

Conditionals:

- If _____ [then] _____ statements
 antecedent consequent
- Dualism:
 - Indicative
 - Subjunctive, counterfactual ← our interest

E.W. Adams's examples

- (A) If Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy, someone else did --INDICATIVE
- (B) If Oswald hadn't shot Kennedy, someone else would have. --SUBJUNCTIVE, COUNTERFACTUAL

A Brief Look at the Paradox of Indicative Conditionals

- P: The butler did it
- P or Q: The butler did it or the gardener did it
- $\sim P \rightarrow Q$: If the butler didn't do it, then the gardener did

First seems to entail the second; the second seems to entail the third; but the first seems not to entail the third

But entailment is transitive!

Paradox of ICs: Doesn't Arise for Subjunctives

- P: The butler did it
- P or Q: The butler did it or the gardener did it
- $\sim P \rightarrow Q$: If the butler hadn't done it, then the gardener would have

Here, P or Q does not seem to entail $\sim P \rightarrow Q$

What the relation between these conditionals *appears* to be

- If Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy, someone else did
- If Oswald hadn't shot Kennedy, someone else would have.
- Surface appearance: same type of connection; different things (clauses) connected
- But the standard approach (at least among philosophers) is that this appearance is deceptive

The standard (among philosophers) approach to the relation

- (A) If Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy, someone else did
- (B) If Oswald hadn't shot Kennedy, someone else would have.
- (A) and (B) are two somewhat different ways of connecting the same pair of sentences: "Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy" (**antecedent of both**) and "Someone else did [shoot Kennedy]" (**consequent of both**)
- Messing with the verbs in (B) signals that the connection claimed between the clauses is a different one (from that claimed in (A))

The standard approach: Sentence Frames

- If _____, [then] _____
- If it had been the case that _____, [then] it would have been the case that _____
- Plugging the straightforward ant/conseq pair into these frames yields (A) in the first case; and in the second case, it yields.....

The standard approach: Regimentations

- (Br) If it had been the case that Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy, [then] it would have been the case that someone else did [shoot Kennedy].
- This is the "regimentation" of (B)
- Idea: (B) is arrived at by plugging the straightforward ant & cons into the funky sentence frame, yielding (Br), which is then deregimented down to (B). We can intuit that (Br)'s meaning is similar to (B)'s.

The standard approach: Regimentations

- If we insist on a wordier regimentation for (A), I suppose it would be:
(Ar) If it is the case that Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy, then it is the case that someone else did [shoot Kennedy].
- Just make the frame at the top of two slides back a little wordier, so that plugging our old ant & conseq into it yields (Ar)
- (A) is then arrived at through de-reg-ing (Ar)

Possible world semantics for c/s conditionals (N. p. 160.7)

- Basic idea: $A \square \rightarrow C$ is true iff C is true in the closest pw's in which A is true
- So, (B) is true if someone else shot Kennedy in the closest worlds in which Oswald didn't shoot him (the world in which Oswald doesn't shoot him that most closely resembles the actual world)
- (This is the basic idea of the treatment of both David Lewis and Robert Stalnaker, whom Nozick cites.)
- Apply to: If kangaroos had no tails, they would topple over

Epistemology: Subjunctive Conditionals and Sensitivity

- S's true belief that P is sensitive iff (at least to a first approximation) this sensitivity conditional holds:
If P had been false, S would not have believed that P
- S's true belief that P is insensitive iff (at least to a first approximation) this insensitivity conditional holds:
If P had been false, S would [still] have believed that P
- Application: Lottery case with a flip at the announcement

[1/30: end here]

Possible world semantics for c/s conditionals: Counterpossibles

- Basic idea: $A \square \rightarrow C$ is true iff C is true in the closest pw's in which A is true
- But what if A is impossible? Then there are no worlds, and so no closest worlds, in which P is true. What then?
- Usual answer: $A \square \rightarrow C$ is then trivially true
- Nozick's 3rd condition: no real hope for dividing good from bad cases of beliefs in necessary truths

Possible world semantics for c/s
conditionals: "Factuals"*

- Basic idea: $A \square \rightarrow C$ is true iff C is true in the closest pw's in which A is true
- But what if A is true? What then?
- Usual answer: $A \square \rightarrow C$ then has the same truth value as does C
- But then Nozick's 4th condition will always be met when the "standard conditions" (1 & 2) are met. So on the "usual answer," condition 4 can do no work.
- Other possibilities on handout