

Re: Existence as predicate

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From: The Sophist (*sophist_at_brown.edu*)

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Terry Firma wrote:

- > *This is an attempt at refuting Kant's claim that a thing's existence can't*
- > *be a predicate:*
- >
- > *Since everything is connected ("hangs together") – there are no absolute*
- > *dividing lines / there is no empty space – everything must have a *common*
- > *denominator*; this common denominator must be necessary (since everything is*
- > *necessary / has at least one cause); therefore general existence must have a*
- > *necessary component/aspect in order to exist (therefore existence is a*
- > *quality/predicate).*

Let's see. David Lewis denied that everything is connected, and while his view may be false, I know of no conclusive arguments to that effect.

I am not sure what you mean when you say that there is no empty space.

However, even if everything were connected, this would not entail the existence of a common denominator. Even if we assume that things must share something in common to be connected, object 1 might be connected to object 2 by sharing A, and object 2 might be connected to object 3 by sharing B, and objects 1 and 3 might then be connected without sharing anything in common. You seem to assume that things which are not necessary must have causes, which seems not to be the case (popular interpretations of present quantum theory deny this). Finally, even if everything that existed needed to have a component in common, that would not entail that this common component would be existence.

Rather a stunning amount of mistakes for such a short argument, I must say.

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Aaron Boyden

The main division between the so-called Continental and Analytic traditions has been disputes over whether the task of being unclear should be carried out in natural language or in a formal system.