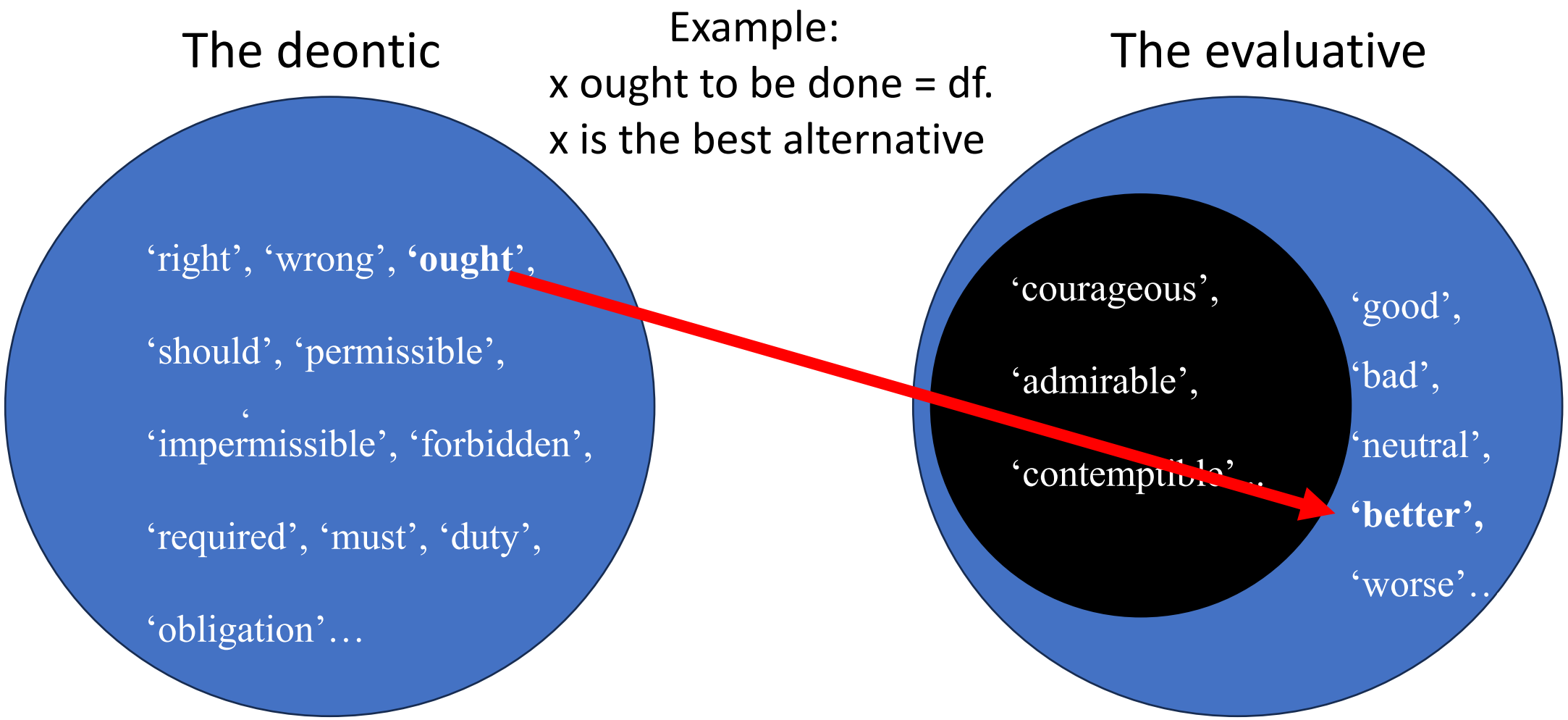
The evaluative

- Ways to be good:
    - ‘good for someone’ (wellbeing, prudential goodness),
    - ‘good to use for an end’, ‘good as a means’ (instrumental goodness),
    - ‘good in itself’ (final good, intrinsic good)
    - ‘good at’ (technical goodness),
    - ‘good x’ (attributive use, good instance of its kind)
- Some ways of being good seem to entail others:
    - ‘x is a good swimmer’ entails ‘x is good *at* swimming’
    - ‘x is a good knife’ entails ‘x is good *to use* for cutting’

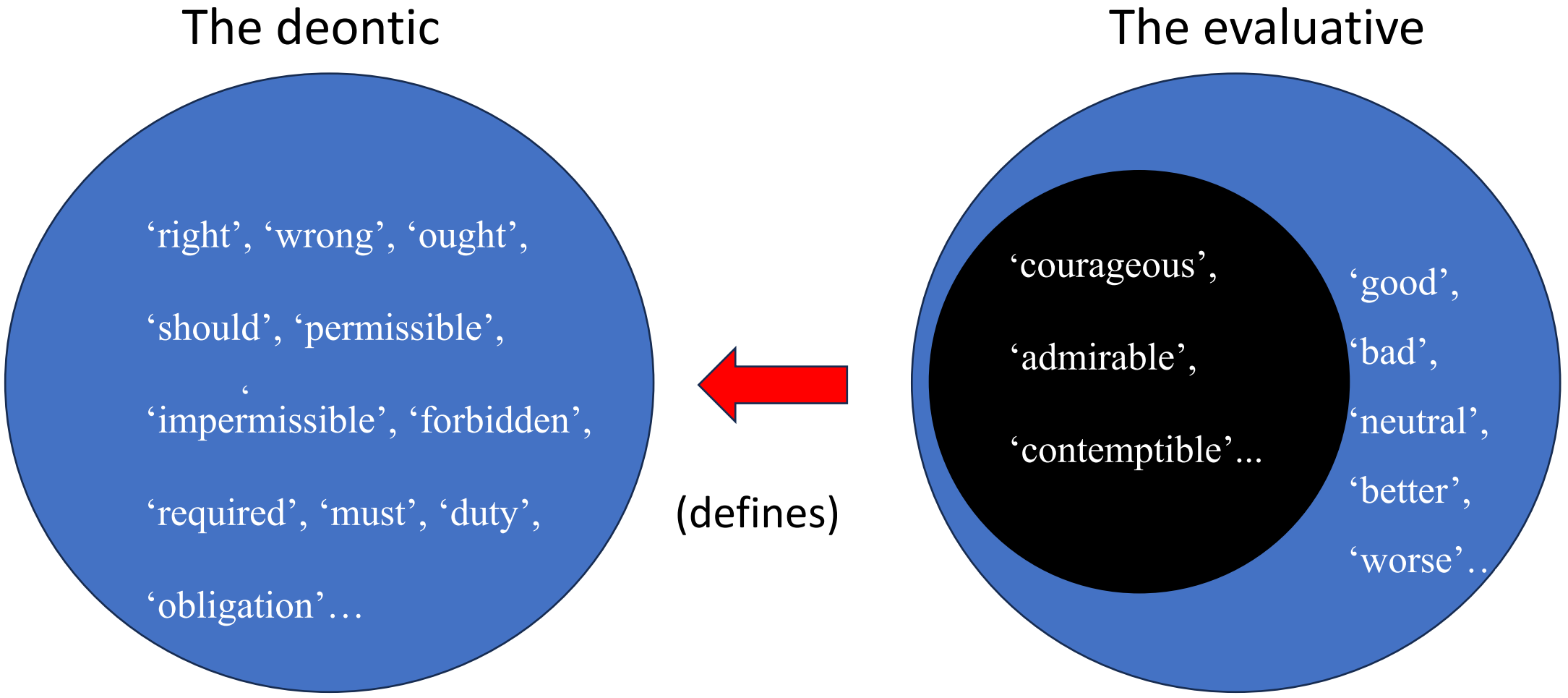
‘The good is prior to the right’



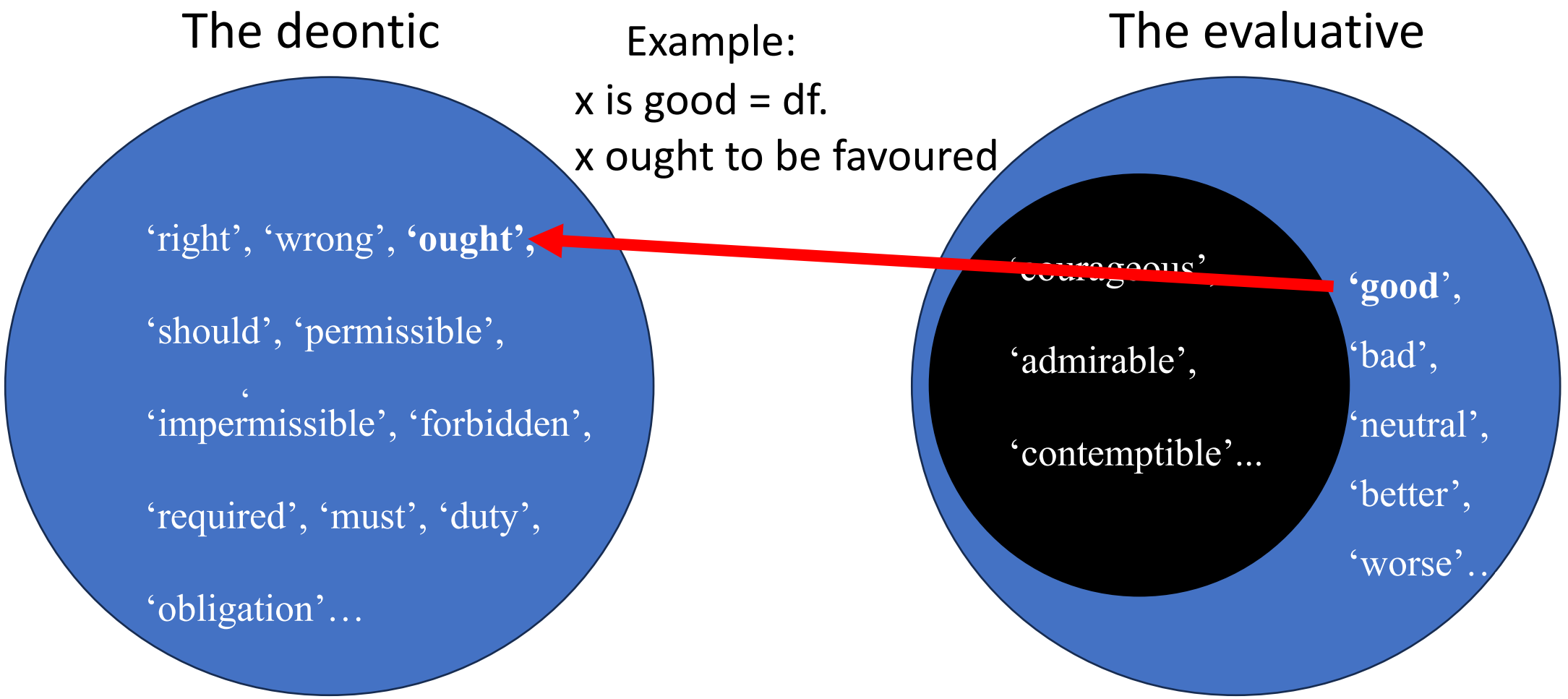
‘The good is prior to the right’



‘The right is prior to the good’



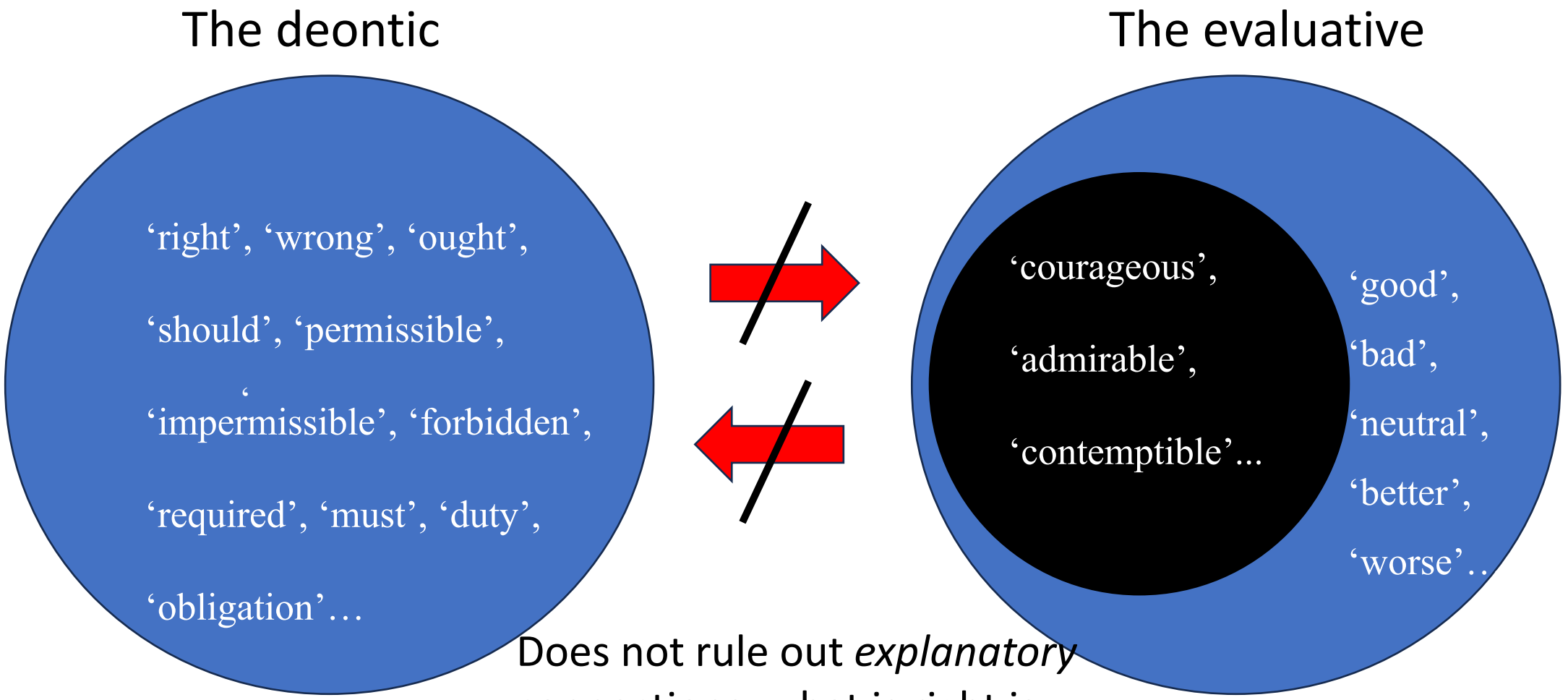
‘The right is prior to the good’



‘Wrong kind of reason’-objection

- ‘Wrong-kind of reason’-objection: e.g., something bad ought to be favoured because of the good consequences of favouring it.
- The definition seems more promising for certain thick evaluative notions (Tappolet: the ones that ‘wear their response-dependence on their sleeves’), and in terms of fittingness:
- x is admirable = df. it is fitting to admire x (fitting attitude analysis)
- But is fittingness a deontic notion?

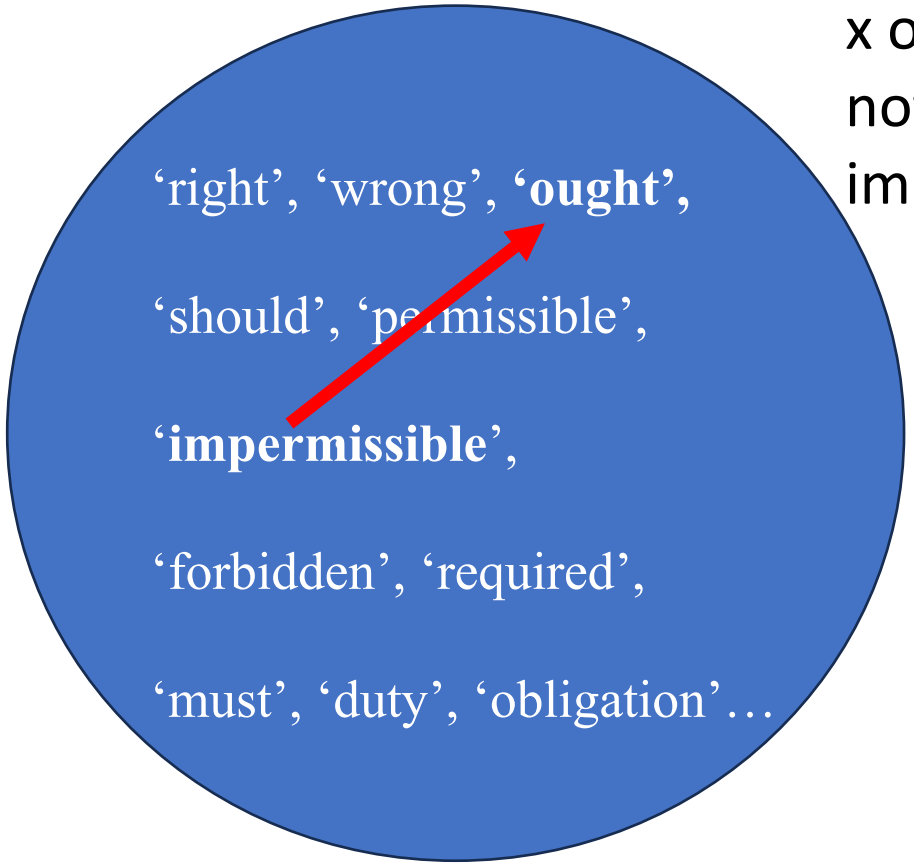
‘No priority’



Does not rule out *explanatory* connections: what is right is *explained* by what is good

Some deontic notion is prior to some other(s)

The deontic



Example:

x ought to be done = df.
not doing x is
impermissible

The evaluative



Some evaluative notion is prior to some other(s)

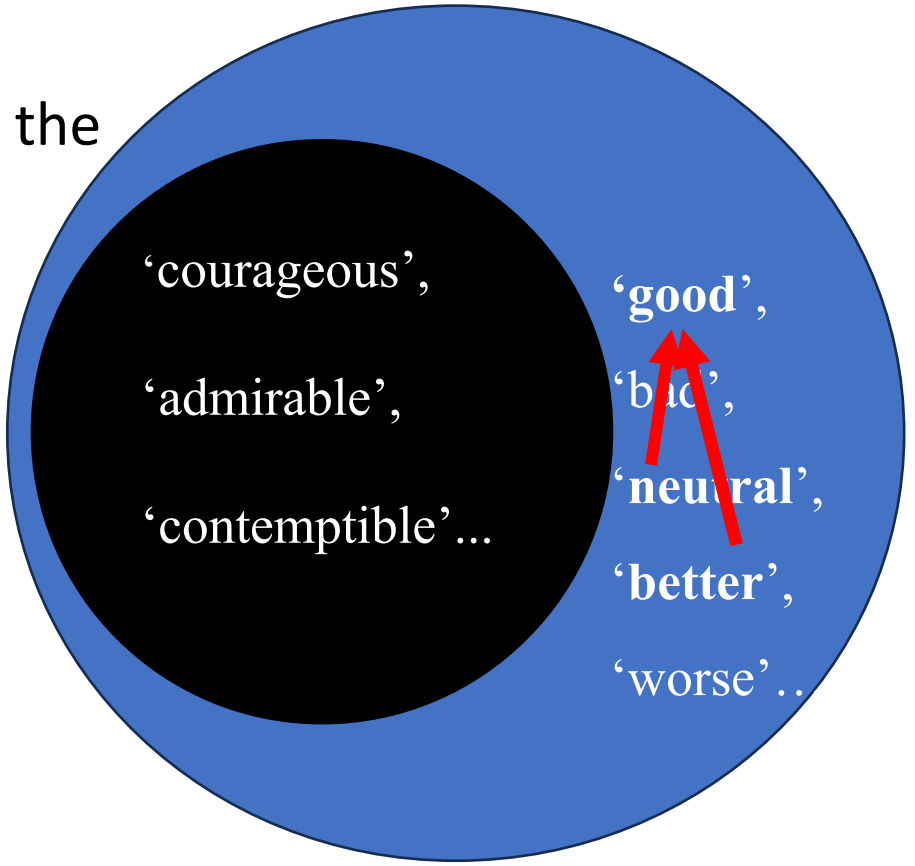
The deontic



Example:

x is good = df.
x is better than the neutral

The evaluative



Contestable cases: both deontic and evaluative, or neither deontic, nor evaluative

- Fittingness as neither evaluative, nor deontic, 'suitable'?
- Reason

Evaluative: 'reasons for x' - 'Speak *in favour* of x' - 'rates x a *plus*' (gradable value)

Deontic: 'reasons for x' – 'part of explanation why one *ought* to do x

Both? 'reason for x' – ' x is to some extent *worthy* of being done'

- value-like: worth

But also

- desert-like: is worthy *of* – calls for – deserves

Contestable cases: both deontic and evaluative, or neither deontic nor evaluative

- Blameworthiness, praiseworthiness
    - *Ought* to be blamed (but distinguish a blameworthy person and a person one ought to perform a blame *action* towards)
    - *Worthy of* being blamed (value or desert?)

Some of Tappolet's claims about the evaluative and the deontic

1. *Response dependence*. Many evaluative concepts are directly linked to affective concepts (e.g., admirable – admire). No deontic concept is directly linked to affective concept.

- *Comment*: It is not clear that *thin* evaluative concepts are directly linked to affective concepts (see 'wrong-kind of reason'-problem above).

Some of Tappolet's claims about the evaluative and the deontic

2. Dilemmas. There are deontic dilemmas but no evaluative ones. Deontic dilemma: I ought to do A and I ought to do B, but I cannot do both.

Not an evaluative analogue: A is a good (bad) option and B is a good (bad) option, but I cannot do both. For either they are equally good (bad) or incomparable.

Comments:

- Are there really dilemmas in terms of what we *overall* ought to do? Or is it just matter of unresolved (or unresolvable) conflicts of *prima facie* oughts?
- Dilemmas in terms of prima facie oughts have an evaluative analogue: A is better than B *in some respects*, B is better than A *in other respects*, but I can't decide which is best overall.
- Note that if overall ought entails overall *best*, there cannot be any 'overall ought'-dilemmas.

Some of Tappolet's claims about the evaluative and the deontic

3. Description. To say that Sally acted *courageously* is to *describe* how she acted. To say that she acted *rightly* is not to describe how she acted.

- *Comment*. Yes, but this is explained by the fact that 'courageous' has some *descriptive* content: managing fear in a certain way. If we use a thin evaluative notion, then the difference disappears: 'Sally acted rightly' versus 'Sally acted *well'*.

- *Overall comment*: The most convincing of Tappolet's examples of differences between the deontic and the evaluative seem to have more to do with special features of *thick* evaluative notions than special features of the evaluative.