

Abstract

What is an event? What sort of object are they? How is a given event distinguished from other events and other objects? This thesis on science oriented metaphysics will take Davidson's account of events as its starting point to answer the above questions. It will develop this conception of events into one that is consistent with the special theory of relativity by updating its notions of change, cause and property.

The new concept of a proper property, a generalization of the notion of an invariant, is introduced to solve some of these metascientific problems. Other features of the work include an analysis of the Lorentz force equation as it applies to one family of cases of causation, showing that a use of cause and effect to help individuate events cannot be complete until relativistic features are built into it. I propose that the conception of a proper property will also solve this worry over the nature of causation as it affects the issues of events above. In particular, it will attempt to solve a charge of circularity which has been leveled at Davidson's account.

This property analysis also has the feature that it makes the account of events which started with Davidsonian inspiration (i.e. causes and effects are intimately connected to events) more like Kim's. Kim's account of events is modified on the grounds it does not do justice to our intuitions about changes and events.

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