

Comment on Sturgeon's "Confidence and Coarse- Grained Attitudes"

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Thick confidence and Coarse-Grained Attitudes



Minimal sufficient condition for belief that p :

$\text{Con}(p) = [a; b]$, with $[a; b] \supseteq [t; 1]$ and $b \geq a$

Aims

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2. Very, very brief critique of Sturgeon's view of updating on thick confidence
3. Brief discussion of Sturgeon's solution to White's case

1. Some problem cases

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(iii) $\text{Con}(p) = [0; 1 - t] \ \& \ [t; 1]$

2. Thick confidence and updating

A summary of Sturgeon's *key*:

You want to update h on the evidence p .

The pre-theoretic plausibility which attaches to the idea that your new view of h should inherit its character from p , is itself inversely proportional to the level of thickness of your initial confidence in p .

3. White's case

$$\text{Con}_O(h) = [0,5]; \text{Con}_O(p) = [0;1]; \text{Con}_N(h) = \text{Con}_N(p)$$

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$$\text{Con}_N(p) = [0,5]$$

3. Does it generally conflict with our intuitions to update p ?

Consider the following case: p and $non-p$ are written on the sides of a dice you know to be fair. The false proposition is written on one side only, while the true one is written on the other five sides. You have no clue about p . p lands up.



your confidence in p should increase

3. Does Sandra no longer suspend judgement on p ?

$$\text{Con}_O(h) = [0,5]$$

$$\text{Con}_{\text{sup}(p \text{ up})}(p) = \text{Con}_{\text{sup}(\text{non-}p \text{ up})}(p)$$

It neither makes p more plausible nor less that p lands up.

The outcome of the toss doesn't yield any information on the plausibility of p .

3. Does Sandra no longer suspend judgement on p ?

Sandra's attitude must still be one of suspended judgement, although her new confidence in p is $[0,5]$, i.e. an exact credence.



Sturgeon is threatened by White's case to admit that you can have an exact credence, but nevertheless suspend judgement.

Conclusion

1. Sturgeon has to say more about the relation of coarse- and fine-grained attitudes.
2. Sturgeon's description of our intuitions about updating is problematic.
3. The interpretation of suspended judgement as thick confidence conflicts with Sturgeon's solution to White's case.