



Things that Are But Cannot Be

To better understand yourself, don't rely on what makes sense.

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*“To learn is not to know; there are the learners and the learned.
Memory makes the one, philosophy the others.”*
— **Alexandre Dumas**, *The Count of Monte Cristo*

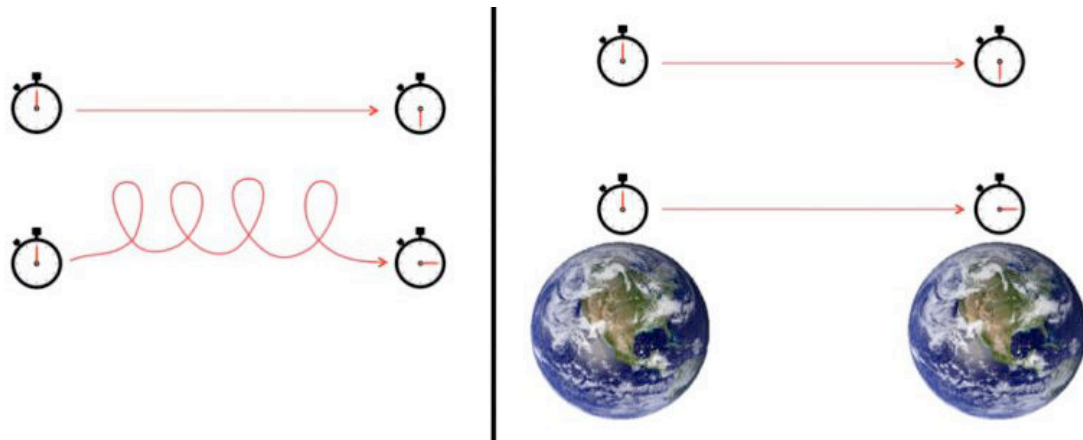
We’re always looking for sense in the world. Is this because the world is sensible, or because we are wired to understand it that way? And if we find sense in the world, is it really there, or are we using what we see to justify what we think?

Physics gives us some answers if we accept it without prejudice. It tells us that the world cannot make sense, and that there is no way that we will ever make sense of it. You can take this

to be a disaster or as liberating. It's a disaster, if you need order to find peace. It's liberating, if you accept the necessity for higher consciousness.

Newton invented physics to demonstrate that there must be a God, because only a universal omniscience could arrange everything with a consistency for which there was no exception. It turns out that while there does seem to be a universal consistency at a fundamental level, it exists beyond anything we can understand.

We can calculate it, make predictions, and run experiments. Some of these techniques are understandable, but others are not. It's not that we don't understand them, it's that they contradict what we call understanding.



Relativity

I referred to one of these paradoxes before, in the piece [“To Be Confused I – Physics”](#). There, the conclusion was that time could be circular. The situation in which time is predicted to be circular is not the situation in which we live, but it applies to the same universe, with the same things in it, operating according to the same rules for which we've found no exceptions.

We live in a differently configured universe where time may not be circular, but whether it is or not, it's the same “time” as the universe with circular time, so we should not feel self-assured.

To say time is circular is, in itself, an unfathomable assertion. Does it mean that the calendar repeats after a few billion years, or does it mean that the events repeat themselves when the cycle comes around? It's most likely the former: that the calendar repeats, and the actions of things does not: time is like a hamster wheel. Is that a problem?

What meaning does that have? If things behaved differently the second time around, then we'd need a new calendar in which to record them. If that were the case, then the cycle would not be the same and time would not be something we live "within," but something that rather flows "underneath" us, reminiscent of what Heraclitus said: "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river, and he's not the same man."

We may be spared the experience of repeating time, but it's still the same insubstantial time that we are experiencing. Which indicates to me that time, as we know it, is only our experience within it, and that we really know nothing of time at all.

What we know nothing about, we hold as external to us, and we view as constant and simple. This is how we view time, and that's alright because we can be fairly confident that the nature of time is not going to change. From the calculations we've made about the relativity of time, it doesn't affect our everyday lives, and it won't affect us as long as we remain in our terrestrial habitat.

This problem with time comes from the Theory of Relativity, in which time can be distorted. This is disturbing, but not incomprehensible. Relativity tells us that we can measure time using the speed of light, which is not actually the speed of light per se, but rather the maximum speed of information.

Light is what we call a stream of photons, if you use light's particle name. Other things besides photons travel at this speed (O'keefe, 2019), but light is the only one we directly experience. For such particles, Relativity tells us, time does not progress.

If you understand that all events—actions and reactions—involve the communication between things, and that communication is the transfer of information, then you can start to understand that weird stuff is going to happen when the speed of things moving through space and time approaches the maximum speed at which information can flow.

In this case, if you begin to catch up with information, then it's comprehensible that the rate at which events progress will drop to zero. And since distances are measured by events—every measurement is an event—then distances will be affected. But, as long as we keep away from that realm, and we don't try to catch up with information, then times and distances will seem reliably consistent.

“Things traveling at the speed of light don't actually age... So a photon is actually not aging relative to us. It's timeless, in that sense.”

— **Flip Tanedo**, physicist (O'keefe, 2019)

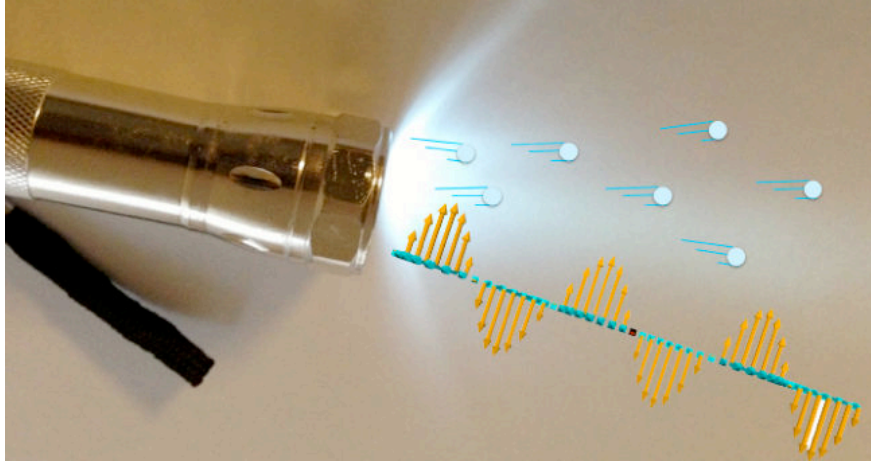
The maximum speed of information is 186,000 miles per second, which is seven times the circumference of the earth every second. Aside from light itself, nothing in our common experience goes anywhere near that fast, so we can continue to think of time as flat, common, linear, and unchanging.

Even phone conversations with people on the other side of the earth continue at an unbroken pace. Not so with conversations with people on the moon, however. Question and answer conversations with people on the moon are delayed by five seconds. We are not entirely immune from this effect.

The fastest satellites can travel at 18,000 miles per hour. This is only 5 miles per second, but that's fast enough to create detectable distortions in time and distance. In particular, global positioning technology, built into every smartphone, uses this distortion in the calculation of your position.

We are using this reality distortion in our everyday lives, but it is not changing our understanding of life. Still, we're painting our reality with the same brush that would utterly confound us if we painted with larger brushstrokes. The very concepts that assure our safety, as long as we remain within terrestrial limits, predict the possibility of a mental collapse if we went outside them.

What is this stuff on our conceptual brush? Is it really okay to be complacent and ignore what happens at the far limits of our experience? As the old maps of the world sometimes warned, at the edges “there be dragons.”



Quantum Mechanics

Quantum mechanics is the physics of the ultra-small, but the ultra-small underlies everything. Quantum mechanics makes some unequivocal statements about the workings of things that are more incomprehensible than the Theory of Relativity.

While we can insulate ourselves from relativity by living in a world of slow information transfer, the paradoxes of quantum mechanics exist everywhere and always. Quantum mechanics says, “You don’t understand anything, and you never will.” The only way to avoid this is to shut our eyes, take what we’re given, and avoid any attempt to understand it. Quantum mechanics basically undid everything Newton was trying to achieve.

The irony is that Newton’s God-infused universe actually didn’t work out. It is inconsistent with both the historical record and the details of processes in the present, but it was logical!

In contrast, quantum mechanics is illogical and nonsensical, but it is self-consistent. You can use it to calculate and predict things to the highest accuracy that we can measure. What’s more, quantum mechanics is consistent with both the historical record and processes in the present to the extent we can understand what we can see.

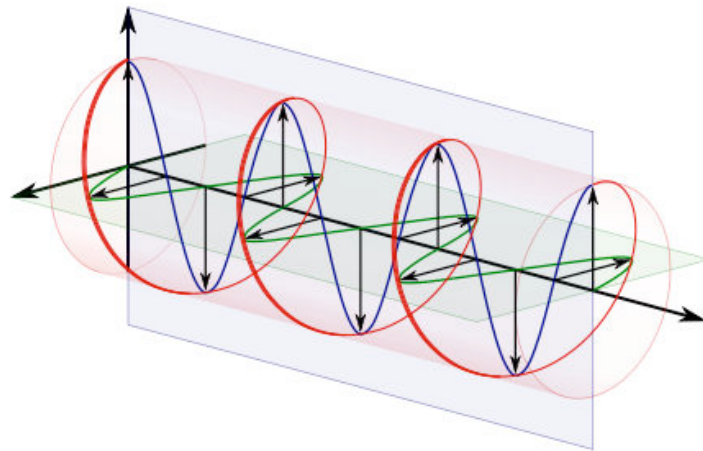
But here’s the problem: you can only understand what you see in accordance with what makes sense. To understand is to make sense. Unfortunately, quantum mechanics does not make sense, so saying that we “understand” anything based on explanations that don’t make sense is an oxymoron. This should be telling us something. Maybe we don’t understand, or we don’t need to understand.

Look at other species that make tools, use tools, and communicate among themselves. Do they “understand” what they’re doing? Do they have a theory? Other animals do have memory, accumulate experience, and make inferences. And while we appear to excel at making inferences and recording history, many species have better memories and have a richer experience of the world than us.

Duality of Reality

Quantum mechanics says that you can think of light, which is another name for the electromagnetic field, as a swarm of particles or an ocean of waves. The particles are called photons and the waves are electromagnetic. Both travel at the same speed in vacuum, which is the speed of light. Both completely and accurately describe what we observe. Both are true, yet each refutes the other. That’s the problem: they are simultaneously true and incompatible descriptions.

The way physicists deal with this is like gender relativism: “The world is here. It’s queer. Get used to it!” We’re supposed to leave it at that. Everything makes sense if you look at it from one way or from the other way, but there is no way to understand it from both ways. Does that make sense to you?



The Unreal Reality of Phase

We can get closer to the source of the contradiction, and that source is a universal property of everything that’s called “phase.” The phase of a wave is the position of its crests and troughs, which form a regular pattern. If you’re on a beach, the phase is the rhythm of the surf. If you’re swimming in the ocean, the phase is noticeable as the time when you’ll get a mouth full of water

at the passing of a wave.

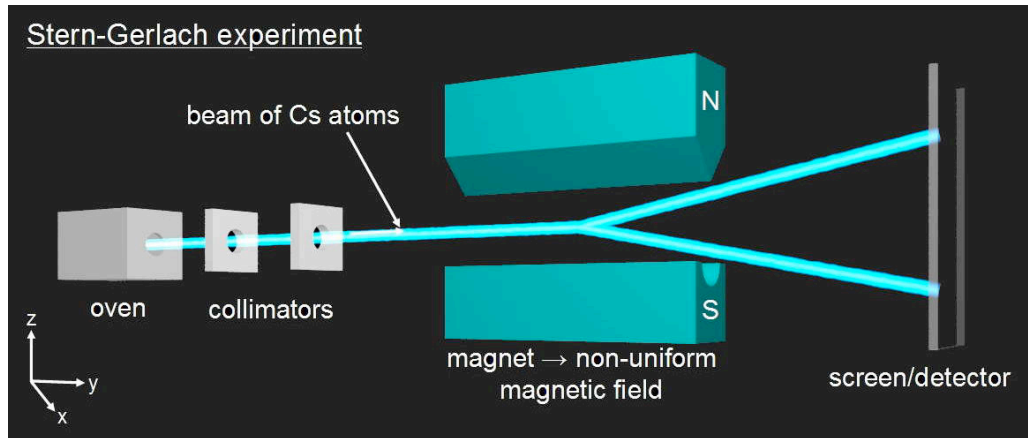
The quantum mechanical property of phase cannot be measured. It has no direct effect either in theory or reality. Quantum mechanics says that in theory everything has a phase, and phase can never be observed. This is the source of the incompatibility of the wave and the particle descriptions of nature.

The wave description of nature carries the phase aspect of all things, and this is what determines how things interact. The particle description of nature carries no phase, and this determines how things are observed. This is not a “sometimes” rule, it’s an always-rule: all interactions are affected by the phases of things, and no observations ever display the phase of anything. They exhibit the consequence of phases, but phase itself is not observable.

One thing’s phase can add or subtract from the phase of whatever it interacts with. If the phase crests of two things coincide, then those things have a greater effect. If the phase crest of one coincides with the phase trough of the other, then they have a lesser effect. You might think that this gives us a way to understand what we can’t see. You might think, “Well, so what if the phase of things is invisible, at least we understand what’s going on beyond our sight.” But it gets worse.

It turns out that the phase of things are present even when the things are not. More to the point, the phases of things interact even when the laws of physics demand that there be no things there to interact. Yet they do, and we see the results consistently, accurately, and everywhere.

False prophets, like the wonderful Joe Dispenza, like to tell us that this sort of behavior confirms that everything in the universe is connected, and we are all one. But it equally tells us that nothing in the universe exists, and we are all disconnected. Perhaps these two points of view have truth, like the particle and the wave. They’re not identical, and neither can be appreciated without the other. Both stories are actually the start of one’s work toward understanding, not the end of it.



Here's the Experiment.

1. Isolate a single, indivisible particle that carries an up or down magnetic orientation, like a little magnet. This could be an electron, or a neutron.
2. Project that particle through a magnetic field that will pull it in a left or right direction, that is, in a direction perpendicular to its magnetic orientation regardless of which of the two ways it's oriented.
3. After that, without paying attention to which direction the particle went in response to the field you subjected it to, bring the particle back onto its original course and measure whether it's still pointing up or down.

If you perform this experiment, then you'll find that you have not changed anything. If the particle was pointing up or pointing down at the start, it still is. In spite of you having pushed it left or right, it is still pointing up or down at the end.

However, if you perform the experiment slightly differently by looking to see whether the particle was pushed left or right, then you will have completely disrupted it. That is, the particle can either be an up or down particle, or it can be a left or right particle, but if it's one, then it's no longer the other. This means that measuring the particle's leftness or rightness entirely disrupts its upness or downness.

But here's the problem: it is not the pushing the particle left or right that disrupts it, it's only the knowing how it responded that upsets it. Anything that you do to discern how the particle responded—now, later, near, far, in this cycle of time or another—disrupts the particle. It's not the pushing that's disruptive, it's the knowing.

The way that quantum mechanics explains this is by saying the particle is not a particle, it's a wave, and the wave splits into two parts, each part going in different directions. One part goes left, and another part goes right.

Then, when the two parts are brought together, the particle is whole again and behaves just as before. However, you'll never see the two waves, you'll only see one particle going one way or the other. The physics tells you it's absolutely impossible for you to ever see either of these waves.

The particle is indivisible. It's impossible for the particle to ever be found as having split into two parts. All you'll ever see is one particle, in one place. And this single particle has either behaved as a single particle or a combined pair of waves.

We could rejoin the estimable Dr. Dispenza by saying, "Either we all affect each other, in which case we completely disintegrate each other, or we maintain our integrity, in which case we do not affect each other."



False Is Not Fraudulent

We should not call Dr. Dispenza a fraud, because that would mean he does not deliver what he's sold. But his message is false because what he delivers is a cocktail of contradictions. You may like the taste of the "we are all connected" cocktail, and you may feel inebriated by it, but it is the Cheshire Cat's smile. It's confusion in a pretty package, and perhaps that's what you need!

As the physics makes clear, gaining an "understanding" will give you the wrong results. The

right results emerge from certain contradictions. Not any contradictions, but contradictions built of carefully managed opposites.

The resolution of the quantum paradox lies in the existence of the phase, something that will never be seen directly, but which can affect every outcome. A particle's phase is the information that survives its impossible decomposition and then rebuilds the particle's integrity after its impossible reassembly.

We can never see the phase because it's carried by the invisible wave. Not just invisible, but unperceivable and immeasurable and, at the same time, essential and fundamental. We are all connected in ways that we'll never observe, and disconnected in everything we know.

The resolution of the Joe Dispenza paradox, which is a reflection of your reality, is that neither his nor your notion of yourself exist. Both are observations you make regarding the state of things, and both are false. They are not fraudulent because they give you value—they underpin both your and the doctor's evanescent personalities—but both are fictions. They are the particles we observe amidst the undetectable reality of our wave nature... just to thoroughly butcher the metaphor.

“Of all the rational belief processes (preferences, non-catastrophizing, high frustration tolerance, and acceptance), acceptance was most influential in predicting levels of happiness... Individuals who have a more accepting view of themselves, have a significant advantage in acting in a more psychologically advantageous way to traumatic events.”

— **Kevin Morley**, psychologist (2014)

We need a better understanding of ourselves, and less dependence on what “makes sense.” I appreciate Dr. Joe's disconnecting his audience from their insistence on reason, but he has not entirely succeeded. Instead of being open to the chaos of opportunity, his audience is lining up to purchase the charades of his next presentation. Nonsense can be a cure for inappropriate rationality, but it is not real.

The Cheshire Cat's smile is both real and unreal. It's an instructive fabrication.

If you'd like to explore how to make sense of your reality, schedule a free, 15-minute video or audio conversation here:

<https://www.mindstrengthbalance.com/schedule15>

I'll be in touch.

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