

Joins and Basic Ways¹

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Abstract: Metaphysicians often distinguish between *joins* and *basic ways*. *Joins* are the unified and joint-carving properties that trace the structure of the world. They are theorized under the ideology of *structural*, *perfectly natural*, or *sparse* properties. *Basic ways* are the ultimate and independent properties that give rise to all others. They are theorized under the ideology of *grounding*, where the *ungrounded* properties are the basic ways. While these notions are often seen as rivals, I argue that we need both, because the *joins* and the *basic ways* crosscut. For the sake being exhaustive and ecumenical, I distinguish between *natural* and *normative* sorts of joins and basic ways. I argue that, for either sort, *if* there is such a sort of joint and basic way, then there are joins that are not basic ways and there are basic ways that are not joins.

KEYWORDS: fundamentality; grounding; naturalness; structure; properties; normativity

Metaphysicians often distinguish between *joins* and *basic ways*. *Joins* are the unified and joint-carving properties that trace the structure of the world. They are opposed to the gerrymandered and the gruesome. The property of *being an electron* is a joint while *being an electron or a cow* is not, because, among other things, appealing to electrons is explanatory in a way that appealing to electrons-or-cows is not. Philosophers such as David Armstrong (1978), David Lewis (1983), and Ted Sider (2011) have revived the Platonic image of “joins of reality” by positing

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jointness, respectively, in the form of *sparseness*, *naturalness properties*, and *structure*. Let us say, then, that some properties are *jointy*.

Basic ways are the ultimate and independent properties that give rise to all others. They are opposed to the derivative and the dependent. The property *being an electron* is a basic way while *being a table* is not, because, in part, electrons help generate tables. Philosophers such as Kit Fine (2012), Gideon Rosen (2010), and Jonathan Schaffer (2009) have revived the Aristotelian conception of “priority in nature” by positing the relation or operation of *grounding*. Let us hold, then, that some properties are *grounded* in others, while yet other properties are *ungrounded* and so are *basic ways* of being.

These different appeals to joints and basic ways are usually viewed as ‘rival approaches’ (Sider 2011: 142) to a metaphysics of *fundamentality*. Both approaches, for instance, consider *being an electron* to be “fundamental” in that one treats it as a joint and the other a basic way, but each approach believes that the other calls it “fundamental” for the wrong reasons. While there is growing recognition that positing both joints and basic ways as is consistent (cf. Bennett 2017), this still allows for a metaphysical rivalry in that this allows that either joints or basic ways reduces to the other. In this paper, I argue that joints and basic ways are *metaphysically distinct* but *equally genuine* statuses of *properties* – where neither is “built” out of the other.

My primary argument is that joints and basic ways crosscut. For the sake of being exhaustive and ecumenical, I distinguish between *natural* and *normative*

sorts of joints and basic ways (§1). Yet, for both sorts, the joints are not always the basic ways (§2), and the basic ways are not always the joints (§3). While this crosscutting does not by itself preclude a complex metaphysical account of one in terms of the other, I argue that the best account treats the statuses of *being a joint* and *being a basic way* as metaphysically distinct such that neither is built from the other (§4).

Caveat: I focus on *properties* because that allows for a common entity to invoke in discussing *jointness* and *basicness*. Thus, it avoids trivializing the thesis that joints and basic ways crosscut merely because they apply to different sorts of entities. Thus, while I set aside ongoing disputes about the best regimentation of jointness, on the one hand, and basicness, on the other, I assume that there is *some* way of construing properties as jointy or basic.²

1. Varieties of Joints and Basic Ways

² Long footnote on allowing joints and basic ways to be properties:

On the jointness side, some reserve the status of naturalness, sparseness, or structure just to properties (Armstrong 1978), some to objects and properties (Lewis 1983), and others only to ideology (Sider 2011). I assume that we can at least speak of properties as being joints or not. This already accords with Armstrong and Lewis' positions, though not Sider's official view that "structure" applies only to "notions". However, Sider's view can certainly be adapted by someone who believes in properties – as suggested by his repeated informal invocation of certain properties as joint carving (cf. 2011: vii, 4-5, 6-8).

On the basicness side, some regiment grounding as an operator over sentences (Fine 2012), some as a relation between facts (Rosen 2010), and others as a relation between entities of arbitrary category (Schaffer 2009; cf. Bennett 2017). I assume that properties can in some way enter into grounding relations and that we can distinguish between grounded and ungrounded properties. For example, although proponents of fact grounding don't usually talk about grounding of properties themselves, they can treat an ungrounded property as a property featuring in an ungrounded fact (implied in Audi (2012)) – or, for those who think some properties *qua* entities are basic, they can more narrowly treat an ungrounded property as a property whose existence fact is ungrounded. Proponents of entity grounding should allow for properties to be among the entities that enter into the grounding relation, and so an ungrounded property would be a property not grounded in any other entity (Schaffer 2009). Of course, any particular regimentation will be substantive and controversial, but there must be *some* way of capturing grounding connections, or lack thereof, between properties.

I thank an anonymous reviewer for pushing me to clarify my commitment to property grounding.

Within the general notions of joints and basic ways, we must differentiate between various kinds. In this section, I distinguish between *natural* and *normative* joints and basic ways.³ I assume that there are these two sorts of joints and basic ways because it allows my argument to be maximally general and neutral. The argument is *if* there are such kinds of joints and basic ways, then for *each kind* the joints and basic ways crosscut. Thus, one needn't believe in *both* kinds of natural and normative joints and basic ways. So long as one believes in *just one* of these sorts, then joints and basic ways of that sort, and hence joints and basic ways as such, crosscut.⁴

1.i Joints

The joints are the properties that serve to *horizontally* structure the world by being unified and *horizontally* productive. They are unified in that they underwrite

³ There are two ways to understand the qualifiers “natural” and “normative”. One is that there is a single status of jointness and to say a property is a *natural* joint is to say it's a natural property that's a joint and to say a property is a *normative* joint is to say it's a normative property that's a joint. Likewise, for the status of being a basic way. Another is to hold there are different *statuses*, so that there is a natural sort of jointness and a normative sort of jointness. Likewise, for the status of being a basic way. The difference between these understandings won't matter for the purposes of my argument. On either understanding, I argue that joints and basic ways crosscut, so I set aside the distinction in what follows.

As an aside, perhaps there are also *mathematical/logical* joints and basic ways. *Mathematical* joints are the privileged properties of the mathematical realm, such as *plus* rather than *quus* – where $quus(x, y) = x+y$, if $x, y < 57$, and 5 otherwise (Kripke 1982: 22). *Mathematical* basic ways would be the properties at the foundation of the mathematical world, such as *being zero* and the *set-builder relation*. I leave exploration of their connection for another time.

⁴ If you uphold both sorts of joints but not both sorts of basic ways – or vice versa – then it *immediately follows* that joints and basic ways as such crosscut. For instance, if you think there are normative joints but no normative basic ways – say, if you're a metaethical naturalist who wants to distinguish *good* from *schmood* – then by that very fact you believe there are joints that are not basic ways. Or, if you think that there are normative basic ways but only natural joints – say, if you like normative basic ways, but, following Armstrong (1978) and Lewis (1983), think that jointness requires endowing causal powers and deny that normative properties do so – then you already think that there are basic ways that aren't joints.

genuine *similarity*, and they are horizontally productive by facilitating the production of further entities at their same level of reality. Accordingly, joints enter into the best explanations.

Natural joints are the properties that unify nature by making for similarity among natural things, and they are *causally* productive in that they endow novel causal powers. *Being an electron* is a natural joint in that it underwrites genuine similarity among electrons and because it endows electrons with new causal powers of attraction and repulsion. A gerrymandered property like *being an electron before 2050 A.D. or not being an electron after* is not a natural joint in that it neither underwrites genuine similarity nor endows novel causal powers. As Lewis says in describing Armstrong's notion of sparse universals, 'There are the universals that there must be to ground the objective resemblances and the causal powers of things, and there is no reason to believe in anymore' (1983: 345). The natural joints, accordingly, enter into the best scientific explanations and are the eligible candidates for entering into the laws of nature.

Normative joints are the unified properties that make for similarity in the normative realm, and they are *normatively* productive by supplying novel *reasons*. *Being good* is a normative joint in that it underwrites genuine normative similarity between any two states of affairs that are good, and *being good* provides distinctive reasons to promote anything that has it. This contrasts with a gruesome normative property like *being schmood* – the property of *being good before 2050 A.D or not being good after* – which does not underwrite normative similarity or provide for

distinctive reasons. Normative joints like *being an agent* and *being a reason* are the privileged edifice of the normative realm (cf. Enoch and McPherson: sec. 6), and they are thereby distinguished from normatively gerrymandered properties, like *schmagents* (Enoch 2006) and *counter-reasons* (Enoch 2011: ch 5, sec. 3; cf. McPherson 2011). Normative joints, consequently, make for the best normative explanations and are the eligible candidates for entering into general normative principles.

1.ii Basic ways

The basic ways are the properties that *vertically* structure the world by serving as the base-layer of reality and *vertically* producing all higher-layers.

Natural basic ways are the properties at the foundation of the natural world, including the ultimate properties of physics like *spin*, *mass*, and *charge*. The natural basic ways ground all higher-level natural properties, like the chemical property of *being oxygen* and the psychological property of *being in pain*.

Normative basic ways are the properties at the foundation of the normative world (Frugé, manuscript). Depending on one's moral theory, they might include *being good*, *being autonomous*, or *having eudemonia*. Such properties generate the rest of the normative realm. For consequentialists, *being good* helps ground properties like *being better* and *being optimific*. Or, for those consequentialists like John Broome (2004: ch. 2), who think *being better* grounds *being good*, then *being better* is a normative basic way. For deontological autonomy theorists, *being*

autonomous helps ground properties like *being impermissible*. For eudemonistic virtue-ethicists, *having eudemonia* helps ground properties like *being courageous* and all the other specific virtues.

2: Joints but Not Basic Ways

In this section, I argue that there are joints that are not basic ways. I begin with the natural case and then turn to the normative case.

2.i Natural joints that aren't natural basic ways

To find a natural joint that is not a natural basic way, we need to find a unifying and causally productive natural property that is grounded.

2.i.a Multiply realizable joints

Consider chemical properties, like *being oxygen*, and psychological properties, like *being in pain*. On a broadly Putnamian (1975) and Fodorian (1974) view, such higher-level scientific properties have the following three features: multiple realizability, novel causal powers, and explanatory autonomy.

Multiple realizability. *Being oxygen* can be realized by a host of physical states that differ, for example, with respect to the exact location of various electrons. *Being in pain* can be realized in a dizzying array of fundamental states, including those of humans, cats, and even silicon-based aliens. Similarly, for *having*

a desire. As multiply realized, such properties are not *identical* to their microphysical realizers, but rather *grounded* in them – and so they are not basic ways.

Causal power. *Being oxygen* has unique causal powers. For one thing, two oxygen atoms can combine with a hydrogen atom to make H₂O. *Being in pain* has new causal powers, beyond those of its realizers, in that, for instance, it can cause avoidance behavior and further mental states like *desiring to flee*.

Explanatory autonomy. Many explanations do better when they appeal to high-level properties. As Hilary Putnam (1975) points out, you have a better explanation of why the square peg does not go through the round hole in terms of high-level geometrical facts than you do in terms of microphysics. The same goes for explaining chemical bonding and avoidance behavior. Explaining why someone desires to flee in terms of their microphysical properties is a worse explanation than citing psychological properties like *being in pain*.

As higher-level properties, *being oxygen* and *being in pain* are not natural basic ways of being, but the realized results of underlying physical patterns (cf. Schaffer 2004). *Being oxygen* is not a fundamental physical property. Rather, *being oxygen* is a chemical property that something has *in virtue of* lower-level physical patterns. *Being in pain* is a mental property that something has in virtue of physical realizers. Yet from a non-reductive perspective, such properties are natural joints.

Being oxygen helps structure the chemical-level of the world, and is not gruesome or gerrymandered. Contrast *being oxygen* with *being schmoxygen*, the property of *being oxygen before 2050 A.D. or being lithium after*. *Being oxygen* gives its possessors genuine similarity to one another, endows causal powers, and features in the best scientific explanations – whereas *being schmoxygen* does not.

Similarly, *being in pain* helps structure the psychological-level of the world. Contrast it with *being in schmain*, which is *either being in pain before 2050 A.D. or having a desire after*. *Being in pain* provides for new causal powers and enters into the best cognitive scientific explanations – whereas *being in schmain* does not. Moreover, *being in pain* makes for *genuine* similarity, whereas *being in schmain* does not. The argument is not simply that *being in pain* makes for *more* similarity than *being in schmain*, but rather that *being in pain* underwrites *genuine* similarity and *being in schmain* does not. Any genuine similarity it seems to underwrite is really due to *being in pain* or *having a desire*.

However, some might think that multiple realizability cuts against counting a property as a joint. The thought, I take it, is that multiply realizable properties can be realized in very *different* underlying microphysical structures, which then cuts against the “unity” of the properties such that they can’t be *perfectly jointy*.⁵

Yet, this intuition conflates joint-theoretic with *ground*-theoretic status. Certainly, multiply realizable properties have a range of distinct grounds. But my overall argument is precisely that grounded properties can still be jointy, so we

⁵ I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this objection.

should be careful not to appeal to considerations from grounding to decide whether or not it is a joint. Indeed, a property that is jointy but has a variety of possible grounds serves to *unify* across otherwise disparate entities. That a human and an octopus can both instantiate *being in pain* doesn't show that *being in pain* is not a joint – but rather that if *being in pain* is a joint, then humans and octopuses can partake in some of the same unified mental states. Instead of looking to ground-theoretic status, in determining whether a property is a joint we should determine whether it enters into some of the best explanations, makes for genuine similarity, and – for *natural* joints – underwrites novel causal powers. *Being in pain*, multiply realizable as it is, does this.

2.i.b Acceleration

Moreover, there are examples of natural joints that are not basic ways that do not involve multiply realizable properties. Consider *acceleration*, which is grounded as the second-derivative of *position*. Now take a world that obeys Newtonian laws of mechanics in that $force = mass \times acceleration$. *Acceleration* is not a basic way in that it is grounded in *position*. Yet, *acceleration* features in the laws of physics of this Newtonian world, and so mediates causation.

In light of these sorts of considerations, Hicks and Schaffer (2017) argue that laws of nature can feature properties that are not basic ways and so are “non-fundamental”, while Sider (2020: 19, fn. 30) argues that Newton's law really is *sum*

of component forces = mass × second time derivative of position, and so involves only properties that are joints and thereby “fundamental”.

However, given my view that we should appeal to *both* joints and basic ways, there’s a way to make both parties happy – well, unhappy. Newton’s law is indeed *force = mass × acceleration*, and so laws of nature can feature properties that are not basic ways but they must still be joints. *Acceleration* is thus a natural joint, but not a basic way.

2.ii Normative joints that aren’t normative basic ways

To find a normative joint that is not a normative basic way, we need to find a normative property that is unifying and supplies distinctive reasons and yet is grounded.

Consider evaluative properties like impersonal *better than*, deontic properties like *being impermissible*, and virtue-ethical properties like *being courageous*. Some consequentialists may be wary of deontic properties and virtues, but they admit of evaluative relations like *better than*. Some deontologists may be wary of impersonal evaluations and virtues, but they admit of facts about impermissibility. Some virtue ethicists might be wary impersonal evaluations and deontic properties, but they admit of virtues like *being courageous*, or at least some other virtue. Because I do not want to get into controversial disputes over which is the correct ethical theory, read the following as an argument by disjunctive elimination. *If* consequentialism is

correct, then *better than* is a normative joint. *If* deontology is correct, then *being impermissible* is a normative joint. *If* virtue ethics is correct, then *being courageous*, or some other virtue, is a normative joint. But one of consequentialism, deontology, or virtue-ethics is the correct ethical theory, so one of these properties is a normative joint – yet on none of these views are these respective properties normative basic ways. Thus, even though I don't know which particular ethical theory is true, I believe that *something like one* of the following examples is right.

Start with *better than*. For consequentialists, *better than* provides distinctive reasons in that it enables one option to be *more choiceworthy than* another. It also makes for genuine similarity between any two otherwise diverse pairs of options in which one is better than the other. Moreover, it features in some of the best normative explanations, such as those that appear in population ethics (Parfit 1984: pt. 4; Temkin 2012).

Better than thus contrasts with gerrymandered normative features like *schmetter than*, which is *better than unless Teddy Roosevelt thinks otherwise*. This relation *schmetter than* doesn't make for genuine similarity between pairs of options, supply distinctive reasons, or enter into the best normative explanations. Crucially, the reasons that *better than* provides are truly distinctive in that, for instance, they are distinct from those provided by *being good*. *Being better than* makes options *more choiceworthy than* alternatives, and *being good* gives reason to pursue an option *in itself*. Thus, they make for different kinds of distinctive reasons, so they are different normative joints.

Hence, *better than* is a normative joint, but most consequentialists consider *better than* as grounded in the more basic impersonal normative property of *being good*. Of course, the details as to exactly how *better than* is grounded in *being good* are controversial. For example, in population ethics, some think that one population of people is better than another when it has more total good, or when it has higher average good, or when it maximizes the worst off, or disperses additional burdens, or satisfies some combination of these and still other distributional considerations besides.⁶ But among those who take *being good* as a normatively basic way, it's uncontroversial that *better than* is grounded in *some sort of distribution of being good*.⁷

Turn to the deontic property of *being impermissible*, which, for deontologists, is a normative joint. *Being impermissible* is a crucial normative status of an action that provides a deontic reason not to perform it. Moreover, any two actions that are impermissible are genuinely similar along a normative dimension, and impermissibility appears in the best deontological theories. Yet, most deontologists don't appeal to fundamental facts about impermissibility, but rather ground it in notions like rights (Thomson 1990), Kantian (1785) constraints on universalizability, or contractualist concerns about reasonable rejection (Scanlon

⁶ For discussion of all these options, and more, see Larry Temkin (2012). I thank an anonymous reviewer for pushing me to go into more of the details about this.

⁷ As for those who take *better than* as basic and ground *being good* in it (Broome 2004: ch. 2), they can just make the parallel argument about *being good*. For *being good*, as we just saw, itself supplies distinctive reasons and thereby carves at the normative joints.

2000). Hence, *being impermissible* is not a normative basic way, and yet it is still a normative joint.

Finally, consider *being courageous* – or any other virtue you prefer. For virtue-ethicists, actions that would exemplify the trait of courage thereby provide distinctive reasons for a virtuous agent to perform them, and courageous agents are all genuinely similar to that extent. Moreover, courage, or at least your preferred virtue, features in the best virtue-ethical explanations. Yet, at least for *eudaemonist* virtue ethics, *being courageous* is not a normative basic way. *Eudaemonists* hold that virtues are grounded in more basic normative features of human flourishing or agency, such as *having eudemonia*.⁸ And even on other virtue-ethical views, *being courageous* is not *brutely* virtuous – presumably its virtue is grounded in *some* other features such as its relating to proper motivations, or an aim to respond appropriately to fear and danger, or whatever. *Being courageous* is not plausibly normatively bedrock.

Whether or not one is a consequentialist, deontologist, or virtue-ethicist, there are normative joints that are not basic ways.

2.iii Jointly but not basic

Thus, joints are not always basic ways. The natural joints are not always the natural basic ways, and the normative joints are not always the normative basic

⁸ For discussion, see Hursthouse and Pettigrove (2018: sec. 2.1). So this argument won't work for virtue theorists who hold that *being courageous* is intrinsically virtuous and doesn't have its virtue grounded in something like *having eudemonia*. But the *eudaemonist* view I mention is a prominent one, and so it at least shows that the view that there are joints that are not basic ways is a serious contender.

ways. So long as you buy *one* of these sorts of joints and basic ways, then you should believe that joints and basic ways *as such* crosscut.

3. Basic Ways but Not Joints

In this section, I argue that there are basic ways that are not joints. There are properties which are ungrounded and yet aren't unifying or horizontally productive. I begin with the natural case and then turn to the normative case.

3.i Natural basic ways that aren't natural joints

To find a natural basic way that isn't a natural joint, we need to find a natural property that is ungrounded and yet doesn't endow novel causal powers.

I argue that *position*, at least in worlds that obey Newtonian laws of physics, offers a candidate for just such a property. As before, consider a world that obeys Newtonian laws of physics. Assume that *position* is a basic way – for instance, assume substantivalism about space. Given that in this world Newton's laws mediate physical causation, and *position* does not appear in Newton's laws, then *position* does not endow causal powers. Rather, *position* grounds *acceleration*, which appears in the law $force = mass \times acceleration$ and thereby, as we saw, is a joint that is not a basic way. But, then, *position* is a basic way that's not a joint.

In fact, it's easy to cook up cases where ungrounded properties don't endow any causal powers in that the properties they ground are the only ones that features in the laws of nature. Take a cheesy example of a world where the only thing that

happens is that negatively charged particles with mass repel each other at a constant rate, regardless of their specific masses and charges. Particles that are merely negatively charged don't repel, and particles that are merely massive don't repel. Rather, particles both negatively charged and massive to any degree to repel one another.

In this world, the law of nature mentions *being negatively charged and massive* in that it states that negatively charged massive particles repel one another. This conjunctive property is therefore a natural joint,⁹ but it's grounded in more basic mass and charge properties making up its conjuncts. Take, then, a basic way that helps to ground this conjunctive property. This basic way doesn't feature in any laws, and so doesn't endow any causal powers – only the conjunctive *being negatively charged and massive* does – and so it's not a joint.

3.ii Normative basic ways that aren't normative joints

To find a normative basic way that isn't a normative joint, we need to find a normative property that is ungrounded and yet doesn't supply distinctive reasons. I argue that the personal value relation *good-for* does not, by itself, supply any reasons at all, and thereby doesn't supply *distinctive* reasons. *Good-for* only supplies reasons in combination with other considerations, and so *all those considerations*

⁹ Thus, it seems that jointness is not something necessary to a property, but can vary world to world.

taken together – not *good-for* itself – is a normative joint. But *good-for*, I argue, is ungrounded – at least not in any further normative properties.¹⁰

Let's start with the argument that *good-for* is a normative basic way. Most ethicists, consequentialists, deontologists, and virtue ethicists alike, believe in wellbeing even if they disagree about its moral implications. But, along with *bad-for*, the relation of *good-for* underwrites wellbeing in that it relates the person to those possible things that would make their life go better, were they to come about. Hence, most ethicists allow for the *good-for* relation. However, *good-for* is not grounded in any further normative property. For instance, *good-for* cannot be understood in terms of *impersonal good* (Smith 2003), because this wouldn't capture the special reasons that one has in relation to one's own wellbeing (Korsgaard 2013). Thus, *good-for* must be taken to be a normative basic way.

Turning to supplying reasons, *good-for* does not supply reasons by itself. If *ought* implies *can*, then someone only has reasons given that they have some ability to act on those reasons, but there are many things that are *good-for* someone without their being able to act on them. Consider procreation cases. Prior to existing, someone's life can be good for them. But while one doesn't exist one can't act on any reasons, and so, in particular, while someone doesn't exist they don't have any reasons to be created to acquire a good life. As a non-procreation case, a late-entry career as a superstar NBA player might be good for me, but it's only in one of the weakest senses of "can" that I can accomplish this. Normative joints

¹⁰ This is enough, because I'm assuming, remember, that there are *some* normative basic ways, so I'm setting aside, for instance, the view that *good-for* is grounded in some *natural* property.

supply distinctive reasons, but because *good-for* by itself does not supply reasons, then *good-for* is not a normative joint.

Of course, this leaves open that *good-for* might supply distinctive reasons *in combination* with other considerations – such as those involving the person’s already being created or having certain abilities – but that means that it is that *combination* of considerations, not *good-for* by itself, that is a normative joint. Yet, while *good-for* is plausibly not a normative joint, it is still a normative basic way.

3.iii Basic but not jointy

Thus, basic ways are not always joints. The natural basic ways are not always the natural joints, and the normative basic ways are not always the normative joints. So long as you buy into *one* of these sorts of joints and basic ways, then you should believe that joints and basic ways *as such* crosscut.

4. Metaphysical Distinctness

So far I have argued against treating the structure of joints and basic ways as aligned. This leaves open the options of rejecting one or more of joints or basic ways, holding out hope for a more complex account of one in terms of the other, or treating the two as metaphysically distinct properties. I argue that we have good reason to take the third option.

As far as rejecting the postulation of either joints or basic ways, I simply take for granted that each posit of joints and basic ways is theoretically useful enough to think that there are indeed joints and basic ways. Let's start with joints. In the natural case, some kind of naturalness structure is useful to characterize similarity among natural objects, the eligible properties to enter into the laws of nature, and, more generally, to make sense of scientific practice (Sider 2011: ch. 3; Lewis 1983; Armstrong 1978). In terms of normative joints, we need them for parallel reasons of making sense of similarity across normative states of affairs, the eligible properties to enter into moral principles, and, more generally, making sense of normative practice. Turning to basic ways, they are needed to make sense of the levels of reality. In the natural case, natural basic ways are needed to capture the bottom, physical layer of nature that gives rise to the chemical, biological, and social. In the normative case, the normative basic ways are need to make sense of foundational normative properties that give rise to all others.

As far as holding out hope for a more complex account of either *joint* or *basic way* in terms of the other, I obviously cannot prove the negative existential that there is no such account. Yet, the fact that joints and basic ways crosscuts undermines what would be the most straightforward proposal: that they are identical or otherwise co-extensive. Moreover, proponents of joints and proponents of basic ways, respectively, treat these as metaphysically unanalyzable (cf. Sider 2011: chs. 7-8; Bennett 2017a: ch. 5). Thus, I am simply following the proponents of each status in holding that

neither jointness nor basicness can be metaphysically accounted for in terms of the other.

Insofar as we take joint and basic ways as separate statuses of properties, then we recognize that the world admits of two different types of metaphysical structure. Indeed, the only reason I could provide both examples of joints that are not basic ways and basic ways that are not joints is that both sorts of metaphysical status are needed to characterize distinct aspects of reality. The structure of the joints discloses the scaffolding of the world. They are the unifying and horizontally productive elements that *horizontally structure* each layer of reality. The structure of basic ways reveals the basic-layer of reality. They are the foundational elements that give rise to each layer and thereby *vertically structure* the hierarchy of reality. Neither structure is neatly reflected in the other. Our theories need to limn both.

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