

'Time Passes'

Smart:

THEORY 1: The metaphors get at something deep and true about the nature of time.

THEORY 2: The metaphors do not get at something deep and true about the nature of time.

Price's 'Two Camps.'

Camp 1:

1. The passage of time is an 'objective feature of reality.'
2. The present moment is the 'leading edge of this advance.'
3. The present has 'ontological priority'; the past and future are 'unreal.'

Camp 2:

1. The present is a 'subjective notion.'
2. NOW is dependent on one's viewpoint in much the same way that HERE is. 'Here' means roughly 'this place'; 'now' means roughly 'this time.'
3. There is no 'ontological difference' between the past, present, and future.
4. 'There is no objective flow of time.'

The block universe theory:

1. **Semantic Thesis:** Tensed verbs, and words like ‘past,’ ‘present,’ and ‘future,’ have *temporal-perspective-dependent* meanings. That is, uses of them only make sense relative to, or ‘from the perspective of,’ a given time.
2. **Non-semantic Thesis:** There is a ‘description of reality’ that is (i) true ‘from a perspective outside of time’; and (ii) complete.

What does the description say? It is very long. But among other things,

- It will say that time is ‘just another dimension of reality,’ ‘on a par’ with the three dimensions of space.
- It will say where each thing is at each time.
- More generally, it will say what each thing is like at each time.

It will not say that any time is present, or past, or future.

What does it mean to say that it is ‘complete’?

What is an alternative to the block universe theory?

The Moving Spotlight Theory

1. **Semantic Thesis:** Tensed verbs, and words like ‘past,’ etc, do not have temporal-perspective-dependent meanings.
2. **Non-semantic theses:** the block universe ‘description’ is incomplete. To make it complete add the claims:
 - Exactly one time is the present time. Times earlier than it are past times. Times later are future times.
 - If T is any time later than the present time, then T will be the present time.

The ‘moving spotlight’ picture.

[Note: the last claim is not quite enough.]

Markosian: by 'time passes' he means the combination of

- The tensed conception of semantics.
- The A-property thesis.
- The claim that times successively possess different A-properties.