

Reflections,
and
Just A Little Disagreement,
on
“Reflection and Disagreement”

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- X may be hard to characterize exactly. For my “extra information” includes all sorts of *de se* information, which does not apply to my guru.
- (See Adam’s train example, of which more shortly.)

Experts and gurus

- I treat an advisor as an *expert* if for any proposition H and for any probability function P' that I think the advisor may have,
$$P(H|\text{advisor has } P') = P'(H).$$
- I treat an advisor as a *guru* if for any proposition H and for any probability function P' that I think the advisor may have,
$$P(H|\text{advisor has } P') = P'(H|X),$$

“where X is my extra information”.

Reflection, again

- Two criticisms of Reflection:
 - 1. My future self may suffer impaired *judgment*.
Adam does not speak to such cases.
 - 2. My future self may suffer impaired *information*: loss of memory.
Adam says: I should treat my future self as a *guru*.
 - The usual Bayesian model presupposes no memory loss.

- Mere positive probability of memory loss is bad enough (Arntzenius' Shangri La case)
- Collision between regularity and Reflection

Adam's train example (after Arntzenius)

- “your probabilities should not match what you expect to believe in fifty-five minutes. Instead they should match what you expect to believe in fifty-five minutes *given that exactly fifty-five minutes have elapsed*”.

- This doesn't seem to be a case of information loss. Rather, it seems to be a violation of the assumption that future times are treated as *stopping times*:

“For each time T (random or otherwise) when a prediction is to be made, the truth or falsity of the event $\{T \leq t\}$ is known at time t , for all fixed t . Such (random) times T are called *stopping times*.”

—Schervish, Seidenfeld and Kadane, “Stopping to Reflect”

- You *don't* treat your future self as a guru. The evidence on which you conditionalize your 55-minute-future self's P is: *exactly 55 minutes have passed*. But *neither* you *nor* that self has that evidence.

Equal weight view, and spinelessness

- Special case of an advisor (regarding some subject matter): an *epistemic peer*, someone you count as being as good as you at evaluating relevant claims (regarding that subject matter)
“Should you always give your [epistemic peer's] assessment equal weight, and think that it is no more likely that you're right than that she is? ... Answer: you should give the assessments equal weight.” This is the *equal weight view*.

Equal weight view, and spinelessness

- Problem: spinelessness (low confidence that your own view is right)
- “Open-mindedness”? “Undogmaticness”?

Symmetry-breaking strategies

1. Extra weight view
 - *How much* extra weight should you give your own view?
 - Does this depend on what your advisors think, too? Regress?
 - Recreating the problem of spinelessness.

2. One candidate is privileged: the TRUE ONE!
3. One candidate is privileged: the RATIONAL ONE! (*Right reasons view*)

Symmetry-embracing strategies

4. There may be no fact of the matter of which position is best supported by the evidence. (Late Carnap)

Symmetry-embracing strategies

- Still, for some disagreements there may well be a fact of the matter as to who is right. Then the right reasons view applies.
- I think it's still a live option (although I'm not sure how it would apply to perceptual cases like the horse race example, because the evidence is not shared).

Bootstrapping

- Adam's bootstrapping argument. You could run it from the arm chair!
- Does the bootstrapping argument prove too much? I can bootstrap myself to a more focused credence over various hypotheses of my reliability compared to my friend's. (Adam convinces me: that's OK.)

The Equal Weight View, refined

- Distinguish three kinds of cases over which you might disagree with your friends:
 1. You make verifiable judgments that are answerable to some objective, external standard. (Horse race judgments, mathematics.)
 2. Purely epistemic cases, where there is no external check on who is right. (Philosophical disputes may be like this.) Your best guide to who your peers are may just be agreement on other cases of the same kind.
 3. Murky real world cases where there is no external check on who is right, and values get mixed in with epistemic judgments. (Abortion case.)

- We don't want disagreement on *any* allied issue to rule out someone from being your peer, else you may find yourself without peers!
- There may be disagreement over what *counts as* an allied issue.