

# Terms and Terminology

– EH – Pot Corpse I:83

WE DO NOT DEFINE THINGS; things are already well defined.

What we define are **the limits of the application of terms**.

We do not say what a dog is; we say to what we shall apply the **term** "dog".

Very great confusion has been caused in philosophy by an attempt to define things, rather than to indicate the application of terms.

Either the universe of things is independent of man's definitions or not.

If it is, then man can only indicate the field of application of his terms.

If the things of the universe depend on man's creative power, then it is possible for him in the act of definition to bring something into being which before was not.

But this is equivalent to ascribing to man the power to produce form out of no form. For if the form he produces is in any way derived from other than pure formlessness, we cannot say that he has produced something not previously existent.

But to produce form from the formed is not pure creativity. For a man to be a pure creator we would have to assume him to be completely formless; but this is to make him non-existent.