

ISSEPP 2026

THEOREMS UNRAVELLING THE FOUNDATIONS OF QUANTUM THEORY

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- Main Idea:

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 - (ii) Do (perfect) measurements reveal the value that physical quantities possess immediately beforehand?

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- We can then define the Operator $\hat{P}_W$:

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$$\mathcal{H}_{\hat{P}} := \{ \vec{\psi} \in \mathcal{H} \mid \hat{P} \vec{\psi} = \vec{\psi} \}$$

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- If $|e_1\rangle, |e_2\rangle, \dots$ is an orthonormal basis for $\mathcal{H}$ then

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$$|e_1\rangle\langle e_1|, |e_2\rangle\langle e_2|, \dots, |e_i\rangle\langle e_i|, \dots$$

are projection operators onto the one dimensional subspaces $|e_1\rangle, |e_2\rangle, \dots, |e_i\rangle, \dots$ respectively.

- Then $|e_i\rangle\langle e_i|, |e_j\rangle\langle e_j|$ are orthogonal if $i \neq j$.

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- The set of all eigenvectors of a self adjoint operator forms an orthonormal basis for the Hilbert space $\mathcal{H}$, i.e.,

$$|\psi\rangle = \sum_{m=1}^M \sum_{j=1}^{d(m)} \langle a_{m,j} | \psi \rangle |a_{m,j}\rangle,$$

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Mathematical Digression: Projection Operators, Significance

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- Non-trivial projection operators have just **two eigenvalues**:

The Kochen-Specker Theorem

Mathematical Digression: Projection Operators, Significance

- Non-trivial projection operators have just **two eigenvalues**: 1 and 0. Both degenerate if $\dim\{W\} \geq 1$ and $\dim\{W^\perp\} \geq 1$
- because of their eigenvalues,

The Kochen-Specker Theorem

Mathematical Digression: Projection Operators, Significance

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Let H be a Hilbert Space of dimension $d \geq 3$, it is impossible to associate definite numerical values 1 or 0, with every projection operator $\hat{P}_m$, in such a way that, if a set of commuting $\hat{P}_m$ satisfies $\sum \hat{P}_m = \hat{1}$, the corresponding values, namely $V(\hat{P}_m) = 0$ or 1, also satisfy $\sum V(\hat{P}_m) = 1$

The Kochen-Specker Theorem

Argument's Core

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Only Rays need are present in table.

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Only Rays need are present in table.

Orthogonal Triad			Other rays		Why 1st Ray is Blue
001	100	010	110	1 $\bar{1}$ 0	arbitrary choice of z axis
101	$\bar{1}$ 01	010			arbitrary choice of x vs $-x$
011	0 $\bar{1}$ 1	100			arbitrary choice of y vs $-y$
1 $\bar{1}$ 2	$\bar{1}$ 12	110	$\bar{2}$ 01	021	arbitrary choice of x vs y
102	$\bar{2}$ 01	010	$\bar{2}$ 11		orthogonality to 2nd and 3rd rays
211	0 $\bar{1}$ 1	$\bar{2}$ 11	$\bar{1}$ 02		orthogonality to 2nd and 3rd rays
201	010	$\bar{1}$ 02	$\bar{1}$ $\bar{1}$ 2		orthogonality to 2nd and 3rd rays
112	1 $\bar{1}$ 0	$\bar{1}$ $\bar{1}$ 2	0 $\bar{2}$ 1		orthogonality to 2nd and 3rd rays
012	100	0 $\bar{2}$ 1	1 $\bar{2}$ 1		orthogonality to 2nd and 3rd rays
121	$\bar{1}$ 01	1 $\bar{2}$ 1	0 $\bar{1}$ 2		orthogonality to 2nd and 3rd rays

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The elements 100, 021, and 0 $\bar{1}$ 2: are red and mutually orthogonal!

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$1\bar{1}2$	$\bar{1}12$	110	$\bar{2}01$	021
102	$\bar{2}01$	010	$\bar{2}11$	
211	$0\bar{1}1$	$\bar{2}11$	$\bar{1}02$	
201	010	$\bar{1}02$	$\bar{1}\bar{1}2$	
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If we want a value function $V_{\vec{\psi}}$ to exist we may try to drop [1]:
 $V_{\vec{\psi}}(\mathcal{F}(Q)) = \mathcal{F}(V_{\vec{\psi}}(Q))$. Then the question is:

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$$f_1(V_{\vec{\psi}}(\hat{A}_1)) = f_2(V_{\vec{\psi}}(\hat{A}_2)) \quad [6]$$

which implies that taking the result of a measurement of $\hat{A}_1$ and applying f_1 to it would give the same number as taking the result of a measurement of $\hat{A}_2$ and applying f_2 to it.

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The Kochen-Specker Theorem

Implications

If we want a value function $V_{\vec{\psi}}$ to exist we may try to drop [1]:
 $V_{\vec{\psi}}(\mathcal{F}(Q)) = \mathcal{F}(V_{\vec{\psi}}(Q))$. Then the question is: **how can it fail?**

Well, suppose that for some self-adjoint operator $\hat{A}$ we may have
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If **only one** eigenvalue is **different from zero**, then it is equal to 1 and all the others are equal to 0. Then the state is called **Pure** and is of the form

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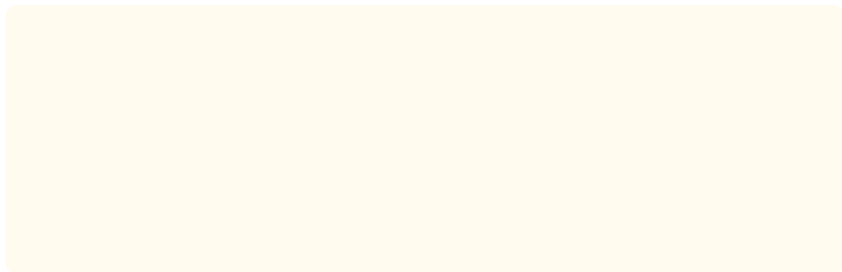
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