

Properties = (Special) Particulars Lewis's ontology: possible worlds, and possibilia. *Properties* are sets of possibilia. So two properties are the same if *necessarily*, whatever has the one has the other. How do these differ from universals a la Armstrong? And where universals are "sparse" – there are only a few of them – properties are "abundant," there are as many as there could possibly be. Just for that reason, a distinction is needed between the properties that are natural and the ones that aren't:

Because properties are so abundant, they are indiscriminating. Any two things share infinitely many properties, and fail to share infinitely many others. That is so whether the two things are perfect duplicates or utterly dissimilar. Thus properties do nothing to capture facts of resemblance. That is work more suited to the sparse universals. Likewise, properties do nothing to capture the causal powers of things. Almost all properties are causally irrelevant, and there is nothing to make the relevant ones stand out from the crowd. Properties carve reality at the joints -- and everywhere else as well. If it's distinctions we want, too much structure is no better than none...it would be otherwise if we had not only the countless throng of all properties, but also an elite minority of special properties. Call these the natural properties (211).

Lewis allows that *if* we had universals, they'd be useful in distinguish the naturals from the rest. After that they could retire. But even without universals, you'd still need the distinction. One option is to treat it as primitive. That is Lewis's preference. Another is resemblance nominalism, based not on binary resemblance but "variably polyadic," contrastive resemblance. $x_1x_2\dots Ry_1y_2\dots$ means that the x_i s resemble each other and do not likewise resemble the y_i s. The x_i s form a perfectly natural class iff there are y_1, y_2, \dots such that for all z ($zx_1x_2\dots Ry_1y_2\dots$ iff z is one of the x_i s). In English, the x_i s form a perfectly natural class iff

- i) they resemble each other
- ii) they do not likewise resemble certain other things
- iii) they can't be extended to a larger group still satisfying i) and ii)

He hints that R can be defined reversewise from naturalness; how? Perhaps like this: $x_1x_2\dots Ry_1y_2\dots$ iff the x_i s belong to some perfectly natural class to which none of the y_i s belong. (Is this the same?) Assuming interdefinability, primitivism and resemblance nominalism might be considered "a single theory presented in two different styles" (229).

Primitivism would solve our problems if the problem of naturalness was the only one we faced. But not otherwise, for it doesn't help with the problems we called PREDICATION, REFERENCE, and SAMENESS (one over many) Lewis argues that these other problems are fake.

PREDICATION: 'F' applies to x not because x has Fness but because x is F. Most predicates have unnatural extension so there is no such thing as Fness.

NOUNS: "Red is more like yellow than green" can state a relation between color-classes. (Or...) "He has all the virtues of his father" can mean that he belongs to all the virtue-classes his father belongs to. Most abstract nouns have unnatural extension so there is no Fness for them to refer to. But as Lewis says for any predicate ϕ there's a property of ϕ -ing. (True?)

SAMENESS (One over Many). "How is the nominalist to account for the apparent if partial identity of numerically different particulars? How can two different things both be white or both be on a table?" Armstrong thinks everyone dodges this -- and PREDICATION which he runs together with it -- but the realist.

When the demand for an account -- for a place in one's system -- turned into a demand for an *analysis*, then I say that the question ceased to be compulsory. And when the analysandum switched, from Moorean facts of apparent sameness of type to predication generally, I say that the question ceased to be answerable at all... doing away with all unanalysed predication is an unattainable aim, and so an unreasonable aim. No theory should be faulted for not achieving it. How could there be a theory that names entities, or quantifies over them, in the course of its sentences, and yet altogether avoids primitive predication (214)

Whatever you say to "explain" one predication is just going to involve another predication, which to that extent will be unanalysed. (Compare being asked to explain what makes a sentence true or assertible without asserting anything yourself, or putting anything forward as true.) This applied to Armstrong too. "Such identity in nature [as we get with sharing of universals] is literally inexplicable, in the sense that it cannot be further explained."