

## Re: Is $1+1=2$ analytic or synthetic?

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2005-01/2301.html>

---

*examachine\_at\_gmail.com*

**Date:** 01/08/05

Date: 7 Jan 2005 18:52:40 -0800

I think I should name myself a positivist first. Even the purest of all analytic disciplines, mathematics, cannot free itself of the real world, as its rules are imposed in the way it can conjure new theories. For instance, everything has to be expressed as a string of symbols. The mathematical concepts themselves occur in a way that is causally connected to the world, it's hard to see them being wholly independent of their material causes. These and other metaphysical considerations lead me to believe that our every idea has a synthetic content, including mathematical ideas. By analyticity, we merely mean abundance in its formal nature, in its capacity to depict a possible world. Deviation from the actual world can be understood in the terms of algorithmic dissimilarity, but it seems that much commonality is always present whenever the theory in question does anything interesting.

So, I agree with Quine that the distinction is a matter of degree. The further from the known world we get without collecting new empirical facts, the higher risk of falsehood we run.

I'd call logical positivism extinct, not positivism, by the way.  
Regards,

--

Eray Ozkural