The Unity of Science

Preliminary Remarks

- Last two weeks: Reductionism
- What is this progress Reductionism supposedly achieves?
- This week: Unity of Science.

Unity of Science

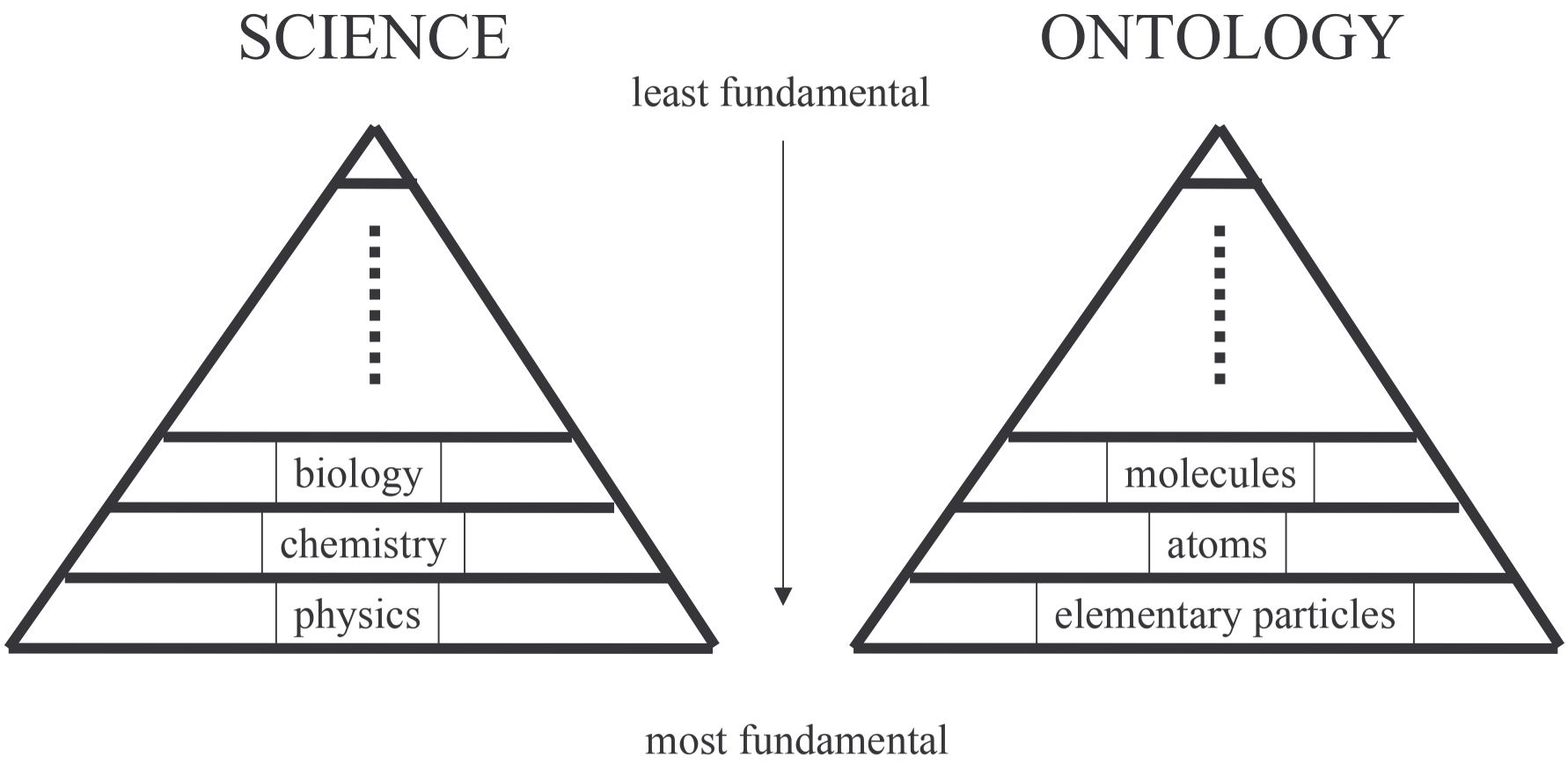
- The urge to give a unified account of the cosmos is too hard to resist and goes back to antiquity.
- Roughly put, our current conception of this ideal is that science tends towards unification. One day in the not too distant future we will have a Theory Of Everything.
- In more detail: The laws, entities and concepts of each scientific domain *are* OR *will be* reducible to those of a more fundamental domain until we reach the bottom.
- Recent Advocates: Kemeny, Oppenheim, Putnam, Sklar, Hoefer, Weinberg, etc.

Unity of Science (2)

- Oppenheim and Putnam (1958) 'The Unity of Science as a Working Hypothesis'.
- Main idea: Unity of science is achieved by ontological reductions from macro-objects to micro-objects; the entities of the reduced are parts of the entities of the reducing theory or science.
- The model of reduction assumed is the Kemeny and Oppenheim (1956) model:

  A theory or science T reduces to another theory or science T′ iff T′ can explain and predict everything that T does.

Pyramid Structure



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The Standard Model

Standard Model of

FUNDAMENTAL PARTICLES AND INTERACTIONS

The Standard Model summarizes the current knowledge in Particle Physics. It is the quantum theory that includes the theory of strong interactions (quantum chromodynamics or QCD) and the unified theory of weak and electromagnetic interactions (electroweak). Gravity is included on this chart because it is one of the fundamental interactions even though not part of the "Standard Model."

FERMIONS

matter constituents
spin = 1/2, 3/2, 5/2, ...

Leptons spin = 1/2

Flavor	Mass GeV/c^2	Electric charge
ν_e electron neutrino	$<1\times10^{-8}$	0
e electron	0.000511	–1
ν_μ muon neutrino	<0.0002	0
μ muon	0.106	–1
ν_τ tau neutrino	<0.02	0
τ tau	1.7771	–1

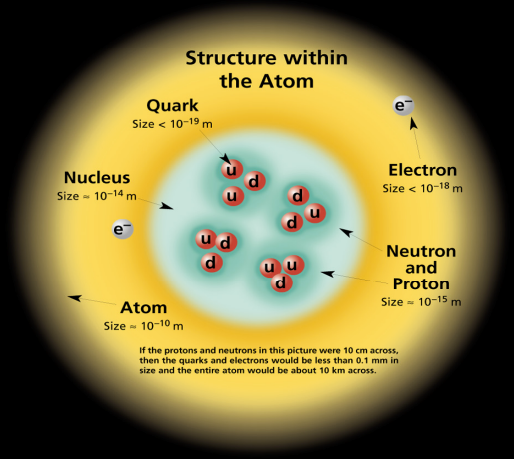
Quarks spin = 1/2

Flavor	Approx. Mass GeV/c^2	Electric charge
u up	0.003	2/3
d down	0.006	–1/3
c charm	1.3	2/3
s strange	0.1	–1/3
t top	175	2/3
b bottom	4.3	–1/3

Spin is the intrinsic angular momentum of particles. Spin is given in units of ħ, which is the quantum unit of angular momentum, where $\hbar = h/2\pi = 6.58\times10^{-25}$ GeV s = 1.05×10^{-34} J s.

Electric charges are given in units of the proton's charge. In SI units the electric charge of the proton is 1.60×10^{-19} coulombs.

The **energy** unit of particle physics is the electronvolt (eV), the energy gained by one electron in crossing a potential difference of one volt. **Masses** are given in GeV/c^2 (remember $E = mc^2$), where 1 GeV = 10^9 eV = 1.60×10^{-10} joule. The mass of the proton is 0.938 GeV/c^2 = 1.67×10^{-27} kg.



BOSONS

force carriers
spin = 0, 1, 2, ...

Unified Electroweak spin = 1

Name	Mass GeV/c^2	Electric charge
γ photon	0	0
W^-	80.4	–1
W^+	80.4	+1
Z^0	91.187	0

Strong (color) spin = 1

Name	Mass GeV/c^2	Electric charge
g gluon	0	0

Color Charge
Each quark carries one of three types of "strong charge," also called "color charge." These charges have nothing to do with the colors of visible light. There are eight possible types of color charge for gluons. Just as electrically-charged particles interact by exchanging photons, in strong interactions color-charged particles interact by exchanging gluons. Leptons, photons, and ***W*** and ***Z*** bosons have no strong interactions and hence no color charge.

Quarks Confined in Mesons and Baryons
One cannot isolate quarks and gluons; they are confined in color-neutral particles called **hadrons**. This confinement (binding) results from multiple exchanges of gluons among the color-charged constituents. As color-charged particles (quarks and gluons) move apart, the energy in the color-force field between them increases. This energy eventually is converted into additional quark-antiquark pairs (see figure below). The quarks and antiquarks then combine into hadrons; these are the particles seen to emerge. Two types of hadrons have been observed in nature: **mesons** $q\bar{q}$ and **baryons** qqq.

Residual Strong Interaction
The strong binding of color-neutral protons and neutrons to form nuclei is due to residual strong interactions between their color-charged constituents. It is similar to the residual electrical interaction that binds electrically neutral atoms to form molecules. It can also be viewed as the exchange of mesons between the hadrons.

PROPERTIES OF THE INTERACTIONS

Property \ Interaction	Gravitational	Weak (Electroweak)	Electromagnetic (Electroweak)	Strong: Fundamental	Strong: Residual
Acts on:	Mass – Energy	Flavor	Electric Charge	Color Charge	See Residual Strong Interaction Note
Particles experiencing:	All	Quarks, Leptons	Electrically charged	Quarks, Gluons	Hadrons
Particles mediating:	Graviton (not yet observed)	W^+ W^- Z^0	γ	Gluons	Mesons
Strength relative to electromag for two u quarks at: 10^{-18} m	10^{-41}	0.8	1	25	Not applicable to quarks
Strength relative to electromag for two u quarks at: 3×10^{-17} m	10^{-41}	10^{-4}	1	60	
for two protons in nucleus	10^{-36}	10^{-7}	1	Not applicable to hadrons	20

Baryons qqq and Antibaryons $\bar{q}\bar{q}\bar{q}$
Baryons are fermionic hadrons.
There are about 120 types of baryons.

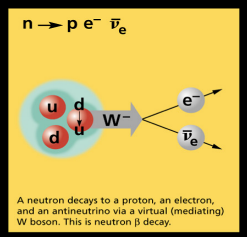
Symbol	Name	Quark content	Electric charge	Mass GeV/c^2	Spin
p	proton	uud	1	0.938	1/2
$\bar{p}$	anti-proton	$\bar{u}\bar{u}\bar{d}$	–1	0.938	1/2
n	neutron	udd	0	0.940	1/2
Λ	lambda	uds	0	1.116	1/2
Ω^-	omega	sss	–1	1.672	3/2

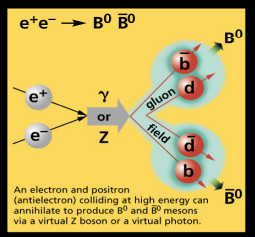
Mesons $q\bar{q}$
Mesons are bosonic hadrons.
There are about 140 types of mesons.

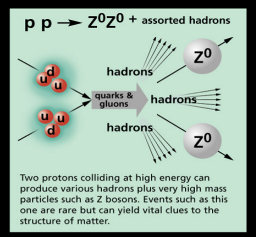
Symbol	Name	Quark content	Electric charge	Mass GeV/c^2	Spin
π^+	pion	$u\bar{d}$	+1	0.140	0
K^-	kaon	$s\bar{u}$	–1	0.494	0
ρ^+	rho	$u\bar{d}$	+1	0.770	1
B^0	B-zero	$d\bar{b}$	0	5.279	0
η_c	eta-c	$c\bar{c}$	0	2 .980	0

Matter and Antimatter
For every particle type there is a corresponding antiparticle, denoted by a bar over the particle symbol (unless + or – charge is shown). Particle and antiparticle have identical mass and spin but opposite charges. Some electrically neutral bosons (e.g., Z^0, γ, and $\eta_c = c\bar{c}$, but not $K^0 = d\bar{s}$) are their own antiparticles.

Figures
These diagrams are an artist's conception of physical processes. They are ***not*** exact and have **no** meaningful scale. Green shaded areas represent the cloud of gluons or the gluon field, and red lines the quark paths.







The Particle Adventure
Visit the award-winning web feature *The Particle Adventure* at
http://ParticleAdventure.org

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Dreams of a Final Theory

- Steven Weinberg:

  - We don't have it yet and we're not likely to discover it soon. Yet, we see glimpses of it and it is not too far off.

  - The final theory will bring to an end "the ancient search for those principles that cannot be explained in terms of deeper principles" (p.13)

  - Superconducting Super Collider

- Superstring Theory is the current T.O.E. contender.

  - Aims to unify relativity and quantum mechanics.

Arguments for Unification

- Simplicity: One unified theory of everything promises to give us the simplest view of the cosmos.
- Evidence (broadly construed):

  - The reductions and partial reductions of various sciences, theories, laws, properties and entities.

  - Complexity arises from simple constituents. According to our best cosmological theory, the universe has evolved to become more complex over time.

  - Principle of Compositionality: We have strong evidence that everything is composed of the basic entities of fundamental physics.

A Taste of Dissent

- How well do our fundamental theories work and how often do we give explanations in terms of them?
- The answer that *once the final theory of everything is in place* such explanations can *in principle* be given (because it will be a T.O.E.) begs the question.
- The evidence shows at least as much disunification and irreducibility.
- Do the laws of physics even hold universally?

Food for Thought

- Does the evidence really support a trend towards unification?

Reading

- Weinberg, S. (1993) *Dreams of a Final Theory*: *The Scientist's Search for the Ultimate Laws of Nature*, London: Vintage, ch. 1.