

Writing the Book of the World

Theodore Sider

CLARENDON PRESS • OXFORD

Contents

1	Structure	1
1.1	Structure: a first look	1
1.2	Philosophical skepticism about structure	2
1.3	Structure in metaphysics: a preview	5
2	Primitivism	9
2.1	Understanding	9
2.2	Primitivism supported	10
2.3	Epistemology	11
2.4	Against reduction	15
2.5	Against subjectivity	18
2.6	The privilege of the physical	19
3	Connections	21
3.1	Explanation and laws	21
3.2	Reference magnetism	23
3.3	Induction and confirmation	35
3.4	Intrinsic structure in physical spaces	38
4	Substantivity	44
4.1	Nonsubstantive questions	44
4.2	Substantivity characterized	46
4.3	Conventionality	54
4.4	Subjectivity	57
4.5	Epistemic value	61
4.6	Objectivity of structure	65
5	Metametaphysics	67
5.1	The challenge of metaphysical deflationism	67
5.2	Personal identity, causation	72
5.3	The metaphysics room	74
5.4	Substantivity in nonfundamental disputes	77
5.5	A test case: extended simples	79
5.6	Metametaphysics as just more metaphysics	82
6	Beyond the predicate	85
6.1	The reason to generalize	86
6.2	Inapplicability of the similarity test	87
6.3	No entities	90
6.4	Unclear epistemology?	96

6.5	Logical conventionalism	97
7	Questions	
7.1	Complete?	105
7.2	Pure?	106
7.3	Purity and connection	109
7.4	Metaphysical semantics	112
7.5	Completeness and purity reformulated	115
7.6	Metaphysics after conceptual analysis	116
7.7	Metaphysical semantics for quantifiers	118
7.8	Metaphysics and the study of language	122
7.9	Nonfundamental ground	124
7.10	Subpropositional?	128
7.11	Absolute?	128
7.11.1	Absolutism and comparative structure	129
7.11.2	Absolutism and infinite descent	133
7.12	Determinate?	137
7.13	Fundamental?	137
8	Rivals	
8.1	Fine's concepts	142
8.2	First Finean view: grounding and reality	143
8.2.1	Ground and purity	143
8.2.2	Ground and infinite descent	145
8.3	Second Finean view: reality	147
8.3.1	Explanation of fundamental truths	147
8.3.2	Combinatorialism about fundamentality	148
8.3.3	Combinatorialism about determinacy	150
8.3.4	No fundamental truths	151
8.3.5	Nihilism and deflationism	151
8.4	Truthmaking	153
8.5	Truthmaking as a theory of fundamentality	157
8.6	Schaffer: entity-grounding	161
8.7	Entity-fundamentality	164
9	Ontology	
9.1	Ontological deflationism	166
9.2	Ontological realism	167
9.3	Ontologese	168
9.4	Predicates not the issue	171
9.4	Predicates not the issue	173
9.5	Quantifier variance	175
9.5.1	Quantifier variance and domain restriction	177
9.6	Objections to quantifier variance	180
9.6.1	The semantic argument	181

9.6.2	No foundation	182
9.6.3	No epistemic high ground	187
9.6.4	Indispensability	188
9.7	Easy ontology	189
9.8	Analyticity	191
9.9	Against easy ontology	195
9.10	Other forms of easy ontology	197
9.11	Metaontology and conceptions of fundamentality	199
9.12	Ontological commitment	201
9.13	Quantifiers versus terms	203
9.14	NonQuinean first-order ontology	206
9.15	Higher-order quantification	208
10	Logic	216
10.1	Fundamental logic	216
10.2	Hard choices	217
10.3	Nonfundamental metalogic	222
10.4	Logical pluralism	225
10.5	Objectivity in model theory	228
10.6	Classical logic and fundamentality	231
11	Time	239
11.1	Presentism	239
11.2	Presentist ideology: quantified tense logic	240
11.3	Is the dispute over presentism substantive?	242
11.4	Passage	246
11.5	Williamson on saturation and contingency	247
11.6	Change and saturation	249
11.7	Talk of saturation is legitimate	250
11.8	The metaphysics of saturation	252
11.9	Varieties of passage	257
12	Modality	266
12.1	No fundamental modality	266
12.2	A Humean strategy for reduction	268
12.3	Logical consequence and mathematical truth	272
12.4	Analyticity	274
12.5	Laws of metaphysics	274
12.6	Determinates and determinables	278
12.7	Contextualism	280
12.8	The necessary a posteriori	282
12.9	Micro-reduction	283
12.10	De re modality	286
12.11	Family resemblances	288

12.12 Spreading arbitrariness	289
13 A Worldview	292
References	299
Index	315