

Updating on Conditionals

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Many authors have concerned themselves with the question under what conditions a conditional is acceptable. The question what it is to accept a conditional, however, has hardly received any attention. In the present paper, we aim to answer this question against the background of the Judy Benjamin problem. We note first that a standard response to this problem is tied up with the view that for the purpose of updating, a conditional may be equated with the material implication. We then show that this has some unpalatable consequences. Subsequently we develop an alternative view on updating on conditionals, which employs proposition-relative distance functions between initial and updated probability assignments. The updated probability assignment does not have the material implication as a border case. At the end of the paper, we investigate how this proposal bears on the semantics of conditionals.