
THE MAGNITUDES BEYOND OUR MIND

(or: Metaphysics of Quantity and the Limit of Phenomenal Concept)

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I. Metaphysics of Quantity

1. Quantities and Magnitudes

I am indeed both 65 kg and am between 60 and 70 kg. But I do not have two magnitudes of weight.

A quantity is a property that comes in degrees/magnitudes. A magnitude is a *maximally determinate way* to instantiate a quantity.

2. Proportionality of Causation

There is reason to accept the proportionality requirement of causation if the world consists of a determinable-determinate structure and the bottom level of the world does not monopolize the causation.

[PR1] If the instantiation of F is a cause of an event **e**, then: for any property X that is a *determinable* of F, it is not true that, if F were not instantiated but X were, **e** would still have happened.

[PR2] If the instantiation of F is a cause of an event **e**, then: for any property X that is a *determinate* of F, if it were true that X (and hence F) were instantiated, **e** would have happened.

3. Causal Profile of Magnitudes

No magnitude instantiation can be proportional cause of instantiation of non-magnitude properties.

II. Phenomenal Feelings as Magnitudes

1. Phenomenal Quality vs. Phenomenal Feeling

Pain comes in various magnitudes. When I break my leg, I instantiate only one painful feeling. That is a *maximally determinate way* of instantiating pain.

Our proficiency in concept deployment comes in degrees, but the possession of a concept is an all-or-nothing matter.

2. Having concepts

For any concept C, having C is a mental property that a person can instantiate. But that property is not a magnitude of any quantity.

3. Causal Barrier between Phenomenal Feeling and Concept

Due to the metaphysical nature of magnitude, some kinds of phenomenal feeling cannot cause us to possess any concept.

III. Phenomenal Concept Strategy

1. Explanatory Gap w/o Metaphysical Dualism

The epistemic gap between the mental and the physical is a result of our ability to refer to our brain states via two kinds of concepts: physical concepts and phenomenal concepts. The phenomenal concepts are demonstrative concepts.

That the phenomenal concepts are demonstrative concepts explains why we can only have them if we have encountered the relevant experiences.

2. Simple vs. Complex Demonstrative Concepts

Complex demonstrative concepts (e.g., <this idiot>) must have simple demonstrative concepts (e.g., <this>) as part.

3. Physicalist Conception of Simple Mental Representation

From a physicalist perspective, we cannot have simple concept about o if o is beyond the “causal reach” of our conceptual resources.

Unlike some other challenges against the phenomenal concept strategy, beefing up the phenomenal concepts won't help address this metaphysical challenge.

∴ A proper metaphysics of quantity blocks a very popular physicalist account of the explanatory gap.
