

Math, Productivity, Happiness & Decision-making

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Wednesdays, 5:00–6:00pm, 740 Evans

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How and when to change beliefs: internalizing Bayesian updating

When should we change our minds, and how? *Bayesian updating* is a machine learning technique for modifying subjective beliefs using Bayes theorem, which is provably optimal under diverse circumstances. Many even go so far as to consider it a solution to the problem of epistemology. But regardless of such philosophical claims, for us humans, Bayesian updating is a powerful source of everyday reasoning heuristics: it guards against cognitive biases, helps interpret evidence, and can help with designing both scientific and everyday experiments to test and update our beliefs. The goal of today's seminar is to learn how it works, and how to incorporate it in our real-world, intuition-based reasoning.

This week (and every second week) we'll go out for dinner after the seminar.