"In all judgment in which there is a relation between subject and predicate . . .
that a relation can be of two kinds. Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A
as something contained (though covertly) in the concept A; or B lies outside the sphere
of the concept A, though somehow connected with it, in the former case I call the judg-
ment analytical, in the latter synthetical."[1] Here Kant makes his now classic distin-
ction of the two types of propositions: analytic and synthetic. Of course this
dichotomy of the types of propositions had a long history prior to Kant, such as in
Leibniz's truths of reason and truths of fact, and in Hume's relation of ideas and mat-
ters of fact. But, nonetheless, it was Kant who gave this dichotomy its modern name
and form. Furthermore, an issue concerning this dichotomy (Are synthetic a priori
was
propositions possible?) the basis of his philosophical inquires in his Critique of
of Pure Reason. But despite this commonly accepted dichotomy is accepts by many philo-
sophers as a prosaic and harmless categorization, I believe it must be rejected because
it lacks clarity ultimately, it implies man acquires knowledge by two totally different
methods, and because it implies a chasm exists between what is sensible and what is
intelligible.

At first glance, the analytic/synthetic dichotomy looks like a harmless catagor-
ization of various propositions. Since this dichotomy is mutually exclusive and col-
lectively exhaustive, all statements with a truth value (propositions) fall into one
or the other category.

An analytic truth is one true by definition in which the predicate does not add
to a concept since the predicate is taken from the definition of the subject's term.
For instance, "All Euclidean space is three dimensional," "All bodies are extended,"
and "All bachelors are unmarried," are all examples of analytic truths. All of these
propositions are considered to be necessarily true, which means that it would be a
logical contradiction to deny any of these propositions. For instance, to say "Euclidean
space is not three dimensional" would be contradictory since Euclidean space by defin-
ition has the three dimensions of height, width, and depth. Analytic propositions
are also considered to be a priori (true without experience of the real world) since

[1]Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason (Anchor Books: Garden City, NY, 1966), p. 7.
Translated by F. Max Muler.

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they require no _further_ empirical investigation to be known to be true. As Kant

himself put it: "For this very reason all analytic judgments are _a priori_ even when

the concepts are empirical, as, for example, "Gold is a yellow metal"; for to known

this I require no experience beyond my concept of gold, which contained the thought

that this body is yellow and metal. It is, in fact, this thought that constituted

my concept; and I need only analyze it, without looking beyond it elsewhere."2 Fin-

ally, an analytic proposition is universally true because the subject's definition

must be applicable as a predicate to anything named by that concept. "All albinos are

white" is a proposition that must be universally true for if an animal is not white it

can't be an albino. An empirical investigation of "All albinos are white" would be

foolish since if a thing is an albino, it must be white. To venture where Strawson

and Grice3 chose not to tread in defining analyticity [an analytic proposition is one _not well put_

in which a denial of wh*i*c*h* makes the predicate contradict the essence of the subject,]

such as "All bachelors are married." Thus, to sum up describing analytic propositions,

they are statements with a truth value that would be a logical contradiction to deny

(are necessary), require no further experience to form (are _a priori_), and have predi-

cates [that must be applicable to their subject] (are universal).   ?

  [By contrast, a synthetic proposition *that* has a predicate that adds to the subject) _sentence_

information that isn't already contained in the subject's definition.] "Gold sinks in   _fragment_

water," "All events are caused," "All bachelors are unhappy," "All grass is purple"

are all examples of synthetic propositions. Unlike true analytic propositions, true

synthetic propositions are uncertain. This type of proposition is uncertain because

they are contingent, that is, they are true or false depending on the nature of the

universe. One can form a mental image *AND*/or think of God's rearranging the universe

such that the proposition "All grass is purple" is true or that "Gold bars sink in

water" is false. By contrast, one can't imagine *AND*/or conceive of God's creating a

universe such that "2 + 2 = 4" is false or "All bachelors are married" is true.

Thus a true analytic proposition must be true, while a true synthetic proposition

might be true, depending on the way the world is. (Furthermore, a synthetic proposition

2Immanuel Kant, _Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics_ (Hacket Publishing Company:
Indianpolis, IN, 1977), p. 12-13. Translated by James Ellington _from a translation of_ Carus.
3H.P. Grice and P.F. Strawson, "In defense of a dogma," _The philosophical Review_, vol.
65 (1956), pp. 141-158.

is a posteriori, which means it is formed <u>after</u> experience of the universe.⟩ I

[margin, handwritten: Kant, / course, / that denies this is always the case]

can't know "All grass is purple" is false until after I have had sense experience

of grass. This "after experience" aspect of synthetic propositions is in decided

contrast to analytic propositions, which are <u>a priori</u> precisely because ⟨no sense

experience is needed to form them.⟩ Because a synthetic proposition has a pred-

[margin, handwritten: misleading as the concepts may be empirical]

icate which isn't contained in the definition already, I have to have sense

experience and think on it <u>afterwards</u>. I can't break down (analyze) in the pro-

cess of forming a synthetic proposition because the predicate isn't already con-

tained in the concept's definition. "Sinking in water" is not considered to be

a part of the concept "gold," while "a dense yellow metal" is part of the concept

"gold." ⌈Finally, a true synthetic proposition is an empirical generalization on

[margin, handwritten: (again Kant denies that this is always True]

experience which isn't universal necessarily.⌉ The synthetic proposition, "All

ravens are black" is only true so far as I can tell, and isn't universal with

the certainity an analytic proposition like "All albinos are white" is. Why?

the truth of "All ravens are black" depends on my future sense experience while

the truth of "All albinos are white" depends on its definition. In conclusion,

synthetic propositions are different from analytic propositions because synthetic

[margin, handwritten: ditto]

propositions depend on the current state of the world (are contingent and thus

uncertain), are formed <u>after</u> experience of the universe (<u>a posteriori</u>), and are

universally valid only so far as we can tell (empirical generalizations).

Admittedly, as explained above, it seems the analytic/synthetic dichotomy

marks a seemingly clear, useful distinction and looks harmless. But, I still

think this dicthotomy should be rejected because this disnction between analytic

and synthetic propositions breaks down and becomes less distinct when the origin

and nature of concepts (universals) is examined. Also the analytic/synthetic

dichotomy should be rejected because it implies man has two totally different

epistemological methods of acquiring knowledge and because it implies a wide

gulf between the sensible and the intelligible, which strikes me as very dan-

gerous if we want our minds' ideas (the intelligible) to fit the world (the sens-

ible). So on this note, let's examine deeper the implications, foundations, and

clarity of this distinction.[4]

First of all, let's examine what a concept (universal) actually is. Admittedly, the problem of universals is a hideous mess philosophically, but I think Ayn Rand has found one particularly useful approach to this often visited battleground. When a concept is formed, one abstracts out a distinguishing attribute of a group of existents (objects) that is an attribute that must exist in <u>some</u> quantity in each existent, but can exist in <u>any</u> quantity in the various existents in that group, and then subsumes (includes) these existents under a concept which is symbolized by an audio-visual signal (a word). (Notice that a word isn't the same as a concept, which is something all too easy to forget). The key part of Ayn Rand's theory of universals is omission of the specific measurements of each existent as it is subsumed under a concept. This measurement omission means that the existents under a concept must have the same attribute(s) to some degree, but the degree or amount of similarity (the measurement of the similarity) isn't mentioned or covered by a concept. The distinguishing attribute both simultaneously indicates what is similar in a group of existents and indicates what is different from other existents outside the concept which lack the distinguishing attribute. Let's consider an example. A leatherbound Bible, a thin hardback children's story book, and a paperback bestseller all have different numbers of pages, different page sizes, different words on each page, and different messages, but to call these very <u>different</u> existents by the exact <u>same</u> concept "book" is <u>not</u> arbitrary. Why? Because each of these three books has the exact same common attributes (a cover with sheet held together inbetween) in different degrees (the specific size of pages, the specific number of pages, the number of words on each page, the type of cover, etc.) for each of these three books, but the difference in amount (measurement) of each attribute isn't specifically mentioned or contained within the concept, although for the concept to be applicable to these three existents these common attributes <u>must</u> exist in the existents to some degree. Thus, I can apply the exact same concept with the exact same meaning to somewhat different

[4]Much of the following discussion is very heavily dependent on the following book: Ayn Rand, <u>Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology</u> (New American Library: New York, 1967). Especially useful was an article contained in this book. I mean, I mean

existents by   omitting from what a concept means the <u>specific</u>

measurements of the distinguishing attribute(s) of each existent, but still

including in the concept that the measured attribute(s) must exist to <u>some</u>

degree in order for that concept to be applicable to that concept's existents.

[But what does this proposed solution to the problem of universals have to *not well expressed*

do with the analytic/synthetic dichotomy is because of a false view of concepts,

and their definitions.] This dichotomy assumes a concept means only its defin-

itional attributes when makes its distinction when in fact a concept means all

attributes that are held in common by the existents subsumed under a concept.

[A concept means all the common attributes of the existents it can be applied *not well put*

to, as well as the existents themselves (denotation), <u>to the limits of our</u>

<u>knowledge</u> of the existents and their held in common attributes the concept

stands for.] A concept, such as "man," includes common attributes (Aristotle's

propria) not mentioned by the definition "rational animal," such as containing

carbon, having a heart, having EEG (brain) waves, and having two legs.*

Notice now the epistemological consquences of concepts meaning only their

definitions, which the analytic/synthetic dichotomy assumes. If I made the

analytic statement "All mean are rational animals" this statement is regarded

as a necessary analytic truth, but if I made the statement "All mean have hearts,"

or "All men are mortal," or "All men have carbon and water in their bodies,"

these synthetic truths are contingent (and thus uncertain) truths. And why is

"All men are rational animals" a certain truth and "All men have carbon in their

bodies" a possible falsehood? Because in Kant's examination of synthetic prop-

ositions he assumes a concept means only its definitional attributes and

nothing else, which is an assumption I reject. If a concept means only its

definition, I should be able to substitute the definition in every case the

word for the concept appears. Yet, this clearly isn't the case. The proposition

"That woman works" does not mean the same as "That combination of rationality and

animality works." A concept is <u>not</u> a shorthand tag for its definition. A concept

means all its existents shared attirbutes and the existents' themselves, and not

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just the attribute mentioned in the definition. To illustrate that a concept

means more than its definition still further, I'll use Leonard Peikoff's example:

"When a woman says: "I married a wonderful man," it is clear to most philosophers

that she does not mean: "I married a wonderful combination of rationality and

animality."[5] [But now notice what happens specifically when a concept means only

its definition: anything that contradicts its definitional essence is a logical

contradiction, while anything that contradicts its non-definitional essence (Ari-

stotle's propria) is <u>not</u> a logical contradiction.] The analytic/snythetic dichot-

omy makes propositions about definitional attributes 100% certain and necessarily

true, but other <u>equally</u> held in common attributes ("All men are mortal," "All men

have carbon in their bodies," etc.) are uncertain, contingent truths. This arbi-

trariness in what is certain and what isn't even though the characteristics are

equally common in all humans makes me   eye   the analytic/synthetic dichotomy

a bit more suspiciously.*

(margin handwritten: but too clear what you mean here. actually, Kant doesn't suppose all synthetic judgments uncertain — his synthetic a priori ones aren't.)

    Let's examine the proposition "All men are rational animals" a bit more closely.

It is considered necessarily true, which means it is a logical contradiction when

denied. It is true in all possible worlds God could create and is innconceivable

to deny. But suppose we are suddently confronted by someone who lacks the faculty

of reason, like an insane man or someone severly retarded. Does this constitute

an empirical disconfirmation of the above analytic truth. Even if one is an opt-

imistic Aristotlean concerning the important of man's reatiion\al faculty, one still

can imagine particular cases refuting the truth of the above proposition, such as

a baby born without a brain. An analytic truth, you see, depends just as much upon

the way the world is as does a synthetic truth. One doesn't devise concepts and

propositions stating some truth about the world ("All bachelors are unmarried")

unless it does depend on what actually does exist in the world, even if the prop-

osition is unfalsifiable. Indeed, the ₐsynthetic propositions "All men have carbon in their

bodies" and "All men are mortal," strike me as more certain and much harder to

     - empirically disconfirm   than the analytic truth "All men are

(margin handwritten: that analytic judgments may for empirical concepts is not, of course, denied by Kant)

rational animals," even though "All men are not rational animals," is a logical

[5]Ibid., p. 141.
*Imagine what kind of mischief I could create if definitions are totally arbitrary.

contradiction while "All men don't have carbon in their bodies" isn't a logical contradiction. Notice how the analytic/synethic dichotomy arbitrarily makes one existentially less certain proposition the "necessary truth" and the more certain one an uncertain, "contingent" truth.

But, of course, any reader (especially if an existentialist) will reply my chosen example above of "All men are rational animals" as unfair. So, let's consider Kant's own chosen example: "All bodies have extension." This proposition looks like a good analytic truth. The reason why we say denying the analytic proposition "All bodies are extended" is a contradiction logically is because the definition of "body" is "has extension" (takes up space). Thus, supposedly, it requires no sense experience to say "No bodies are extended" is a false proposition since the law of identity (non-contradiction) is all that is needed here to prove its falsity. But this analysis of analytic propositions implies definitions come out of thin air and don't need an empirical basis for their origin. I can't even know bodies exist (let alone take up space) until I have conducted empirical observations to determine their existence and what the best definition of "body" is out of all their shared characteristics. (John Locke suggested "solidity" was a better can-didate for the essence of bodies than extension was). Definitions are formed af-ter experience, and not before. The proposition "All bodies are extended" is not a priori as Kant claimed because I can't predicate "extension" of "bodies" as a subject until I know "bodies" have that characteristic. I can't form the prop-osition "All bodies are extended" until I know the predicate can be predicated of the subject, and in this case I need to abstract from sense experience "extension" before I can say bodies have this characteristic. How can I analyze concepts in propositions to get their meanings "without a knowledge of their source and nature-- to determine their meaning, while ignorant of their relationship to concretes."[6] The fact that I need no further experience to form the proposition "Gold is yellow" doesn't mean I could form this proposition without experience (a priori) since the proposition names a state of affairs in the world that has to be observed before

[6]Ibid., p. 131.

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the concept could be formed with the attributes of "yellow" being part of it. Since

apriori always implies "without ~~any~~ experience," it shouldn't be used in cases where

it ~~is meant to~~ mean, "without _further_ experience." Since no definitions can be

formed or considered part of a concept without experience, to call "Gold is yellow"

an analytic truth is a misnomer.

No definition can be formed until after experience, which includes that old

favorite example of analytic propositions: "All bachelors are unmarried." [But, _sentence fragment_

it will be urged, because no one would be foolish enough to conduct a survey in

which one asks bachelors "are you unmarried?"] Thus, this proposition, it will be

argued, must be a necessary truth and thus _a priori_ (known without experience)

since one can't imagine how it could be false. Of course, one reason why we can't

imagine how this proposition could be false because the law of identity is at work:

to be a bachelor means you aren't married. ∧ _This proposition is close to being a tautology like "turnips are turnips."_ But to say no one would conduct such

a survey involving empirical research still doesn't mean _no_ observation was involved

to form this proposition (which would make it _a priori_). Since one had to know

empirically that men existed, that the institution of marriage existed, and (im-

portantly) that everybody must either be married or not married (a mutually ex-

clusive and collectively exhaustive categorization), the concept "bachelor" is

hardly _apriori_ (meaning without ∧any experience and not dependent on the way the world

is). And to make the proposition "All bachelors are unmarried" one has to all

about the items I just mentioned. What makes it stupid to do empirical research

on this statement is that the mutually exclusive/collectively exhaustive nature

of participation/nonparticipation in the institution of marriage ∧_for all males_ enables one to

be 100% certain that not a single bachelor is married when "bachelor" is applied

to one of these mutually exclusive categories. It's logic applied to experience,

and not logic alone, that enables me to know no bachelor is married with 100%

certainity.

Suppose I did create a definition out of thin air and put it in a proposition:

"All zans are twenty-one fingered women." Is such a definition useful? No, because

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"zan" has no observational content: "I have never observed nor heard of from

others of the existence of such of a kind of women. Therefore, "Zan" is a useless,

irrelevant tautology that has no application to the real world, even if I am

personally 100% certain every zan has 21 fingers if they did exist. But is

"bachelor" like "zan" in being a useless tautology? No, it isn't because

bachelors are known to exist (by observation) and because whether or no a man

participates in the institution of marriage (which also is known to exist by

observation), has a major effect on a man's activities. For instance, bachelors,

for whatever reason, are more likely to commit crimes, get killed in accidents

and suffer from psychological problems than married men.[7] To be a bachelor

ultimately means you do different activities than non-bachelors, which means

bachelors are unmarried" is a useful statement since you know all the people it

applies to live differently from those who it doesn't apply. By contrast, a

proposition like "All zans have 21 fingers" or "All gonnons are unranned men" are

useless because they have no observational content whatsoever.

The fact is that a proposition like "All bachelors are unmarried" or "All ice

is solid" isn't made useless in understanding the world because it can't be or

isn't allowed to be empirically falsifiable. Why? Partly it is because _if_ some-

thing is going to be true all the time i.e. "It either will or won't rain to-

morrow" it can still state some relationship that exists in the world. Unlike

the non-falsifiable hypothesis "All diamonds are blue when no one looks at them,"

the non-falsifiable hypothesis "It either will or won't rain tomorrow" still

states something that can be verified. If you were a newly arrived Martian, who knew nothing about rain

the latter proposition would be of use in informing you that rain existed in the

earth's weather. The other reason why the proposition "All bachelors are un-

married" is meaningful is because each man designated a "bachelor" is goinging

to be most likely engaging in somewhat different activities from someone who isn't

designated a bachelor. Because "men" and "marriage" exist in the world, "bachelor"

becomes useful since it signifies people who have a certain relationship with

others that has a major effect on their activities. Surely we wouldn't say

[7]See _Men and Marriage_ by George Gilder.

the proposition "Peter is a bachelor" is useless in understanding him. Likewise,

if the concept "bachelor" applies to someone, you can bet a person falling under

this concept will most likely have a substantially different life style and dif-

ferent daily activities than one who falls under the opposite category of "married."

The proposition "All bodies are extended" can be useful in understanding the world

since I know by it two different desks can never occupy the exact same space at

the exact same time. "374 + 583 + 672 = 1629" can be a useful proposition since

one won't know the result until one actually adds it up. Thus 100% certain

                    that exist
propositions because the subject's definition is predicated of the subject are

not rendered irrelevant in understanding the world because no disconfirming

instances can be imagined if they can signify some relation or condition or attr-

ibute that affects how existents signified by that concept act. [The necessity

found in analytic propositions doesn't equal uselessness because it is possible

to observe the effects of having the attribute a concept signifies.]

not too well put

    Notice how the analytic/synthetic distinction already loses some of its clar-

ity: <u>a priori</u> propositions like "All bachelors are unmarried" in actuallity have

an element of sense data in them since definitions don't pop out of thin air.

    But why do we feel analytic statements are certain while synthetic state-

ments aren't? Why am I 100% certain "All bodies are extended" while I am less

certain of "All ravens are black"? "Bodies", "extension," "ravens," and "black"

are all concepts that are only known to exist by experience, so why the differ-

ence in certainity?

    Again, of course the difference in certainity here is based on the fact that

"extension" is of the definitional essence of "bodies," while "black" isn't of

the definitional essence of "ravens." We get these results because we generally

categorize based only on the definitional essence of entities, and not their

non-definitional essence. I would still apply the concept of "raven" to an

albino raven, while if something lacked extension, I couldn't apply the concept

of "body" to it. This difference in applicability in turn exists because a good

definition will always identify the most important features (the essence) of the

The difference in certainty and necessity results from the fact that the concept

"extension" necessarily must be applied to anything that fits the concept of

"bodies," but since "black" isn't considered part of "raven"'s definition, the

necessity is lacking for synethetic propositions since I could theoretically

apply the concept "raven" of an albino raven.   Thus the certainty of analytic

propositions lies in their use of the definitional (category assigning) character-

istics in the predicate while the uncertainty of synthetic propositions is

because their predicates aren't of the definitional (category assigning) essence.

existents subsumed under a concept. We then categorize based on the definition

since it names the most important part of some existent when compared to what is

important in other existents. Again, although essences exist metaphysically, what

we consider to be the essence of an existent is relative to our knowledge of the

object. Thus, definitions (if they identify the essence of some existents) are

useful in relating one object to another. A definition serves as a quick way to

know what existent falls under what concept by telling us the most important part

of a concept's existents, which is their definitional essence. What must be real-

ized is that a good definition cannot be totally arbitrary, but must label the

most important parts of the concept's exists to be useful. Aristotle's definition

of the human race being rational animals was much more useful than the Academy's

featherless biped definition because it explained what was most important about

the human race relative to other things we would compare mentally. Man's mind

is what makes him substantially different from the other animals (i.e. humans have

built an industrial technological civilization which surely couldn't have been

built by instinct alone).

The usefulness of a definition lies in the fact they help our limited human

minds organize and relate all the concepts we know in an easy and orderly fashion.

"Since the definition of a concept is formulated in terms of other concepts, it

enables man, no only to identify and _retain_ (remember--EVS) a concept, but also

to establish the relationships, the hierarchy, the integration of all his con-

cepts and thus the integration of his knowledge. Definitions preserve . . . the

logical order of their hierarchial interdependence."[8] They allow us to quickly

figure the concept's meaning relative to other concepts. In turn, in order for

these interrelations between concepts to be made properly, a definition has to be

of the most important characteristics of a concept (of its essence). Thus defin-

itions allow us to cut down on the amount of mental labor we have to do to or-

ganize our thoughts.

The most important characteristic of an entity is only known _relative_ to what

we know is the most important characteristics of other entities. This relativity

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[8]Ayn Rand, _Introduction_, p. 52.

of a concept's essence, which Ayn Rand emphasizes, doesn't mean they are arbitrary.*

Through observation one finds out what characteristics of an existent is most

dependent upon and explained by one or two fundamental characteristics. But one's

knowledge of the most fundamental characterics (metaphysically) of existents

(objects) is limited at any one time. Thus what we may think now is the most

fundamental characteristics of an existent may change when knowledge increases.

For instance, what a scentist might define and consider the essence of the Loch

Ness monster if he caught a brief glance of one is most likely going to be

different from what the same scientist would consider to be its essence if he

was able to dissect one. ∧ What is considered to be the definition/essence might change still more if

the Loch Ness monster was observed alive doing various activities like eating,

finding food, breeding, etc. Thus, ∧ what people consider to be the essence, and definition, of a concept and

its existents may change in humans minds, even as the object remains the same

metaphysically.

It is this issue of what is considered to be the essence changing with human

knowledge that blurs the analytic/synthetic dichotomy. What is considered con-

tained in a concept today might change tomorrow with advancing knowledge. An

excellent example of this issue is illustrated by the proposition "water is H_2O."

Is this proposition analytic or synthetic? Well, "water is H_2O" became analytic

and ceased being synthetic when "H_2O" was considered an inherit part (of the ess-

ence) of the concept "water." No longer was "a colorless, odorless liquid" con-

sidered an inherit part (of the essence) of the concept water. Thus, "water is

a colorless, ordorless liquid" becomes a synthetic, contingent, uncertain truth. Then

when H_2O became the defining characteristic of water, "water is H_2O" now ∧ became a

necessary truth which was a logical contradiction to deny.   Of course,

the price tag of becoming a necessary truth was that ∧ "water is H_2O" was now a boring trivial-

ity, a meaningless tautology, and totally irrevelant to understanding the real

world. (Notice how this "harmless categorization" works to subvert the usefulness

_____

*Statements of relations aren't necessarily arbitrary. For instance, it is
objectively true I am relatively small compared to the earth. It's because of
cultural relativism that we equate the relative with the arbitrary at times we
definitely shouldn't.

and/or certainity of human knowledge. Whatever is necessary becomes irrelevant

(analytic truths), and whatever is contingent becomes uncertain (synthetic truths)).

THUS ANALYTIC TRUTHS CAN BECOME SYNTHETIC TRUTHS OR VICE VERSA WITH CHANGES IN HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

Of course, I would object to this procedure of making "a colorless, odorless *WHICH BLURS*

THIS DISTINCTION

liquid" no longer an essential part of the concept "water" by saying a concept *BETWEEN ANALYTIC*

TRUTHS AND

SYNTHETIC

means more than its definitional essence. A concept's existents have essential *TRUTHS.*

characteristics other than their definitional essence, and so a concept means more

its definition since these proprial characteristics are part of the essence also.

Thus, although the concept "water" is defined as being H_2O, it also means a color-

less, odorless liquid as well. Thus, a concept becomes a package deal with both

analytic and synthetic characteristics being part of it. Thus, since a concept

does mean more than its definition (often a definition is not interchangable with

the concept), this allows people to change what is the definitional essence of

concepts over time (as in the example of water above). The result is the syn-

thetic/analytic distinction loses clarity and takes on some arbitrariness.

A similar issue of lack of clarity and arbitrariness appears when one says

that A deny

it is said that

denying a true analytic proposition is a logical contradition. Thus, for instance,∧

denying the proposition "ice is solid" would be a logical contradiction while

denying "ice doesn't sink" wouldn't be a logical contradiction. The difference here

exists only because "solid" is part of the definitional essence of "ice," while

"doesn't sink" isn't part of the definitional essence of ice." But if the def-

inition of "ice" was arbitrarily changed such that "doesn't sink in water" was

added to or made by itself the definition of "ice," it would then be a logical

contradiction to deny the proposition "ice doesn't sink in water." By changing

definition, one can change what is a logical contradiction and what isn't. Denying

the proposition "water is H_2O" was a logical contradiction only when this propos-

ition was analytic. Denying the proposition "water is a colorless, odorless

liquid" wasn't a logical contradiction only when this proposition became syn-

thetic. If definition is arbitrary, the analytic/synthetic dichotomy is arbitrary.

If a concept means more than its definition, then what is a logical contrad-

iction great ly increases in scope. If the essence of ice extended beyond the

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definitional essence "solid water," then other (synthetic) characteristics of ice also become logical contradictions to deny. "Ice sinks in water" then becomes a logical contradiction. And it is clear than when people use concepts they frequently mean more than just the intension of a concept (its definitional essence), but, at the same time, its extension (its existents) as well. To use Leonard Peikoff's example again, it is clear that when a woman says: "I married a wonderful man," it is clear to most people that she doesn't mean: "I married a wonderful combination of rationality and animality."[9] Metaphysically, this makes sense because properties don't exist separate from existents. Thus since a concept means more than just its definition but whatever other shared character- istics a concept has as well as its extension, what a "logical contradiction" is receives a much broader area of application, and ceases to keep changing every time definitions change (Is "H_2O is not water" a logical contradiction or not?).

Of course, two main replies will be made against this broad notion of logical contradictions. The first one is that I can make a mental image in my mind of an existent acting against its known non-definitional essence, but I can't make a mental image of an existent acting contrary to its definition. For instance, I can make a mental image of gold not sinking in water and of water boiling at $50° F$, but I can't make a mental image of $2 + 2 = 5$ or of a round square. Thus, according to this argument, the metaphysically contingent and the synthetic epistemologically is what can be imagined not to follow its (non definitional) essence, while the metaphysically necessary the the analytical epistemologically when an existent can't be imagined to contradict its (definitional) essence.

My reply to this idea of the contingent/necessary distinction being based on whether we can imagine the falsity of a true proposition that our mental imagery has nothing to do with whether we can be certain or uncertain of the truth of propositions. As Leonard Peikoff put it, "This argument confuses Walt Disney with metaphysics."[10] The fact that I can mentally imagine a gold bar floating in water, a brick bouncing off a glass window, or a purple crow has nothing to do with whether a proposition is contingent/uncertain. Nor does the fact I can't mental image a round square, $2 + 2 = 5$, or liquid ice mean these

must be true in all the possible worlds God could create. It could be we aren't
as adept yet in conceiving and believing in contradictions as Winston Smith was
in 1984.   My inability to mental ~~FORM~~ PICTURES OF a round square, 2 + 2 = 5, etc. has
nothing to do with whether a proposition is, metaphysically, necessary/ CERTAIN.
Ultimately all concepts are derived by reasoning applied to sense experience and
thus the truth of all concepts (NOT JUST SYNTHETIC ONES) depends upon the way the universe is*. I can't
define man as a rational animal, bodies as extended, or bachelors as unmarried
unless such existents exist in the universe and that these definitions identify
the most important parts of the essence of these existents. And only observation
is ever going to tell whether men, bodies, bachelors, ice or even (in a sense)
numbers exist* and to find out what their nature is. Since nothing gets into
a definition that wasn't reasoned on sense data (at least outside of DEDUCTION IN mathematics),
all definitions and all propositions are "contigent" on the way the world is, This can't really deal with math. truths
if we define truth as being correspondence to the real world. (If we want to be
uncertain about some propositions ("All Crows are black") and certain about
others ("All bachelors are unmarried"), the contigent/necessary distinction has
to be based on something other than our mental image making capabilities, such as not well put
humanity isn't omniscent (so we can't inductively examine every particular), or
because a proposition has a subject whose predicate doesn't extend much beyond
the definitional essence of the subject ("All bachelors are unmarried").) Unless
we are anti-realists, mental imagery shouldn't have anything to do with necessity
or contingency.

The other argument against logical contradictions applying to more than just
the definitional essence being negated in propositions is that necessity can never
be derived from actuality. As Kant said, "Now experience teaches us, no doubt,
that something is so or so, but not that it cannot be different."[11] The argument
Kant gives for this belief is that empirical knowledge depends on induction, which
is thus only true insofar as we can tell, but anything which we can conceive a
priori by reason alone to be true universally must be necessary. And Kant equates
necessary truths with a priori truths since whatever is universally true can't be

[11]Kant, Critique, p. 3 *OF CORSE, IF ONE BELIEVES IN A CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH, ALL
*Helen Keller TRUTHS CONTINGENT OR NECESSARY, DEPEND ON THE WAY THE WORLD IS.

derived from experience since we can't inductively examine the whole universe.
Thus, for Kant, the limitations of the empirical method for gaining human know-
ledge are contrasted with statements known to be universally true (2 + 2 = 4)
throughout the universe which we haven't examined yet to prove some knowledge
is a priori. And then Kant can derive the desired rationalist conclusion also that *[a very bad characterization of Kant's view]*
what knowledge gained by observation (since it only covers a small fraction of
the universe) is uncertain and contingent while that knowledge which is gained
by reason alone (a priori) IS NECESSARY AND CERTAIN.

[TRUE]

What Kant does here is equate the epistemologically contingent with the meta-
phystically contingent. The fact that what we know about the universe depends
on what exists does not mean the universe could be otherwise than it is. The
fact that "a gold bar sinks in water" is true so far as we can tell doesn't
mean our epistemological method (HERE reasoning on induction) proves that another
"possible world" could have existed in such a way that this proposition *WOULD BE FALSE*. If the
universe is rigidly causally determined and couldn't be otherwise than it is, our
epistemological methods aren't going to make any of it "contingent." If Spinoza's
view of the universe is correct, our methods of thinking isn't going to change the
way any of it is since even what we think is induced by causal necessity.* "All
crows are black" is necessarily true if their genes are such that they can't be
be any other color, which in theory could be a necessary truth discovered
empirically from the way the world actually is. Thus, let's stop confusing the
limitations of our knowledge (epistemology) with whether the universe could be
otherwise than it is (metaphysics).

[What we should consider is whether logical necessity and physical (causal) necessity are the same necessities. (e.g. is the necessity of arithmetical equations the same necessity as the nec. of a causal law?)]

Our second reply to Kant here is that observations of actuality can reveal
necessity to us if we realize that what an existent is determines what an
existent does over time. Causality and induction can be justified philosophic-
ally if we realize existents must produce effects that don't contradict their
nature or essence. The sun's rising each morning isn't a curious coincidence or
an uncertain, "contingent" truth, but rather the necessary result of two existents' natures
(the sun and the earth in a certain relationship) unfolding in certain effects over

*This isn't my view.

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time. Nature in the future will be like it was in the past since existents

(objects) have to "obey" their natures and can't act contrary to them. As Ayn

Rand put it, "The law of causality is the law of identity applied to action. All

actions are caused by entities. The nature of an action is caused and deter-

mined by the nature of the entities that act; a thing cannot act in contradiction

to its nature."[11½] We can know a gold bar _must_ sink in water, all other things

being equal, if we know the gold bar's and water's nature or essence well enough.

But, of course, as we well know, induction and the empirical method don't

always come up with truth for us, as the constant revision of scientific theories

throughout history shows us. We should always be willing to admit a "black swan"

case could happen to us. But these failure of induction don't prove existents

can act against their nature, but only that we were (partially) ignorant of their

nature or essence of the existents in these cases. The reason why people say

they are uncertain that the sun will rise tomorrow is because it is always poss-

ible tomorrow some new, but currently unknown, existent could come along and

change the existing interaction between the sun and earth. We can't preclude,

by induction of the currently existing causal inter-relationship between the sun

and earth, that a huge glob of anti-matter won't hit the earth tonight. Thus,

we have to insert a _ceteris paribus_ clause into the results of the empirical

method as an acknowledgement of our ignorance of the universe. But nonetheless

we can have rational certainity that the law of causation is . . . than mere

correlation and regularity because the law of causation is the law of identity

being applied to existents (_not_ actions) moving through time. And that's how

we can get necessity from observing actuality.

So how does this issue of the metaphysical foundations of causation relate

to the analytic/synthetic dichotomy? If we hold contingent truths exist, we will

call them synthetic propositions when put in propositional form since a denial

of an existent acting according to its nature is not considered to be a contradiction.

11½ AYN RAND, _ATLAS SHRUGGED_ (NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY: NEW YORK, 1957), P. 17

The result is that since causation is considered to be only regularity or correl-

ation, all synthetic truths are held to be uncertain and contingent. By contrast,

any necessary truths become analytic propositions because we say any denial of

their definitional essence is a contradiction since we aren't considering how

such an existent acts over time (according to the law of causation), but only how

it is at any one instant in time. "Gold bars sink in water" *OR "ALL MEN ARE MORTAL"* is an uncertain,

contingent truth which isn't a logical contradiction to deny and thus is categor-

ized as a synthetic proposition because "sink in water" isn't considered (arbitr-

arily?) part of essence of gold. Why? Because "sink in water" would be an

event that these existents (gold bars) would produce <u>over time</u> according to the

existents' nature and the law of causation. *IT GETS EXCLUDED FROM THE ESSENCE OF GOLD.* By contrast, to deny the proposition

"Gold is a dense yellow metal" is considered a logical contradiction because

the properties "dense yellow metal" are already considered part of the concept

because gold *MANIFESTS* these properties each instant in time. The property of gold

"sinks in water", by contrast, doesn't manifest itself each instant in time,

and so isn't considered part of the concept "gold." Thus, unless we hold that

DENIALS of the law of causation are logical contradictions, "sink in water" will

never be part of the essence of gold, and this proposition "gold bars sink in

water" will thus remain an uncertain, "contingent" truth. But since causation

has an element of necessity in it, denying the effects gold will produce <u>over</u>

<u>time</u> should be a logical contradiction also. The law of causation is merely

"A is A" over time. Thus synthetic propositions really have an element of

necessity when I take a broad construal of what is a logical contradiction due

to my view of the causal law, which subverts their "contingency." Yet, one of the

main things that distinguishes analytic from synthetic propositions is that one

is necessary and one is contingent completely. Again, the analytic/synthetic

distinction blurs when we examine its underlying assumptions, which was in this

case the metaphysical belief that causation is only regularity and doesn't impart

any necessity to existents' synthetic properties, like "sink in water" for "gold

bars."

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Now, if the analytic/synthetic dichotomy ultimately isn't a clear as many

philosophers believe it is, why should we reject it? Philosophers live with

many other unclear terms (like immoral/moral), so why should we still reject

this dichotomy? Does the analytic synthetic dichotomy really matter? Does it

have any dangerous implications? If it is only a harmless categorization, does

it really matter to get so worked up about it so as to write a 20+ page term

paper on it?

The danger of the analytic/synthetic dichotomy is that it implies man has two

totally different methods of validating his knowledge. All synthetic propositions

are "contingent" truths, like "gold bars sink in water" can only be known by the

senses only. Since causation isn't considered to be the law of identity in

action over time, but mere regularity, all synthetic propositions are considered

uncertain since nature tomorrow might be totally different from nature yesterday.

Thus by stripping the law of identity from the empirical method (which produces just

mere synthetic truths), science's conclusions become uncertain and unjustifiable.

Uncertainity is the price tag of saying our knowledge is known by the senses alone

and denying that logic needs to be applied to experience (in this case the law

of causation being the law of identity at work) to know anything. On the other

hand, analytic truths are known by reason alone. Thus, all necessarily certain

truths, like "2 + 2 = 4" or "A is A" have no justification for being applicable

to the real, sensible world. That's because they are considered apriori only.

Furthermore, all propositions like "All bachelors are unmarried" are considered

validated (analyzed) by a priori reason alone. In point of fact while to emp-

irically research whether all bachelors are unmarried would be stupid, that is

only because these two concepts of "bachelor" and "unmarried" had empirical

research already "built into" these two concepts. We can't analyze concepts

to find truths or their meanings while ignoring "their source and nature--to

determine their meaning, while ignorant of their relationship to concretes."[12]

Thus the analytic/synthetic dichotomy falsely implies some truths are discovered

by reason alone ("All bodies are extended," "All ice is solid," "All albinos are

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[12]Ayn Rand, Introduction, p. 131.

white") while other truths are discovered by the senses _alone_ ("All crows are black," "Gold bars sink in water," "All humans are mortal.")

The end result of the analytic/synthetic dichotomy is that it subverts the reliability $\wedge$ and/or usefulness of human knowledge. The analytic truth "3 + 143 + 252 + 79 + 189 = 666" becomes a useless tuatology, a boring triviality, completely irrelevant to understanding the real world. (of course, this proposition wouldn't be a boring triviality if one was adding up five checks worth these amounts in dollars to get the end result). The synthetic truth "All men are mortal" becomes an uncertain, contingent truth, which is equally useless to understanding the real world because "what's true today might not be true tomorrow." Thus, whatever you are certain of by reason is useless, while what you know by your senses is uncertain. Thus, the "harmless categorization" of the analytic/synthetic dichotomy becomes a tool for skeptics to spread epistemological devastation.

An excellent example of the analytic/synthetic dichotomy creating mischief is found in an analysis of David Hume's philosophy. Notice how a narrow view of logical contradictions and a narrow view of what concepts mean produces epistemological wreckage. ||The reason for this is that no particular even logically implies or excludes any other particular subsequent event. The law of non-contradiction is of no help here; and therefore logical demonstration is impossible. Only experience (_alone_--EVS) can show which events are associated with which other events. . . . The consequence would follow only if we either actually perceived the necessary connection between the types of events in question, or could show that the future must be like the past. But in fact we can do neither. For experience only shows us one event followed by another; we _perceive_ (his emphasis) no necessary connection between them with any of our senses. And no argument can show that the future must be like the past. For, first it cannot be argued _a priori_ that the future will be like the past, since the idea that the future might be _different_ from the past is not self-contradictory. . . . His $_\wedge$ (HUME'S) point is simply that there _is_ (his emphasis) being made here, which we cannot justify either rationally

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or by direct experience; and that therefore all of our conclusions based on this
assumption -- all our reasonings employing the category of causality, and therefore
all our conclusions concerning matters of fact and existence in the world--fall

(LIKE VOODOO?--BJS)

short of being knowledge (his emphasis). They all invo e a kind of leap of faith,
and fall short of that certainty which is a necessary condition of genuine know-

DERIVED FROM SYNTHETIC PROPOSITIONS

ledge."12½Notice how saying an existent acting against its own nature∧is not
considered a logical contradiction, which results from the belief a concept
means only its definition and nothing more. If synthetic properties are
considered part of a concept, then it becomes a logical contradiction to deny
them. The view that actions are causes, and not existents, works its mischief
above also since an action is considered to have no nature of its own, in
contrast to an existent.

The analytic/synthetic dichotomy accomplishes epistemological devastation
by saying two things: 1. A concept means only its definition. 2. Asserting
that propositions about existent(s) acting over time against properties that
they possess only synthetically aren't logical contradictions. If both these
assumptions are rejected, the analytic/synthetic dichotomy collapses. I reject
the first premise by saying a concept means more than just its definitional
essence, and includes its propria∧(non-defitional essence) also. A definition
                          characteristics
simply isn't all a concept means. For instance, the proposition "this woman
stubbed her toe" is NOTinterchangeable with "this combination of animality and
rationality stubbed her toe." Since a definition isn't always interchangeable
with the concept, a concept means both its definitional and its non-DEFINITIONAL
essence always, as well as its extension. I reject the second premise by saying
the law of causation is merely the law of identity working over time in existents
(not actions). What a thing is determines what a thing will do in the future.
Thus, to assert "All men aren't mortal" is a logical contradiction for both
of my reasons above. Admittedly, both of my stances are controversial (especially
the second one), but I think they are justifiable.

Ultimately, the chief danger of the analytic/synthetic dichotomy lies in

its divorce   of the sensible from the intelligible, of reason from sense

experience. It maintains some properties of concepts are logical contradictions

if denied, while some others aren't, since it assumes a concept only means its

definitional essence. Rather, in order to gain knowledge, we must apply

reason and logic to sense experience. Reason needs sense data in order to

have content for the concepts it forms. Sense data needs reason so its dis-

parate sensations can be organized by integration and analysis. To say there

are _apriori_ truths known by reason _only_* creates truths that might not be

useful in understanding reality (analytic truths). To say there are _aposteriori_

truths known by the senses _only_ creates uncertain contingent truths that might

not be true tomorrow (synthetic truths). By rejected the analytic/synthetic

dichotomy we can help (rejoing) the senses with reason, and gain both certainty

that our knowledge will be applicable to the real world and certainty that what

is true about nature today will be true tomorrow.

   Of course, Kant didn't want to pit empiricism against rationalism but wanted

to join them together to get the best of both. As he said "thoughts without

contents are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind."[13] But by adopting

the analytic/synthetic dichotomy, and what this dichotomy assumes and implies,

he put reason and sense-data as far apart as they ever were. If we want to

reunite the two, we can begin by rejectwg the analytic/synthetic dichotomy

and all it implies and assumes.

*Even mathematics needs some kind of sense data to get such an axiomatic system
set up. If man is tabula rasa at birth, he must get at least the basic math
concepts from using the senses at least some. Someone like Helen Keller would
never have been able to do math without learning perceptually at least some basic
concepts of whole numbers.

[13]Kant, _Critique_, p. 45.