

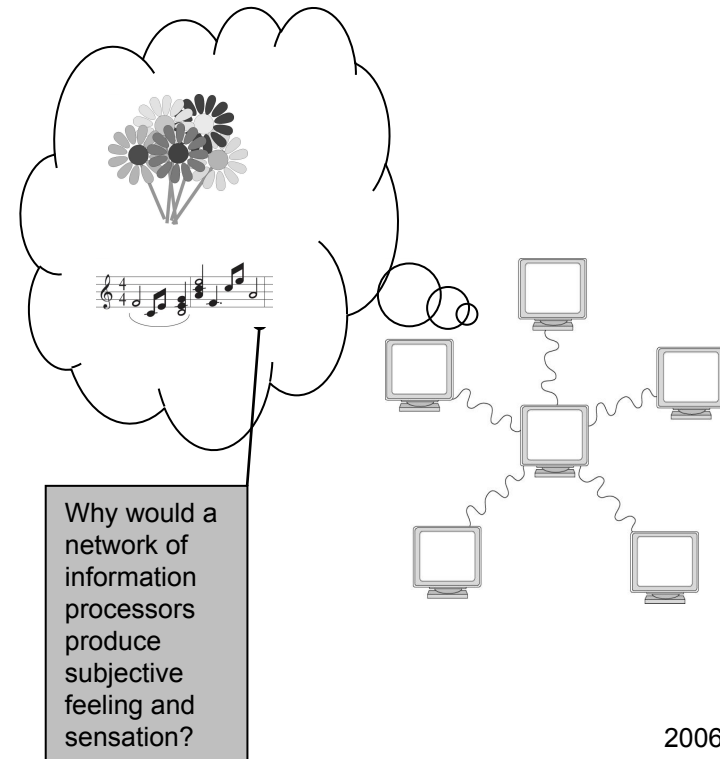
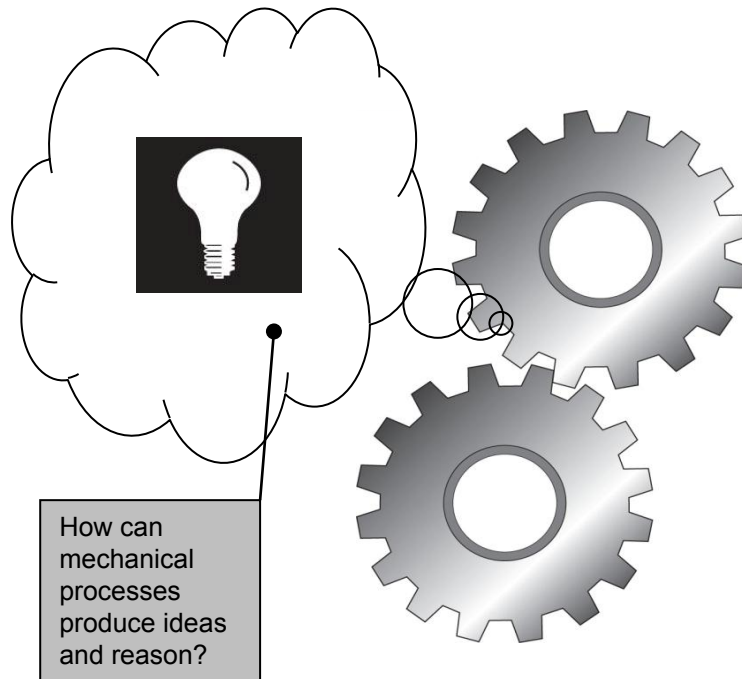
What's So Hard About It?

Descartes and his predecessors saw rationality and morality as the source of the mind-body problem...

...yet today we largely view the subjective quality of mental existence to be the source of the mind-body problem.

Enlightenment era mind-body problem

Modern mind-body problem



1676

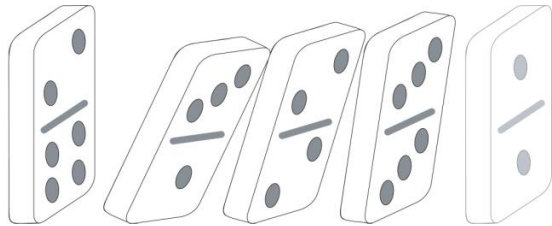
2006

The mind-body problem – Our inability to reach philosophical or scientific consensus on an explanatorily transparent relation between the mind's character and contents and the physical body, rooted in subjectively apparent differences between the two.

Old and new ways of thinking about the physical

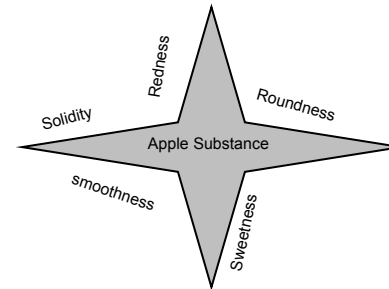
On the pre-scientific view matter passively obeyed mechanical laws...

Cartesian mechanics



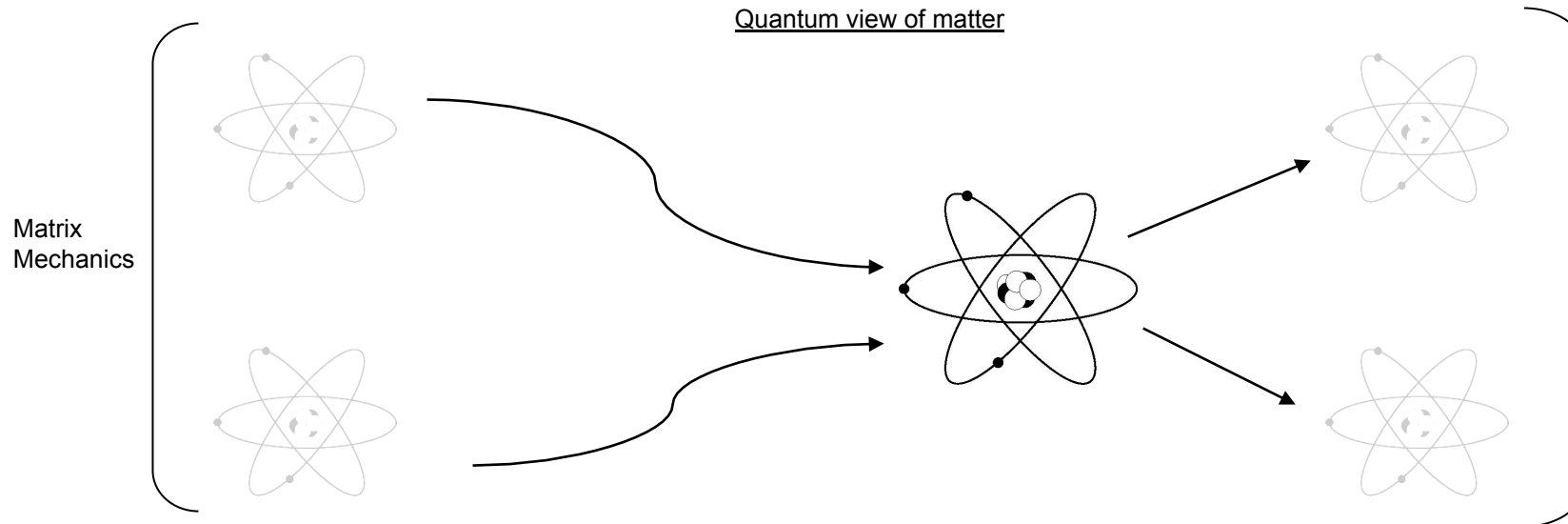
...as a substance in which qualities "inhered"...

Aristotelian metaphysics



...while the modern view of matter is one of geometrically arrayed pure quantities prone to spontaneous, unpredictable action.

Quantum view of matter

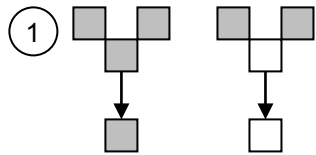


The Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness

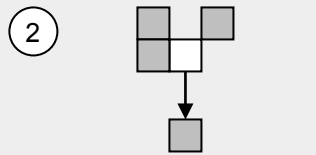
Bertrand Russell noted that quantity and structure are abstract ways of describing things...

... leaving open what that thing might be like intrinsically...

Rules for the Game of Life



If a cell has exactly two "on" neighbors, it maintains its property, "on" or "off", in the next time step.

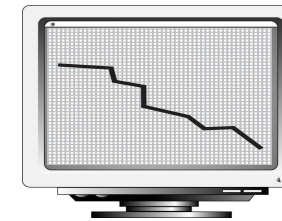
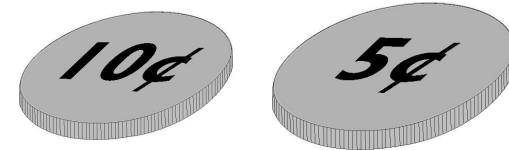


If a cell has exactly three "on" neighbors, it will be "on" in the next time step.



Otherwise, the cell will be "off" in the next time step.

Implementations of the Game of Life



... leading to deep questions about the inner nature of reality.

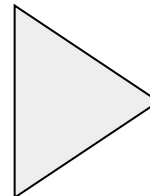
Key Framing Question

Is it coherent that there could be a pure Life world, with pure "on" and "off" properties about which there is nothing else to know?

My View



No.



Key Analogy

Is it coherent that there could be a pure physical world, with pure "spin", "charge", and "mass" properties about which there is nothing else to know?

My View



No.

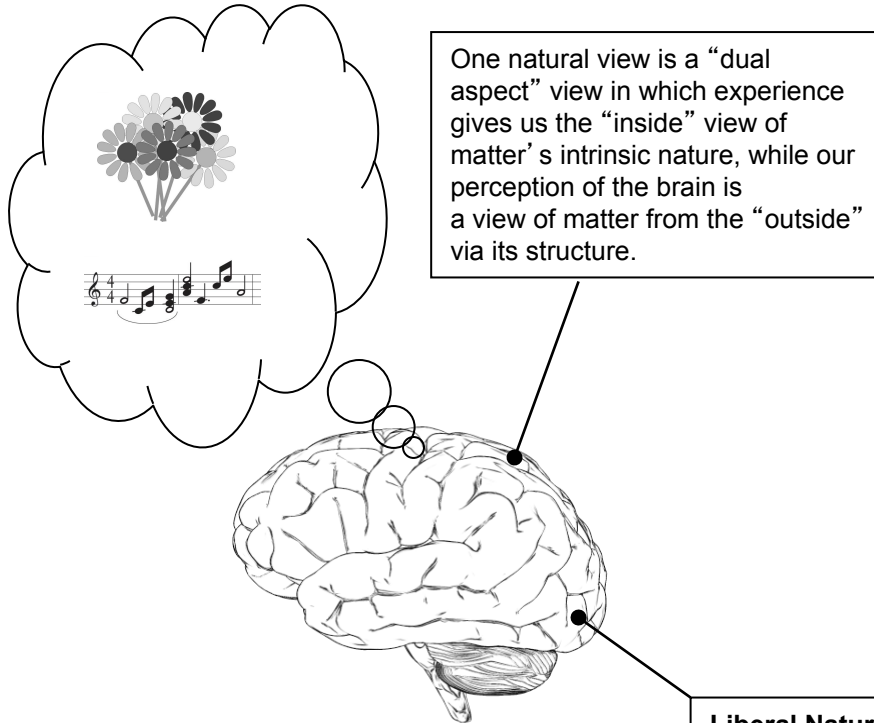
Russell's suggestion

Liberal Naturalism

Perhaps the qualitative aspect of experience is somehow acquaintance with the intrinsic nature of matter...

...though this hypothesis requires answering several further questions.

Inside and outside views of the brain



Liberal Naturalism

If our physical understanding of the world is of structure, what is it a structure of? It could directly be a structure of experiencing individuals.

Problems for dual aspect views

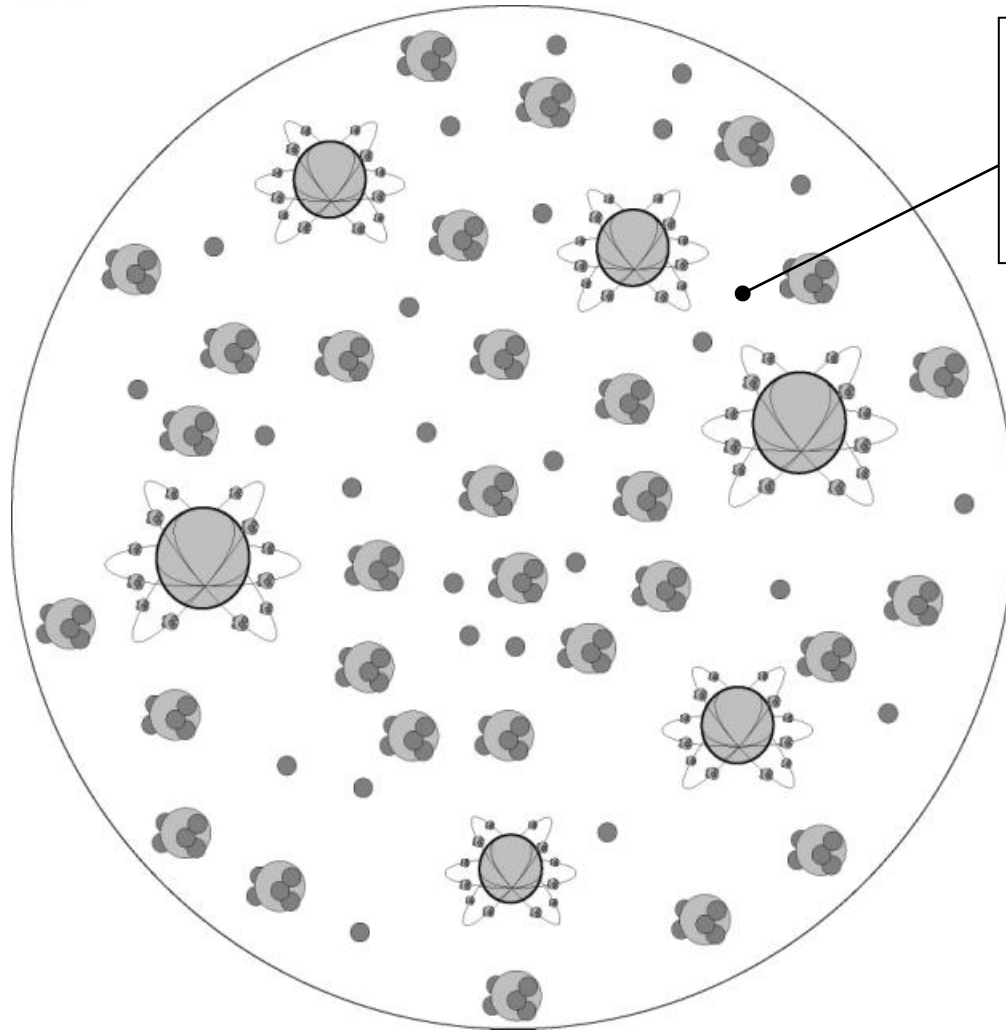
- ① Why should the intrinsic properties of a physical system be experiential?
- ② Why should intrinsic content exist for a physical system above the microphysical level?
- ③ Why should experience of intrinsic content form a unity of the kind we are acquainted with in consciousness?
- ④ Why should phenomenal content, as the intrinsic content of the physical, correspond so closely to the information content of the physical?

The causal connection

Turn to Causality

A metaphysically rich view of nature holds that causality is the result of a deep internal connection between things.

Energy moving between things



The fundamental ability of different things in the world to constrain and influence one another is assumed by science but not explained.

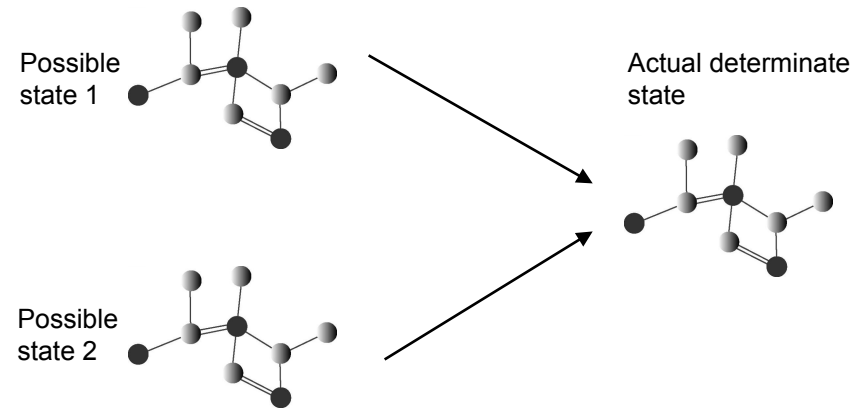
This ability is causation. Theories of it are properly part of metaphysics.

Interactings Meta-physicalized

The deep connection between things is a kind of receptive connection.

The determination problem

Why causality exists
 Nature must create a determinate world from indeterminate potentials. Causal interaction is nature's answer to this determination problem.



Receptive Connections

Environment

Connective properties enabling individuals to receive constraint collectively with other individuals.

Effective Properties

Properties that contribute to constraints on the determinate states of a causal nexus.

Intrinsic Carriers

structure → carrier content

Properties not fully definable through their relations to other properties, and capable of behaving in the ways defined for elements within some natural law system.

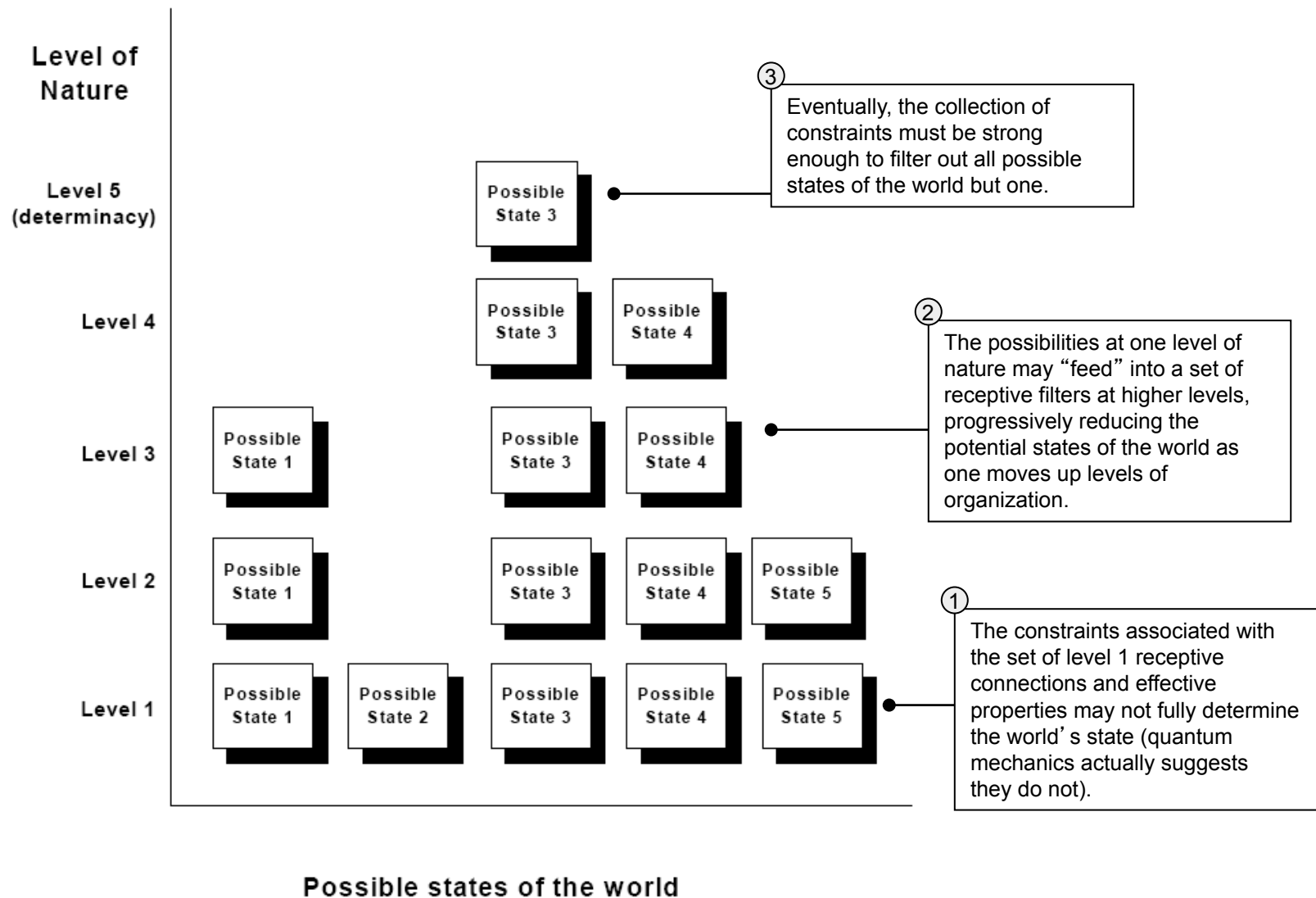
Causal Laws

Laws governing the composition of members in a receptive connection.

A Hierarchy of Natural Individuals

Logically, receptive connections are just a series of possibility filters and could exist across levels of organization

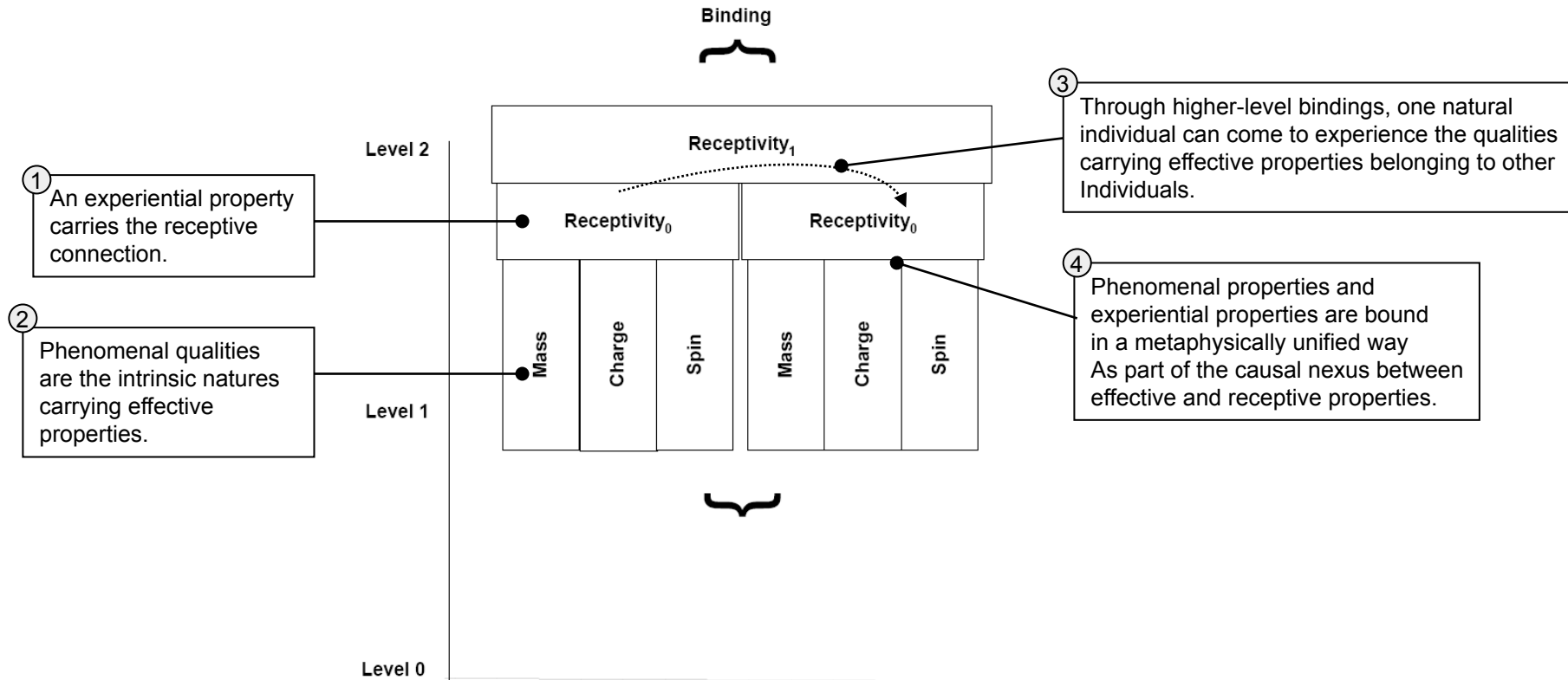
Irreducible levels of natural individuals



The Central Thesis

Something is a natural individual if, and only if, it is capable of experiencing phenomenal quality.

Receptive and effective intrinsic natures



Beyond Horse Betting: Real Answers

The Central Thesis enables us to deduce answers to the four open questions facing the Russellian view.

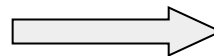
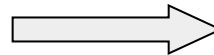
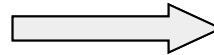
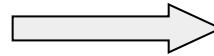
Problems for dual aspect views

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Liberal Naturalist answers

① An intrinsic experiential property is necessary to carry causal receptivity.

② To solve the determination problem, nature contains irreducible receptive connections that layer effective constraints above the microphysical level.

③ Intrinsic content is only experienced in the context of a causal nexus, which is a unified reception of direct effective constraint between natural individuals.

④ Effective properties passed between individuals are encapsulated at the level of nature where the corresponding causal nexus exists, and are thus informational in structure.