

Re: The Difference between a Set and an Element

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 - *Date:* Fri, 12 Jan 2007 23:09:25 +0000 (UTC)
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On Fri, 12 Jan 2007 18:36:06 GMT, Nam D. Nguyen <namducnguyen@xxxxxxx> said:

...

The concept of **set** can be as he says fundamental mathematical concepts should be: that doesn't stop the members of sets being as concrete as you like.

It does stop "members of sets being as concrete" because concepts should be abstract.

You seem to be assuming two things here: (1) that sets are concepts; (2) that a set with concrete members is not abstract. Re (1), the set {5,17,1383} for example certainly doesn't **seem** to be anything like a concept. I mean, sets are just (in general) arbitrary collections of things, right? There doesn't seem to be anything particularly conceptual about them at all. Granted, there might be those who would say that {5,17,1383} is the concept of being identical to 5, 17 or 1383 (though I think that would be an odd thing to say). So consider instead, for example, an arbitrary infinite set *S* of natural numbers for which — unlike, say, {5,17,1383} or the set of prime numbers — there is no description that characterizes exactly the members of *S*, and no procedure that lists them. What concept is *S*? Sure doesn't seem like anything I'd call a concept.

Re (2), while some philosophers (e.g., Penelope Maddy) do indeed think that sets with concrete members are concrete, or are at least spatially located, there is certainly no obvious inconsistency in the view that they are abstract, the concreteness of their members notwithstanding. (If you think otherwise, you'll need to provide an argument.)

Period. (I hate to use that word "Period", but what choice do I have when incorrectness keeps persisted?).

Re: The Difference between a Set and an Element

Oh, that's an easy one. You **argue** for your position instead of dogmatically asserting it to be true with no justification. Maybe you'll have better luck á la Bill O'Reilly by following unargued assertions with a resounding "Shut up!" :-)

Remember the word "concept" should be used with "of":

Really? What's wrong with "Fido falls under the concept DOG"? How about: "A concept is an abstract entity"? Or: "The concept that 'red' calls to mind is very different from the concept that 'snow' calls to mind"?

there is an indirectness–gap between a concrete object and the concept **of** it. (Sigh! Before one accuses somebody else as being foolish, as you've done so in the other post, why doesn't one **carefully** review what has been said, or review the natural–language (such as English) usage of the word in question?)

Fine advice. Vide above.

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