

Article

Not peer-reviewed version

---

# On Limitations to Conceptual Knowledge in Kantian Categories and Postmodernist Philosophy

---

Isaac Penzance \*

Posted Date: 18 December 2024

doi: 10.20944/preprints202412.1429.v1

Keywords: Categories; Ontology; Laplace's Demon; Human Knowledge; Qualifying Factors; Postmodernism; Derrida; Kant; Concept; Cognitivitiy



Preprints.org is a free multidisciplinary platform providing preprint service that is dedicated to making early versions of research outputs permanently available and citable. Preprints posted at Preprints.org appear in Web of Science, Crossref, Google Scholar, Scilit, Europe PMC.

Copyright: This open access article is published under a Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 license, which permit the free download, distribution, and reuse, provided that the author and preprint are cited in any reuse.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions, and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions, or products referred to in the content.

## Article

# On Limitations to Conceptual Knowledge in Kantian Categories and Postmodernist Philosophy

Isaac Penzance

Independent Researcher; penzanceisaac@gmail.com

**Abstract:** Chalmers' *Constructing the World* offers an exploration into *complete* bodies of information – for which he proposes that an entity such as Laplace's Demon has a *scrutable* interpretation over available information. However, Chalmers does not address a *true* realisation of what a complete knowledge should be; Laplace's Demon remains very much human. This article further suggests that information is limited – specifically in a post-modernist framework – because the limited number of perceptible differences (known as Categories) reduces the scale of differences such that the information *converges* into a common limitation.

**Keywords:** categories; ontology; laplace's demon; human knowledge; qualifying factors; postmodernism; derrida; Kant; concept; cognitivity

## 1. Introduction

Qualifying such terms as “human knowledge” has too often been presented in the context of the “dasein” (Heidegger, 2008) or “experiential”, developmental (accumulated) knowledge – explicitly, what they cover is a “patterned” extrapolation from the original, *single* impetus that the “dasein”, among other such interpretations, describes. Each repetition is therefore formative of a larger and eventually complete human faculty. This, however, does not address intelligence in terms of specified boundaries.

Chalmers (Chalmers, 2014) interprets much of the same, the capacity for knowledge is made *from* known origins, where scrutability forms the potential, whole knowledge for a being. As such, in deriving that scrutable knowledge from the object is to remove – such a trap as Locke falls into where the falseness of “innate principles” (Locke, 1690) are described with respect to objects of thought, rather than Categorical inclusions of components.

*First Thesis:* that the difference, although, in accordance with Derrida's remarks (“there cannot be science of difference itself in its operation”), is compounded with the claim for absolutism, “as it is impossible to have a science of the origin of presence itself.”. However, this is true only for the immediate object(s), otherwise the entire knowledge base effectively converges among similarities because of these differences where the finite number of Categories must limit the expression of objects. Interestingly, as opposed to a more *standard* phenomenology<sup>1</sup>, we therefore assume a *limit* to information.

As such, what Postmodernism (Sweetman, 1999) is individually capable of relative to a more traditional phenomenology is its point of dimensionality; in such a scope as sensibility, one may assume each *object* to, on account of its innately different location, to express a “continuous plane” of *objects*. Further, the most significant *exploratory* use of the *difference* is Deconstruction. With convergence in mind, we alter the plane to have an effective limit, a limit made by human sensibility and capacity for thought (such a capacity as is assumed in Kant's Categories).

<sup>1</sup> It is therefore assumed that, with the distinction between a certified limitation to information and a continuity, what *reality* must be is determinable between basic phenomenology and the postmodernist *difference*.

Unfortunately, Derrida and much of the postmodernist movement is limited by how it chooses to infer its case for phenomena: in theoretical pursuits, we are limited to such ideas as the Hyperreality or a formalisation of hermeneutics.

*Second Thesis:* because the difference is (almost explicitly) limited to human sensibility, an entirely different mode of philosophical reasoning is required to properly understand the *range* and *plane* of human thought.

Therefore, this text introduces the conceptual identity of the “qualifying factors” and the more theoretical “knowledge base” respectively to address the needs of human capacity for thought and the expectation of what knowledge unbounded by such qualifying factors should produce. Explicitly, the qualifying factors (of which are applicable simultaneously to sensibility and human thought; an effective unity<sup>2</sup>) are the limitation of human thought to one *focal point*<sup>3</sup> of information (relative to multiple focal points<sup>4</sup>), the uniform objectification of thought (which is shown in Lowe’s ontological categories), and the formation of higher-order constructions of knowledge that remain as uniform objects – these qualifying factors introduce, to assert the position of E.J. Lowe (Lowe, 2005), “what kind of things can exist and coexist”, and it is henceforth argued that the qualifying factors introduce the categories<sup>5</sup>. Do note, however, that the qualifying factors are also *constructive* for human intelligence as well as *limiting* – that one’s apprehension is limited equally by what constructs it is, hence, the absolute Duality of Being.

Further, the relationship between the qualifying factors and the Categories requires that the qualifying factors are generative of the Categories. Fortunately, the human qualitative factors are single-faceted (which is to assume that they are only physicalist<sup>6</sup>) with the exception of the focal point.

As a note, the idea of the Categories themselves have been subject to multiple interpretations, with such an aim as to pursue an “exhaustive” categorisation of human thoughtfulness. Often, however, this is not assumedly achieved (as addressed in this article), although relative approximations are diffuse to such an extent – between ontological categories such as Lowe’s (Lowe, 2005) and an Aristotelian/Kantian inquiry – that their efficacy can be distinguished. For the purposes of this study, the Aristotelian/Kantian method is used for its relevance towards conceivability.

*Third Thesis:* the categorisation that we produce for human thought (Aristotelian/Kantian) does not entirely “mirror” phenomenological reality; likewise, as observed in the Categories, human thought adopts a meta-relation such that we can appropriate ontological objects in thoughtful

---

<sup>2</sup> The author notes that the “effective unity” is essentially a reduced and hence more plausible form of panpsychism.

<sup>3</sup> Although common thought is more often a unity among the context and the thought itself, the individualised *focal point* can only be manifest on a single object.

<sup>4</sup> The assumption that multiple focal points would allow for an expanded conceptual information is the dependence on the Ontological Categories – to use the object as the central identity is as perception. Granted that we derive such identities as Kant’s “quantity” and “quality” in objects (further, we understand in later sections that the Categories are disjoint with physicalism) that are rendered in the context of their own existences, to have multiple focal points (given the former *singularity* of thought) is, for example, to expand the “observation” because the signification of multiple centralities, each that can be *weighted* while remaining central for an idea of perception that is foreign to us.

<sup>5</sup> Of which is presented in the following paragraph.

<sup>6</sup> Deriving human faculty from “physicalist” means is an already pronounced point (see “panpsychism”), yet *phenomenology* as it stands would render that conceptual faculty as a quite exactly direct replication of physicalist form – instead, assuming the physicalism to be transformative on the qualifying factors (further true with respect to Darwinian theory) and then for the qualifying factors to be supplicant for conceptual limits.

contexts where they become “quantities”, “qualities”, and “attributes”<sup>7</sup>. However, where we consider “quantities”, et cetera, they are objects – our treatment of *categorical* thought also ends here; we cannot explicate beyond that *immediate* meta reality.

The “knowledge base” is the expression of an unrestricted frame of concept. Granted that human limitations strictly remove the capacity for violations of the set Categories, the controlling qualifying factors must be set in an effective superposition in a theoretically, maximally expanded qualifying factors that construct, yet do not limit conceptual frames.

What the author intends to persuade with a discussion of the limits of the conceptual nature is the inability to construct *like* modes of thought: for instance, we cannot have a second, wholly distinct Communism that achieves the same dictum on materialism and social product – just as we cannot have a higher modum of *science* (we may modify such ideas as the scientific method or import/export biases, but the *modum* is the same) – as a postulate, *levelled* understandings based on the upwards accumulation of knowledge are impossible by all scales of concept (driven by the qualifying factors) because all are simply *one*, individual state of being).

## 2. Disjunction Between *Performative* and *Stationary* Knowledge

Further, we must understand the distinction between performative and stationary knowledges. The performative knowledge is common thought that is *productive* – essentially reasoning, while stationary knowledge is in the form of objects. In observing each, it is understood that – in how phenomenology or even the *differential* in Derrida’s work only relates to an immediate perception – describing a whole knowledge on the same principle, yet repeated does not necessarily yield correct results.

Fourth Thesis: there exists a disjunction between the *performance* (non-meta thought processes, whereby meta concepts *do* fall within the following boundaries) of knowledge and knowledge as it is convergent to Categorical limitations. Therefore, the limits of thought are a meta-concept and performative thought exists within its own epistemological isolation.

### 2.1. Orientable Categories

Knowledge, in accordance with the Categories, must be oriented in the favour of some *dominating* Category. This is true because of the simple significance of the Ontological Categories (Westerhoff, 2002) over the bare irreducibility of Categories – this is understood as a bearing towards the *object*, further that modality, although it is irreducible, must be predicated on an object that allows for the modality’s existence.

In assuming an orientable Consciousness, the Category of *modality* particularly cannot *exclusively* be reckoned in producing a (conjectural) conceptual *world* because it is derivative on the ontological (quantity, quality) form of the object. As such, we orient our own conceptual knowledge against modality and towards quantity, quality.

### 2.2. Developments on *á Priorí* Knowledge

Given that we restrict *á priorí* knowledge to what is specifically available to human minds, then a different set of qualifying factors then produces a different capacity of *á priorí* knowledge. With this information, we reach a problem of observation: what should the *á priorí* be *recognisable* as between different minds (evidently, with their different qualifying factors)?

*Á priorí* thought is recognisable (Kant, 2003) when it is formed by other humans whose minds are not the same as our own (as such, of the same qualifying factors and mind), and as such where

---

<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, Sellars proposes the view that the “metaconceptual, second-order” nature of Categories is to allow for semantics to be generative, and that therefore the Categories vary on account of their second-order nature. However, given that boundaries of thought are, in this article, *always* applicable, then this only applies to lower order Categories, such as the Ontological.

an *á priorí* thought is not recognisable where another mind would recognise it allows us to show a different set of qualifying factors.

### 3. Conclusion and Significance

This article introduces two central ideas, the latter as a corollary. The first is that knowledge is explicitly limited to its conceptual Categories in accordance with the *differential* in Derrida's worn; the second is the disjunction between the limit (shown in *stationary* thought) and *performative* thought: that "meta" constructions are disjoint from our basic thought and interpretation of *ideas* is exclusively generative of thoughtful reality.

It achieves a model for conceptual intelligence that hitherto has not been introduced. The brevity of this piece serves as an introductory work to the topics in this article. It also – as a note of conjecture – excludes Consciousness from being assumed as a productive entity for conceptual knowledge.

### References

Chalmers, David J. (2014). Précis of Constructing the World. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 89 (1):217-219.

Heidegger, Martin. 2008. *Being and Time*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Kant, I. (2003). *Critique of Pure Reason* (M. Weigelt, Trans.). Penguin Classics

Locke, John, *An essay concerning humane understanding*, volume 1 MDCXC, based on the 2nd edition, books 1 and. 1690.

Lowe, Edward Jonathan (2005). *The Four-Category Ontology: A Metaphysical Foundation for Natural Science*. Oxford, GB: Clarendon Press.

Nunez, Tyke (2014). Definitions of Kant's categories. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 44 (5-6):631-657.

Sweetman, Brendan (1999). Postmodernism, Derrida, and Différance: A Critique. *International Philosophical Quarterly* 39 (1):5-18.

Westerhoff, Jan. "Defining 'Ontological Category.'" *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, vol. 102, 2002, pp. 337-43. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4545378>.

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.