

This very brief note is an add-on to the papers “Existence and the Big Bang 8 21 2021”, “On the Solutions to the Hard Problems”, and “Do Qualia exist Necessarily?”, all on PhilPapers.

... but again: how do you get something from Nothing? But, again: is Nothing really the state of affairs with the weakest assumptions? At very least this would require an argument.

Consider the following two arguments (I am actively in the process of looking for antecedents, but see Hume, Kripke, Lewis, and Yablo).

A1

1. Suppose there is Nothing.
2. If there is Nothing, then it is possible for there to be Nothing.
3. If it is possible for there to be Nothing, then there exists the possibility (in a 2nd-order sense) that there is nothing.
4. If that possibility exists, something exists.

Moreover,

A2

5. At first we want to say that Nothing means Nothing and therefore even a possibility does not exist.
6. But if the possibility of Nothing does not exist, then it is impossible for there to be Nothing.
7. If it is impossible for there to be Nothing, then something exists.

Do A1 and A2 show there is something rather than Nothing? At the very least, they show that what the weakest assumptions about existence are is not a completely straight-forward question.

Note 1. If, *in* possible world W, there is Nothing, then *at* the world there must be the *possibility* of Nothing. So the possibility itself might exist in a ‘2nd-order’ possible world accessible to W.

Note 2. It might be that the best way to understand a possible world is as a non-well-founded set (R. Nozick’s Principle of Fecundity is an interesting example of this). But I’m not asserting that non-well-foundedness would answer all the relevant questions.

Note 3. If there is something that exists because of its intrinsic nature, then, to the extent it is specifiable, it should be possible to derive the particular physical laws *and qualia* of our universe from it.