

Eliminative Materialism

Post by "Cassius" of January 5, 2025 at 3:38 PM

I think your own description is good Don, which is why I find fault in the formulation:

[Quote from Okeefe](#)

"An example of this sort of thing would be a flock of sheep. A flock of sheep is a real entity, but it is *nothing above and beyond* the group of sheep gathered together

I can't read "nothing above and beyond" the sheep gathered together as saying anything more than that the individual sheep have a higher status of significance to us than does the flock.

A more complete statement would be more like :

"An example of this sort of thing would be a flock of sheep. A flock of sheep is a real entity with real attributes, just as the individual sheep are real entities with different attributes. Just as the individual sheep are made of atoms, the flock is made of individual sheep."

Then one among many further points that Velleius among others might make would be that individual sheep can come and go from the flock so long as a large number of sheep remain. The flock maintains its existence and attributes despite the coming and going of individual sheep. And in fact the flock can remain in existence far beyond the lifetime of an individual sheep, and in fact indefinitely, so long as the flock or the shepherd maintain the flock against hazards that come against it.