Mereology is Teleological

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# 1 Introduction

# 2 Rose and Schaffer on Folk Mereology

The gist of their argument:

Folk mereology → constitution is teleological

But ~teleological constitution, because science!

Therefore, ~folk mereology

# 3 Empirical evidence for mereological constitution

## 3.1 Evidence from empirical psychology for teleology in folk mereology

## 3.2 Empirical evidence for teleology in the hard sciences

# 4 An application: folk mereology, teleology, and vagueness

In brief: Teleological accounts of unity help explain why unity is typically cashed out in paradigmatic cases; and conversely, why the further we move away from paradigmatic cases, the harder it is to argue for the existence of a unity. A functioning house is clearly one thing; an abandoned dilapidated house is less clearly so. Hence, the more one thing exemplifies a teleological function, the more it appears to be – and really is – one thing.

Similarly, clear cases of *non-*unity arise not when unity is not present, but when it is present *elsewhere* (Aquinas on the convertibility of *unum* and *aliquid*): a trout turkey is not an object because trout and turkeys *are* paradigmatically unified things, and thereby paradigmatically differentiated from each other.

# 5 Conclusion