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'Powers: Single- or Multi-Track?'

John Heil maintains that '[o]ne and the same disposition can manifest itself differently with different reciprocal disposition partners' (*From an Ontological Point of View*, p. 198). As an example, he suggests that 'the charge on an electron, for instance, might dispose the electron to repel other electrons, but to attract positrons' (p. 199). But is an electron's disposition to repel other electrons in fact *the same* power as its disposition to attract positrons -- in which case, in virtue of what, or by what criterion, are these powers to be judged to be 'the same'? And is the electron's property of unit negative charge itself to be *identified* with these/this power(s), or is it rather something distinct from the power(s) but which *confers* or *bestows* the power(s) upon their bearer (the electron)? Heil does in places use the language of 'bestowing', as when he says: 'I shall use "dispositional" to designate those properties that bestow powers on their possessors in the following sense: it is solely in virtue of possessing a given dispositional property that an object possesses a given power' (p. 79). This *sounds* as though a distinction is being made between property and power. But Heil immediately goes on to say that 'the idea is to distinguish properties that themselves amount to causal powers from those that bestow powers on their possessors, if at all, only indirectly' (p. 79). And this seems to imply that properties of the former type are to be regarded as *being* powers (since they 'amount' to them). My aim in this paper is to discuss some of these interpretive and substantive issues, with a view to defending the claim that all powers are, upon a final analysis, 'single-track' rather than 'multi-track' -- that is, that each distinct power has only one fundamental manifestation-type.