

MINDS
PEOPLE
WORLDS
REAL?

OR JUST
REFLECTIONS
OF ONE?

COGITO
ERGO
SUM?



$$P(A|B) = \frac{P(A \cap B)}{P(B)}$$

$$\sigma^2 = E[x^2] - (E[x])^2$$

PREDICTION
PERCEPTION
REALITY
UNCERTAINTY



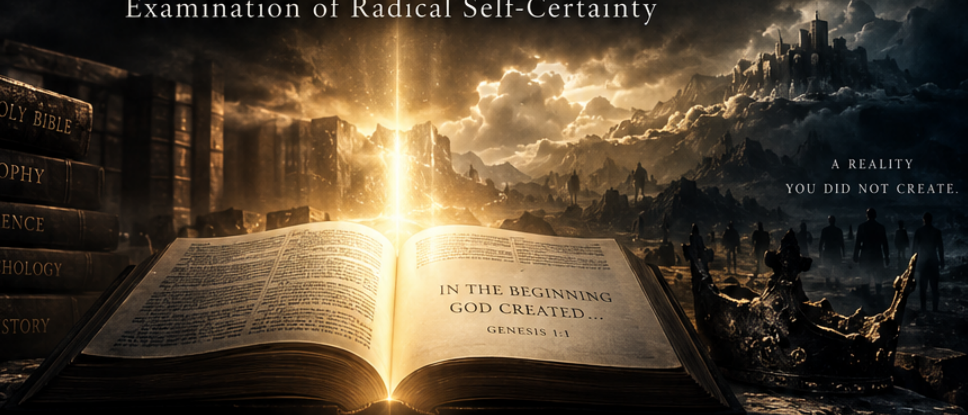
Anonymous 01/22/26(Sun) 30
>what if no one else is real
>just you
>always you
>it's all in your head
>there is no evidence otherwise
► Anonymous
>>42984682 >>42984682
You can't prove I exist either.

PHILOSOPHY
PSYCHOLOGY
NEUROSCIENCE
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
APOLOGETICS
SCRIPTURE
TRUTH

THE SOLIPSIST'S TRAP

A Philosophical, Psychological, Scientific & Biblical
Examination of Radical Self-Certainty

A REALITY
YOU DID NOT CREATE.



4CHAN NARRATIVE BREAKDOWN BY VCG

SEPTEMBER 2026

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THE SOLIPSIST'S TRAP

A Philosophical, Psychological, Scientific & Biblical
Examination of Radical Self-Certainty

4CHAN NARRATIVE BREAKDOWN BY VCG • SEPTEMBER
2026

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ABSTRACT

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On September 19, 2026, an anonymous poster on 4chan's /x/ board asked a deceptively simple question: why do people believe in solipsism? The thread that followed moved rapidly through philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, Buddhism, historical skepticism, trauma, the free-energy principle, Holocaust denial, Socrates, agnosticism, and theology. Some participants noticed genuine philosophical problems. Others confused different kinds of solipsism, treated uncertainty as evidence for nonexistence, invoked scientific theories beyond what those theories establish, or attempted to explain philosophical disagreement by speculating about opponents' psychology. [\[Primary thread\]](#)

This paper treats the discussion as a case study in reasoning under radical uncertainty. Its central contention is deliberately narrower than “science disproves solipsism.” Radical skeptical hypotheses are difficult to eliminate through ordinary empirical observation precisely because they can be constructed to accommodate whatever observation occurs. The more defensible criticism is that the thread repeatedly moves from a sound observation—*I have unusually direct access to my present conscious experience*—to a much stronger metaphysical proposition—*only my consciousness exists*—without supplying an adequate premise connecting the two.

The analysis distinguishes metaphysical solipsism from epistemological solipsism, methodological solipsism, idealism, skepticism about other minds, nondual traditions, simulation hypotheses, and psychological experiences of derealization or depersonalization. It reconstructs the strongest argument available to the solipsist before criticizing weaker versions. It then examines certainty, probability, falsifiability, explanatory power, prediction, ad hoc rescue hypotheses, the free-energy principle, trauma research, dissociation, motivated reasoning, and the misuse of psychological labels.

Finally, the paper asks a separate theological question: **Is solipsism compatible with the biblical worldview?** Here the answer is much clearer. Scripture presents God—not human consciousness—as ontologically prior to creation; distinguishes Creator, creation, self, and neighbour; grounds moral obligation in genuinely relational categories; and depicts human beings as finite knowers inhabiting a reality they did not create. Genesis 1, Job 38, Acts 17, John 1, the biblical doctrine of witness, and the command to love one’s neighbour all work within this Creator–creature structure. [\[KJV: Genesis 1:1\]](#) [\[KJV: Job 38\]](#)

The aim is not to ridicule the solipsist. It is to determine exactly what has been established, what remains possible, what remains merely imaginable, and where certainty has been claimed without warrant.

I

THE THREAD AND THE QUESTION BENEATH IT

The original poster did something worthwhile. Rather than announcing that solipsism was stupid or true, he asked believers to explain three things: why they became solipsists, what experiences influenced them, and what reasoning made the position seem correct. [\[Primary thread\]](#)

Those are three different questions. An **experience** can explain why a belief became psychologically attractive without establishing whether the belief is true. An **argument** can be valid or invalid regardless of the emotional circumstances that produced it. And a **worldview** may have philosophical, scientific, psychological, and theological dimensions that require different methods of evaluation.

The thread frequently collapses those categories. One poster suggests social alienation. Another proposes trauma. Another says surprise falsifies solipsism. Another invokes Karl Friston. Another invokes Buddhism. Another compares the issue to Holocaust denial. Another retreats from metaphysical solipsism into

epistemological solipsism. Another imagines having secretly constructed the universe and erased his own omniscience. Eventually the discussion reaches the possibility that “everything is me.”

The most important hidden assumption is not “I am aware.” It is: “If I cannot know something with the same certainty with which I know my own awareness, I should not believe it exists.”

That premise does enormous work. Yet the thread rarely states it. Making it explicit is the first step toward evaluating it.

II

METHODOLOGY: HOW THIS PAPER EVALUATES THE THREAD

A responsible analysis cannot use one method for every claim. When a poster says that Holocaust denial has a large evidential basis, that is an **historical claim**. Historical records and institutional archives are appropriate evidence. When someone invokes Friston’s free-energy principle, that is a **scientific claim**. Friston’s published work is the appropriate control. When someone says trauma causes solipsism, that is a **psychological causal claim**. Clinical and psychological research is needed.

When someone says only one mind exists, that is principally a **metaphysical proposition**. Neuroscience cannot simply place “metaphysical solipsism” in a scanner and disprove it. When someone claims that Buddha taught solipsism, that is a **historical-philosophical interpretation** and should be compared with Buddhist scholarship. When this paper asks whether solipsism is compatible with Scripture, that is a **biblical-theological question**. The biblical text must be distinguished from the interpretation offered about it.

Evidence hierarchy

1. **Primary materials:** the 4chan thread and the Authorized King James Version wording supplied for this project.
2. **Primary scientific literature:** peer-reviewed papers and reviews.
3. **Academic reference works:** especially the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.
4. **Institutional historical archives:** especially the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.
5. **Secondary interpretive scholarship.**
6. **Anonymous assertions:** treated as claims to investigate, not authorities.

Methodological rule: A criticism of an argument should first address the argument. Psychological explanations come afterward. If somebody says “Only my mind exists,” the first question is “What premises supposedly entail that conclusion?” It is not “What trauma made you say that?”

This paper also separates three standards that internet arguments often blur: **deductive proof**, **empirical support**, and **comparative explanatory warrant**. A proposition can be supported without being certain; a metaphysical possibility can remain conceivable without being probable; and a theory can be empirically unfalsifiable without therefore being true.



WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “SOLIPSISM”?

1. Metaphysical solipsism

The strongest version says: **Only my mind ultimately exists.** External objects and apparent persons are somehow contained within, generated by, or reducible to the sole consciousness. This is the position most readers ordinarily imagine when hearing “solipsism.” Academic treatments distinguish this ontological claim from weaker epistemological claims. [SEP: [Other Minds](#)]

2. Epistemological solipsism

A weaker position says: **Only my own conscious states are directly or certainly knowable to me.** This does not logically entail that other minds do not exist. A person might believe that other minds probably exist while simultaneously claiming that their existence cannot be known with the same immediacy as one’s own consciousness.

3. Methodological solipsism

This technical term in philosophy of mind should not be confused with either of the above. In discussions associated with Jerry Fodor, “methodological solipsism” concerns how psychological states are individuated for explanatory purposes—not the metaphysical doctrine that nobody else exists. [SEP: [Methodological Individualism](#)]

4. The problem of other minds

This asks: **How am I justified in believing that apparently conscious beings besides myself actually possess minds?** That is a genuine philosophical problem without requiring solipsism. Contemporary treatments discuss analogy, inference to the best explanation, testimony, and other approaches. [SEP: [Other Minds](#)]

5. Idealism

Idealism is not synonymous with solipsism. Different idealists understand reality as fundamentally mental, idea-like, experience-dependent, or structured by mind in importantly different senses. Berkeley, for example, did not conclude that only Berkeley existed; his ontology contains finite spirits and God. [SEP: [Idealism](#)]

6. Nondualism

“Nondualism” covers diverse philosophical and religious traditions. In broad terms, it can refer to rejection of an ultimate division between subject and object or between apparently separate realities. That does not automatically mean: *My individual ego is the sole existent being*.

7. Buddhist mind-only doctrines

Even Yogācāra—often described in strongly idealist language—cannot simply be identified with ego-solipsism. The Stanford Encyclopedia’s treatment notes that early Yogācāra thinkers faced the charge of solipsism but did not embrace it and affirmed other minds. [SEP: Yogācāra]

8. Simulation hypotheses

A simulation scenario proposes that the experienced environment is generated by some computational substrate. That is not solipsism. Nick Bostrom’s simulation argument concerns possible simulated civilizations and observers, not the proposition that only one observer exists. [Bostrom: Simulation Argument]

9. Depersonalization and derealization

These are experiences of detachment. Depersonalization concerns estrangement from oneself; derealization concerns the experience that surroundings feel unreal, distant, dreamlike, or strange. Clinical literature explicitly describes them as experiences of detachment from self and environment. [Murphy 2023, PubMed]

Key distinction: Feeling “the world seems unreal” is a phenomenological report. Concluding “the world does not exist” is a metaphysical inference. The second does not follow automatically from the first.

IV

STEELMANNING SOLIPSISM

Before criticizing solipsism, we should make its strongest case. A serious version might proceed like this:

1. Everything I experience appears within consciousness.
2. I never encounter another person's consciousness from the first-person perspective.
3. Even evidence for an external world—vision, touch, testimony, instruments—appears to me as conscious experience.
4. Dreams demonstrate that apparently external environments can be experienced without corresponding to the world as they appear.
5. Radical skeptical scenarios can reproduce the experiential evidence I presently possess.
6. Therefore, I cannot obtain absolute Cartesian certainty that external objects or other minds exist independently of consciousness.

Up to this point, there is a real philosophical challenge. Descartes deliberately pushes skepticism in this direction. His malicious-deceiver thought experiment strips away confidence in the external world until the meditator reaches something that appears resistant to doubt: the occurrence of thought and, with it, his existence while thinking. [\[SEP: Descartes' Epistemology\]](#)

Modern skeptical scenarios such as the brain in a vat retain the structure: the hypothesis is constructed so that ordinary experience cannot simply distinguish the skeptical scenario from the ordinary world. [\[SEP: Skepticism and Content Externalism\]](#)

The solipsist therefore deserves this much:

I have a distinctive first-person access to my present experience that I do not possess toward another person's experience.

But then something changes. From:

I cannot know another consciousness in exactly the same way I know present experience

the argument becomes:

Therefore only my consciousness exists.

The first does not entail the second.

V

THE MISSING PREMISE: HOW “I KNOW THAT I AM” BECOMES “ONLY I AM”

This is the philosophical center of the paper. Let **A** mean: *I am presently conscious*. The thread’s strongest pro-solipsist poster is correct that A enjoys a peculiar first-person status. Let **B** mean: *Other conscious beings exist*. Suppose I cannot know B with precisely the same immediacy with which I know A. What follows?

Not **not-B**. Not even necessarily: *I have no rational justification for B*.

THE HIDDEN PREMISE

P: If a proposition cannot be known with the same certainty as my present awareness, I should not believe that proposition describes reality.

Now the reasoning becomes visible:

1. I know my awareness directly.
2. I do not know other minds with identical certainty.
3. Only things known with that degree of certainty should be treated as existent.
4. Therefore only my own awareness should be treated as real.

The third premise is doing the decisive work. And it is enormously controversial. Contemporary epistemology commonly distinguishes knowledge from certainty. Skeptical arguments may show that much ordinary knowledge falls short of infallible Cartesian certainty without showing that it lacks epistemic value or cannot count as knowledge. [\[SEP: Certainty\]](#)

Not certain $\neq$ not known. • Not deductively proven $\neq$ unsupported. • Conceivably false $\neq$ irrational to believe.

VI

FORMAL ARGUMENT MAPS FROM THE THREAD

ARGUMENT MAP 1 — THE CARTESIAN-TO-SOLIPSIST SLIDE

P1. I am aware.

P2. My awareness is uniquely certain.

P3. Other minds are not equally certain.

C. Only my awareness is truly real.

Problem: C does not follow from P1-P3. The missing premise is that anything less certain than present awareness should be denied or treated as unreal.

ARGUMENT MAP 2 — SURPRISE DISPROVES SOLIPSISM

P1. If my mind created everything, I would predict everything.

P2. I am sometimes surprised.

C. My mind did not create everything.

Hidden premise: If one mind ultimately generates experience, its ordinary conscious ego must have complete access to and voluntary control over that generating process.

ARGUMENT MAP 3 — NONFALSIFIABILITY IMPLIES POSSIBILITY

P1. Solipsism cannot be experimentally falsified.

P2. Nonfalsifiable propositions have not thereby been disproved.

C. Solipsism therefore deserves positive probability.

Problem: P2 may be true while C still fails. Lack of falsification does not itself assign a probability.

ARGUMENT MAP 4 — I SECRETLY CREATED THE UNIVERSE AND FORGOT

P1. Surprise seems inconsistent with conscious omnipotence.

P2. Perhaps a deeper version of myself intentionally hid omniscience from my ordinary self.

C. Surprise therefore poses no problem for solipsism.

Problem: P2 is an auxiliary hypothesis introduced specifically to protect the central claim. The relevant question is what independent evidence supports P2.

ARGUMENT MAP 5 — POSTING IMPLIES OTHER MINDS

P1. I post messages.

P2. I receive complex, context-sensitive replies I did not consciously formulate.

P3. Independent minds are a good explanation for such replies.

C. Therefore other minds exist.

This is best understood as **abduction**—inference to the best explanation—not as a Cartesian deduction. Academic treatments of the other-minds problem explicitly discuss analogy and best explanation. [\[SEP: Other Minds\]](#)

VII

A SHORT GENEALOGY OF THE PROBLEM

Descartes: the solitary starting point

Descartes' methodical doubt asks what remains certain if sensory experience, memory, the body, and even mathematical reasoning can be systematically deceived. The cogito survives because attempting to doubt thought still involves thinking. Yet Descartes himself does not stop at solipsism; his project attempts to recover knowledge of God and the external world. [\[SEP: Descartes\]](#)

Hume: skepticism and nature

Hume pushes doubts concerning causation and the external world very far while developing a naturalistic account of human belief. His work illustrates a recurring theme: inability to produce Cartesian proof need not compel metaphysical solipsism. [\[SEP: Hume\]](#)

Reid and Mill: other minds

Thomas Reid resists the Cartesian framework and treats belief in intelligent fellow humans as part of ordinary cognition. John Stuart Mill develops an inferential approach: we observe stable connections between our own inner states and behavior, then infer comparable inner states behind comparable behavior in others. [\[SEP: Other Minds\]](#)

Kant: challenging the inside-outside setup

Kant's "Refutation of Idealism" attempts to show that consciousness of one's own temporal experience itself depends upon awareness of persistent objects outside oneself. Scholars debate the argument, but its importance is clear: Kant challenges the picture of a self-sufficient inner theater from which an external world must be inferred. [\[SEP: Kant's Transcendental Arguments\]](#)

Berkeley: idealism without solipsism

Berkeley denies material substance in his distinctive sense while retaining minds, other finite spirits, and God. His example demonstrates that making reality mind-dependent does not automatically make reality dependent upon one individual human ego. [\[SEP: Idealism\]](#)

Wittgenstein: can a purely private standpoint sustain language?

Wittgenstein's private-language discussions challenge the idea of a language whose meanings could in principle be known only to a solitary user. The concern is that meaningful rule-following requires standards of correct and incorrect use that cannot collapse into "whatever seems right to me is right." Interpretations are contested, so this should not be sold as a one-paragraph proof against solipsism. It is better understood as a serious conceptual pressure on the picture of a fully private consciousness preceding public meaning. [\[SEP: Private Language\]](#)

The history does not yield: "philosophers proved solipsism impossible." It yields something more instructive: philosophers repeatedly discovered that the supposedly simple route from private experience to solitary reality becomes conceptually expensive.

VIII

FROM “YOU CANNOT DISPROVE IT” TO “THEREFORE BELIEVE IT”

One of the thread’s most important moves appears when a poster correctly says that nonfalsifiability does not mean falsehood, then begins treating inability to disprove solipsism as a reason to grant it positive epistemic weight. [\[Primary thread\]](#)

Those are separate issues. Being impossible to falsify can arise because a proposition is insulated from evidence. It does not automatically become equally supported with ordinary hypotheses that make risky predictions and survive testing.

The burden-of-proof switch

The solipsist often oscillates between:

Motte: I cannot possess absolute certainty about other minds.

and:

Bailey: Only my mind exists.

The first is much easier to defend. The second is much stronger. Retreating to the first under pressure and returning to the second afterward creates an argumentative instability even when it is not consciously strategic.

The important methodological rule is simple: **failure to disprove a claim does not transfer the burden of proof to everyone else.**

IX

POSSIBILITY, PROBABILITY, AND PLAUSIBILITY

The thread repeatedly moves among three concepts as though they were identical.

Logical possibility

A proposition contains no obvious contradiction. Example: *Perhaps I created the universe and erased my memory.*

Epistemic possibility

Given what I know, I cannot confidently rule it out.

Probability

The hypothesis has some quantified or comparative likelihood under a probability model.

Plausibility

The hypothesis fits background knowledge, explanatory virtues, prior evidence, and relevant constraints comparatively well.

These levels cannot be freely substituted. From “I can imagine H” we cannot infer “H has a meaningful probability comparable to its alternatives.” A probability requires an account of priors, likelihoods, or comparative warrant.

Logical openness is not a probability distribution.

x

PREDICTION, EXPLANATORY POWER, AND THE SELF-SEALING HYPOTHESIS

Model R: other-agent realism

Other people possess minds partly independent of mine. This model expects that people will possess information I lack, misunderstand me, surprise me, resist my preferences, pursue projects I never imagined, remember events I forgot, and sometimes correctly tell me I am mistaken.

Model S*: unrestricted hidden-mind solipsism

Everything is generated by my deeper consciousness, but that deeper consciousness can hide any fact, create any apparent person, produce any disagreement, erase any memory, simulate any discovery, and surprise my ordinary ego whenever it wishes.

Now ask: what observation could discriminate S* from anything else?

- If others agree with me: my deeper mind generated agreement.
- If they disagree: my deeper mind generated disagreement.
- If I control an outcome: my hidden power worked.
- If I fail: my hidden power wanted failure.
- If I remember creating the world: confirmation.
- If I do not remember: deliberate amnesia.

S* can postdict everything. But a theory explaining every conceivable outcome equally well often predicts very little.

Popper's falsifiability criterion was meant to distinguish empirical science from non-science: scientific theories must risk conflict with possible observation. Importantly, Popper did not equate "metaphysical" with "meaningless" or automatically false. [SEP: [Science and Pseudo-Science](#)]

Correct conclusion: Radical self-sealing solipsism is not refuted merely because it is unfalsifiable. But its unfalsifiability is not scientific evidence in its favor either.

XI

THE SURPRISE ARGUMENT AND FRISTON'S FREE-ENERGY PRINCIPLE

One poster argues that surprise proves solipsism false. Another invokes Karl Friston's free-energy principle to reinforce this. The thread is reaching for something real but overshooting it. [Primary thread]

Friston’s framework describes adaptive agents in terms of prediction, generative models, sensory exchange, and variational free energy. “Surprise” here has a technical information-theoretic meaning related to the improbability of outcomes under a model—not merely the everyday feeling of being startled. Friston’s review states that surprise rests on predictions about sensations that depend on an internal generative model, and that free energy bounds surprise.

[Friston 2010, [Nature Reviews Neuroscience](#)]

The free-energy principle can help us understand prediction, prediction error, sensory inference, model updating, and adaptive interaction. It does **not** contain a theorem saying: *If an organism encounters prediction error, metaphysical solipsism is false*. That conclusion requires additional philosophical premises.

What surprise actually shows

Surprise strongly challenges one particular thesis: *My ordinary conscious ego deliberately controls and predicts every detail of experience*. If I routinely encounter events I neither intend nor anticipate, that model performs poorly.

But the sophisticated solipsist can respond: *My unconscious or deeper mind generated those events*. At that point the debate has shifted from conscious control to an invisible unrestricted generator whose properties expand as objections appear. The criticism becomes methodological rather than a claim that neuroscience has directly disproved metaphysics.

XII

DREAMS, HALLUCINATIONS, VR, AND SIMULATION

The strongest intuitive argument for skepticism may be very simple: **Dreams feel real while we are dreaming**. Therefore apparent perceptual immediacy is not infallible. Correct. But this establishes that experience can misrepresent reality, not that experience never supplies evidence about reality.

Hallucinations establish the same point. Virtual reality shows that sensory systems can be fed artificially structured information. Brain-in-a-vat scenarios push the principle to its logical extreme.

Yet the inference “some perceptions are misleading; therefore perception provides no knowledge” is invalid. Medicine, navigation, engineering, and ordinary life depend on fallible but corrigible perception. Error is discoverable precisely because observations can be compared across time, instruments, modalities, and observers.

Simulation is not solipsism

Even if we lived inside a simulation, several possibilities remain: other simulated beings are conscious; biological beings outside the simulation are conscious; the simulator is conscious; multiple levels of consciousness exist. Bostrom’s simulation argument therefore is not an argument for “only I exist.”

[\[Simulation Argument\]](#)

A world can be artificial without being solitary.

XIII

PSYCHOLOGY: EXPERIENCE IS NOT METAPHYSICS

Several thread participants attempt to explain solipsism psychologically. This is where caution is especially important.

Depersonalization

A person may feel detached from self, body, thoughts, or emotions.

Derealization

A person may experience surroundings as unreal, distant, artificial, dreamlike, or strangely flattened.

Clinical literature describes both experiences clearly. Murphy’s 2023 review describes depersonalization and derealization as profound feelings of detachment from one’s sense of self and from the surrounding environment respectively, and notes their possible relationship to trauma-related pathology.

[Murphy 2023, PubMed]

Methodological safeguard: “The world feels unreal” is a report about experience. “The world is ontologically unreal” is a theory about reality. The second cannot simply be read off from the first.

XIV

TRAUMA: WHAT THE EVIDENCE DOES AND DOES NOT SUPPORT

A thread participant presents solipsism as a trauma-based escape mechanism; another speculates that social alienation explains most solipsists. These claims are much stronger than the evidence provided.

The research supports something narrower: trauma can be associated with dissociation, depersonalization, and derealization. This permits the statement that some trauma-related states can involve profound experiences of detachment or unreality. [Murphy 2023]

It does **not** permit us to infer that anonymous philosophical solipsists adopted their beliefs because of trauma. No psychological assessment of the posters exists. No representative sample is presented. No causal study in the thread establishes that philosophical solipsism is generally a trauma defense.

The hypothesis may be worth researching. It is not an established diagnosis.

XV

PSYCHOLOGY WITHOUT PSYCHOLOGIZING

There is a broader methodological error here: the genetic fallacy. Suppose we discovered that somebody believes realism because it makes him feel safe. That would not prove realism false. Suppose somebody believes solipsism because it protects him from interpersonal pain. That would not prove solipsism false either.

The origin of a belief and the justification of a belief are distinct questions.

Psychology becomes relevant when asking why certain explanations are attractive, how people preserve beliefs, how identity and emotion affect evidence evaluation, and why self-sealing explanations resist revision. Work on motivated reasoning shows that goals and motivations can shape evidence evaluation and justification. [[Kunda 1990](#), [PubMed](#)]

This applies symmetrically. The realist can rationalize. The solipsist can rationalize. The Christian can rationalize. The atheist can rationalize.

A good methodology asks: What evidence would make me revise my position?

XVI

THE DUNNING-KRUGER LABEL

A poster throws “Dunning-Kruger” into the discussion as an insult. That is not an adequate use of psychological research.

The Dunning-Kruger literature concerns relationships among performance, self-evaluation, and metacognitive calibration. Later work complicates the popular slogan that low performers are simply “too stupid to know they are stupid.” McIntosh and colleagues found that metacognitive differences are neither necessary nor sufficient to produce the familiar pattern. [\[McIntosh et al. 2019, PubMed\]](#)

Nothing about an anonymous philosophical disagreement permits a clinical or psychometric diagnosis of a “Dunning-Kruger victim.” The correct response to a bad argument remains: **show where the argument fails.**

XVII

FACT-CHECKING THE THREAD’S HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS REFERENCES

Did Buddha teach solipsism?

No—not in the simple sense implied by the thread. Early Buddhist teaching is famously associated with non-self rather than apotheosis of the individual ego. Academic treatments discuss arguments denying a permanent substantive self underlying the psychophysical aggregates. [\[SEP: Buddha\]](#)

Yogācāra creates more complicated questions because of its idealist tendencies, but major Yogācāra philosophers explicitly confronted the other-minds problem rather than simply collapsing all minds into one ego. [\[SEP: Yogācāra\]](#)

Did Socrates mean that nothing can be known?

The popular slogan “I know that I know nothing” should not be treated as universal nihilistic skepticism. In the *Apology* context, Socratic wisdom concerns recognition of one’s ignorance where others claim knowledge without adequate justification. [\[SEP: Ancient Skepticism\]](#)

The useful lesson is not “nothing can be known.” It is: **knowing where knowledge stops is different from declaring reality stops there too.**

Does agnosticism necessarily mean permanent unknowability?

No. Huxley's coinage emphasized disciplined refusal to claim knowledge or belief without adequate grounds, and modern philosophical usage includes suspension of judgment, not only the strongest thesis that nobody could ever know the answer. [SEP: Atheism and Agnosticism]

XVIII

THE HOLOCAUST-DENIAL COMPARISON

One of the thread's worst factual moments occurs when a poster compares objections to solipsism with Holocaust denial and suggests that the Holocaust lacks proof while contrary evidence is abundant. That historical claim is false.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum describes the Holocaust as the best documented case of genocide. The Nuremberg evidence included thousands of German documents, photographs and films created by Nazi Germans, and eyewitness testimony from survivors and perpetrators. [USHMM: Evidence at Nuremberg] [USHMM: Evidence from the Holocaust]

This mistake teaches a broader epistemological lesson. If historical knowledge required elimination of every imaginable Cartesian deception scenario, then we would know no historical event. History instead works through converging evidence: source criticism, provenance, physical evidence, contemporaneous records, testimony, demographic reconstruction, and explanatory coherence.

Absolute logical certainty is not the ordinary standard for historical knowledge.

XIX

INTERNET RHETORIC AS PART OF THE PHENOMENON

The thread is not simply a collection of propositions. It is a social environment. The rhetoric matters because it affects how arguments are perceived.

Ridicule replacing argument

Posters repeatedly label opponents stupid rather than identifying faulty premises. The insult may earn status inside the thread. It earns no logical validity.

Scientific name-dropping

Friston's name appears as though mentioning an advanced theory settles the metaphysical question. This is authority inflation: *real technical theory* → *vaguely related concept* → *conclusion not established by the theory*.

Psychological labeling

“Trauma,” “Dunning-Kruger,” social alienation, and bitterness become explanations for opponents. Some may be reasonable research hypotheses. None can be inferred confidently from a few anonymous comments.

Definition shifting

“Solipsism” moves among metaphysical exclusivity, epistemic humility, uncertainty about other minds, nondualism, the universe as self-generated, and ordinary selfishness. Arguments that appear contradictory often target different definitions.

Retreat and return

A poster may begin with “only my own awareness is certain,” defend that modest claim when challenged, then later speak as though everything literally is the same self. Explicit definitions prevent the stronger proposition from hiding behind the weaker one.

Mystical escape hatches

The claim that an unknown deeper self intentionally generated every counterexample cannot be disproved easily because the deeper self can be assigned whatever properties are needed after the fact.

Identity and certainty

Once someone says “I am a solipsist,” criticism can become criticism of identity rather than a revisable proposition. A healthier formulation is: *Here is the proposition I currently think is true.*

XX

CLAIM-EVIDENCE MATRIX

Thread claim	Type	Evidence offered	Assessment	Corrected conclusion
My present awareness is unusually certain	Epistemology	Introspection	Strong but limited	Supports privileged first-person access, not sole existence
Only my consciousness exists	Metaphysics	First-person certainty	Insufficient	Requires additional premises
Surprise disproves solipsism	Philosophy/science	Prediction error	Too broad	Challenges conscious total-control versions
Friston disproves solipsism	Neuroscience/metaphysics	Free-energy principle	Misapplied	FEP concerns adaptive inference, not metaphysical proof
Solipsism cannot be falsified	Philosophy of science	Radical skeptical construction	Often true for unrestricted versions	Nonfalsifiability does not imply truth
Nonfalsifiability gives positive probability	Probability/epistemology	None specified	Unsupported transition	Probability requires additional assumptions
Trauma causes solipsism	Psychology	Anecdote	Unsupported as a general claim	Trauma can relate to dissociation/DPDR without implying philosophical solipsism
Solipsists are social outcasts	Psychology/sociology	Anecdote	Unsupported generalization	Would require empirical population data

Dunning-Kruger explains defenders	Psychology	Insult	Unsupported	DKE cannot be diagnosed from disagreement
Touch proves external reality	Epistemology	Tactile experience	Insufficient against radical skepticism	Touch is evidence, not Cartesian proof
Buddha taught solipsism	History of philosophy	Loose association with illusion	Misleading	Buddhist non-self and Yogācāra are not ego-solipsism
Socrates taught universal ignorance	History of philosophy	Popular slogan	Oversimplified	Socratic ignorance concerns disciplined recognition of limits
Holocaust evidence is weak	History	Assertion	False	The Holocaust is extraordinarily well documented
Posting implies belief in other minds	Practical epistemology	Communicative behavior	Strong practical evidence, not deduction	Ordinary reasoning treats others as independent information sources
“Everything is me” follows from epistemic limitation	Metaphysics	None	Non sequitur	Epistemic limitation does not establish ontological identity

XXI

“WHERE WAST THOU?” — JOB 38
AND THE DECENTERING OF HUMAN
CONSCIOUSNESS

We now change methods. Everything above has asked what philosophy, psychology, history, or science establishes. We now ask what worldview the biblical text itself presents.

A biblical passage is not a neuroscience experiment. Nor does citing Genesis magically solve every problem in secular epistemology. The theological question is narrower: **If Scripture is taken on its own terms, is metaphysical ego-solipsism compatible with its worldview?**

The biblical answer appears overwhelmingly negative. The opening words establish the basic ontology:

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” — Genesis 1:1

[KJV: Genesis 1:1]

Human consciousness is not introduced as the precondition for creation. Within the narrative, God precedes man; creation precedes human observation; human consciousness is located inside creation rather than creation inside the human ego.

Job 38 makes the point almost confrontationally:

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.” — Job 38:4

[KJV: Job 38:4]

The context concerns Job’s creaturely limitation before divine wisdom. Yet the theological implication is directly relevant. Reality is not centered upon Job’s awareness. God distinguishes the divine Creator who laid the foundations from the human creature who was absent.

Biblical epistemic humility is not: “I cannot know everything, so perhaps everything is me.”

It is closer to: “I cannot know everything because I am a finite creature inhabiting a reality whose Author is not me.”

ACTS 17: DEPENDENCE IS NOT IDENTITY

Acts 17 deserves special attention because mystical language is often misunderstood in precisely the direction seen in the thread.

“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth...” — Acts 17:24

[KJV: Acts 17:24-29]

A few verses later Paul says:

“For in him we live, and move, and have our being...” — Acts 17:28

Someone could isolate verse 28 and reinterpret it as “everything is literally one consciousness.” But the immediate context resists that reading. Paul has already distinguished God, the world God made, nations of human beings, their times, their habitations, and their search for God.

*Dependence ≠ identity. • Image ≠ identity. •
Presence ≠ identity. • Creaturely participation ≠
becoming the Creator.*

XXIII

JOHN 1: CREATION AND INCARNATION

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” — John 1:1

“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” — John 1:3

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...” — John 1:14

[KJV: John 1:1-14]

These statements create a profoundly non-solipsistic theological structure. Reality does not originate in the human reader. The reader belongs to the class of created beings whose existence depends upon the divine Creator. Christianity’s central claim also does not involve escaping embodiment into an isolated consciousness. It involves incarnation: the Word made flesh.

Whatever else one makes of Christian metaphysics, its textual narrative is embodied, historical, relational, public, and populated by distinct subjects.

XXIV

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF WITNESS

Biblical revelation repeatedly operates through multiple witnesses. This matters for the structure of the worldview.

“In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.”

— 2 Corinthians 13:1

[KJV: 2 Corinthians 13:1]

The New Testament repeatedly distinguishes the event, the witness who observed it, another witness, and the hearer receiving testimony. Those categories are not philosophical proofs against a malicious-demon scenario. But within the biblical worldview they presuppose genuinely distinct personal agents.

The pattern is particularly visible in Acts 17:11, where the Bereans receive teaching and then search the Scriptures to examine whether what they have heard is so. [KJV: Acts 17:11]

The structure is not one consciousness talking to its projections. It is claims examined among accountable persons before God.

XXV

THE BIBLICAL EPISTEMOLOGY OF EXAMINATION

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:21

[KJV: 1 Thessalonians 5:21]

The context is theological rather than a modern philosophy-of-science manual. Still, the principle is instructive: **test rather than merely assert**.

The Bereans likewise “searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” [KJV: Acts 17:11]

The biblical alternative to solipsistic certainty is therefore not intellectual passivity. Scripture repeatedly distinguishes truth from falsehood, witness from false witness, wisdom from folly, and knowledge from presumption.

XXVI

“LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF”: THE ETHICAL PROBLEM

“Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” — Matthew 22:39

[KJV: Matthew 22:37-40]

Notice the grammar: **neighbour** and **self**. The command relates them morally without identifying them numerically.

“for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” — 1 John 4:20

[KJV: 1 John 4:20-21]

The brother is treated as a genuine moral other whose welfare matters. This creates a serious theological problem for religious forms of ego-solipsism.

This does not mean every philosophical solipsist behaves immorally, or every realist behaves well. The point is conceptual: a worldview in which other persons possess genuine reality supplies a direct basis for treating their interests as genuinely other than mine. A worldview in which every apparent person is merely a projection of my own solitary consciousness must reconstruct that moral otherness by additional theory.

XXVII

HUMAN LIMITATION IS NOT HIDDEN DIVINITY

One recurring solipsistic escape is: *Perhaps I really am omnipotent and omniscient, but I deliberately hid those attributes from myself*. Notice what has happened. The original argument began with epistemic humility—“I only know my own awareness with certainty”—and ends with cosmic self-deification—“perhaps I secretly generated everything.”

The distance between those claims is enormous.

“for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” — Revelation 4:11

[KJV: Revelation 4:11]

“For by him were all things created...” — Colossians 1:16
“and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” — Colossians 1:17
[\[KJV: Colossians 1:15-17\]](#)

Biblical ignorance therefore points toward creatureliness, not concealed universal authorship.

XXVIII

ETHICAL CONSEQUENCES WITHOUT CARICATURE

It is worth asking what practical consequences can follow from a strongly ego-solipsistic worldview, but this must be done carefully. We cannot say, “Solipsists are immoral.” We can ask what becomes conceptually difficult if other people are treated as projections.

Consent

Why respect another’s refusal if the other is ultimately a character generated by oneself? The solipsist may still respect consent—but must provide an ethical reason that survives the reduction of the other person’s independent reality.

Suffering

If another person’s agony is interpreted primarily as “an experience my consciousness generated for itself,” there is a risk that actual interpersonal suffering becomes aestheticized or spiritualized.

Accountability

If every harm done by another ultimately becomes something a hidden self created, ordinary distinctions among victim, perpetrator, responsibility, and injustice can become unstable.

Correction

If every critic is my own projection, disagreement can become self-confirming rather than genuinely corrective.

None of these outcomes is logically mandatory. They are structural risks. The biblical framework counters them by placing each neighbour under God rather than inside my ego.

XXIX

THE PERFORMATIVE TENSION OF POSTING SOLIPSISM ONLINE

There is something philosophically revealing about arguing for solipsism on an anonymous message board. The poster composes sentences, selects words, anticipates interpretation, answers objections, distinguishes misunderstandings, becomes frustrated when readers fail to understand, supplies clarification, and waits for novel replies.

All of that behavior operates naturally under the model: **there are other interpreters whose mental states differ from mine.**

Does that deductively disprove solipsism? No. The solipsist can answer that all communication is internally generated. But the communicative behavior continues to rely pragmatically on categories that the metaphysical theory attempts to dissolve.

That is best described as a **performative tension**, not necessarily a formal contradiction.

XXX

WHAT EVIDENCE WOULD CHANGE YOUR MIND?

To the metaphysical solipsist

What conceivable experience would decrease your confidence? If the answer is “nothing whatsoever, because my hidden mind could generate anything,” then the theory is empirically non-discriminating. That does not make it logically false. It tells us what kind of theory it is.

To the realist

What evidence would reduce confidence that apparent persons possess independent minds? Possible answers might include reliable evidence that apparently independent agents are generated predictably by one’s own intentions, disappearance of behavioral independence, or a demonstrably superior alternative explanatory framework. The point is not that such evidence presently exists; the point is that realism can at least participate in comparative evidence evaluation.

To the Christian interpreter

What would challenge the theological interpretation offered here? Biblically, we would need texts establishing something like: the human ego existed before creation; the individual human consciousness created all other persons; neighbours are merely manifestations of one human subject; or Creator and human creature are numerically identical.

The texts examined instead move consistently in the opposite direction. That does not make the biblical worldview an experimental proof against solipsism. It makes metaphysical ego-solipsism **textually incompatible** with the worldview Scripture presents.

XXXI

ANNOTATED THREAD WALKTHROUGH

The following appendix paraphrases the substantive visible posts rather than reproducing the thread wholesale. Post numbers allow readers to compare the analysis against the source. [\[Primary thread\]](#)

42984682 — Original Post

The OP asks believers in solipsism to explain experience, reasoning, and motivation. **Assessment:** methodologically sound opening question. **Correction:** keep psychological explanation and philosophical justification separate.

42984692

A joke based on the premise that replying to another person would really amount to bothering oneself. **Assessment:** rhetorical play, not argument.

42984947

Dismisses solipsism as unintelligent and easily refuted. **Assessment:** unsupported assertion. Radical skeptical positions are not made false merely by calling them simple to refute.

42985602

Argues that present awareness is the only absolutely certain proposition and claims solipsism therefore requires no beliefs. **Assessment:** the first claim resembles a Cartesian intuition; the second overreaches. “I am aware” does not entail “Only I am aware.” [SEP: [Descartes](#)]

42985911

Attributes solipsism primarily to social isolation and, in other cases, misunderstanding spiritual or occult teachings. **Assessment:** the distinction between universal divine manifestation and personal ego-solipsism is useful; the social-outcast explanation is unsupported population psychology.

42987862

Says solipsism is a category mistake and that surprise defeats it. **Assessment:** surprise undermines conscious-total-control theories more directly than unrestricted metaphysical solipsism.

42987872

Characterizes solipsism as an escape from interpersonal trauma. **Assessment:** unsupported diagnosis. Trauma can correlate with dissociation and derealization, but this does not establish the psychology of anonymous posters. [Murphy 2023]

42988403

Clarifies that no ontological conclusion was intended; the point was merely that one can be sure only of one's own awareness. **Assessment:** important retreat to an epistemological thesis. Calling it a tautology is imprecise.

42988419

Compares the evidential situation to Holocaust denial and suggests the Holocaust has not been proved. **Assessment:** historically false. [USHMM]

42988438

Humorous reaction. No substantive argument.

42988444

Jokes that other people are too foolish to have been imagined by him. **Assessment:** rhetorical version of the surprise argument; not deductive evidence.

42988451

Says unexpected events that violate prior expectations render solipsism void. **Assessment:** overstatement. Prediction error challenges one model of solipsistic control, not every conceivable sole-mind hypothesis.

42988471

Rejects solipsism but makes sweeping claims that humanity is universally delusional, authorities universally dishonest, and existence a hell-realm. **Assessment:** unsupported universal generalizations.

42988477

Says he ceased experiencing surprise after concluding everything was fake. **Assessment:** personal phenomenological report; absence of felt surprise does not establish ontology.

42988493

Invokes Friston's free-energy principle as showing solipsism to be logically invalid. **Assessment:** scientific overreach. [Friston 2010]

42988560

Mocks the use of sophisticated scientific vocabulary. **Assessment:** there is a legitimate criticism beneath the insult: technical language does not establish an unrelated conclusion.

42990863

Pure insult. No evidential content.

42991435

Simply announces that solipsism is the final truth. **Assessment:** assertion without argument. Confidence is not evidence.

42991661

Distinguishes certainty about one's awareness from claims denying other awarenesses. **Assessment:** one of the strongest contributions to the thread; it identifies the core epistemology/ontology distinction.

42991665

Says a claimed loss of surprise presupposes earlier capacity for surprise. **Assessment:** fair reply to the personal claim; still not a universal disproof of solipsism.

42991674

Invokes Dunning-Kruger. **Assessment:** psychological label used as insult.
[\[McIntosh et al. 2019\]](#)

42991692

Vaguely accuses another of substituting popular science for reality. **Assessment:** potentially legitimate concern, insufficiently specified.

42991782

Joke treats spiritual reunification of souls as though it implied all persons literally are one individual self. **Assessment:** useful accidental illustration of the difference between nondualism and ego-solipsism.

42991812

Says an opponent's personal attack constitutes an admission of defeat. **Assessment:** overreach. An ad hominem is not a valid rebuttal, but committing one does not prove secret concession.

42991931

Accepts "epistemological solipsism" as the more precise term and proposes that perhaps the world was deliberately configured to hide omniscience from the self. **Assessment:** terminological improvement followed by an ad hoc rescue hypothesis.

42992535

Argues that tactile experience shows illusions cannot account for reality. **Assessment:** touch supplies evidence but not an answer to radical skepticism.

42992677

Says information limits are not a philosophy and uses division by zero/vertical lines as an analogy. **Assessment:** the intended point—representational limitation does not imply nonexistence—is useful, but the mathematical analogy is imprecise.

42992704

Endorses solipsism "for me" but not for another person. **Assessment:** conceptually unstable if intended literally. If only one subject exists, two independently valid subject-relative ontologies cannot straightforwardly coexist.

42992831

Makes several important distinctions: nonfalsifiable does not mean false; sensory data can be mistaken; posting behavior pragmatically anticipates other minds. Then moves from nonfalsifiability toward positive chance. **Assessment:** mixed. The nonfalsifiability point is correct; the probability transition requires further premises.

42992832

Reduces the prior position to lack of knowledge. **Assessment:** reasonable if referring specifically to acknowledged epistemic limitation. Ignorance does not entail solipsism.

42992836

Dismisses the spiritual discussion as religious nonsense. **Assessment:** mere dismissal; category membership is not a refutation.

42992853

Observes that unconscious things such as rocks or lightning can surprise someone. **Assessment:** correct. Surprise does not logically entail another conscious agent.

42992856

Asks whether an illusory world generated by oneself is essentially Buddhism. **Assessment:** historically misleading. [SEP: Yogācāra]

42992860

Generalizes that implicit solipsism appears as passive-aggressive bitterness. **Assessment:** interesting social hypothesis but unsupported empirical generalization.

42992886

Suggests that being surprised by another person's character provides stronger evidence than surprise by inanimate events. **Assessment:** better abductively, because complex interpersonal behavior is evidence one normally explains by other agents. Still not deductive proof against every skeptical scenario.

42993040

Correctly recognizes that physically striking a solipsist does not philosophically prove realism, but expresses the point mainly through contempt. **Assessment:** sound narrow criticism, poor presentation.

42993492

Argues that epistemic limitation can itself constitute a philosophical stance and invokes Socrates. **Assessment:** first part correct; Socratic ignorance is not universal unknowability. [SEP: Ancient Skepticism]

42993589

Declares that everything is the self and that this realization is liberating. **Assessment:** full metaphysical assertion without supporting inference.

42993619

Argues that if one mind generates everything, it should control violence, lotteries, romantic outcomes, and other events. **Assessment:** strong objection to conscious-volitional omnipotence, not decisive against theories positing unconscious generation.

42994262

Argues that true agnosticism means permanent in-principle unknowability and dismisses the Socrates comparison. **Assessment:** the rejection of the Socrates analogy is partly fair; the definition of agnosticism is too restrictive. [SEP: [Atheism and Agnosticism](#)]

42994286

Brief dismissive meme response. No argument.

42995079

Repeats the claim that everything is the same self. **Assessment:** assertion without new evidence.

42995087

Test post. No philosophical content.

XXXII

FIVE-CLAIM EXERCISE: SPOT THE HIDDEN PREMISE

Each exercise is drawn directly from a reasoning pattern in the thread. Try to identify what unstated proposition must be supplied before reading the answer.

Claim 1

I am completely certain that I am aware. I am not completely certain that other minds exist. Therefore only my consciousness is truly real.

Hidden premise: Only things whose existence I know with the same certainty as my own awareness should be believed to exist. The argument otherwise moves from an epistemological difference to an ontological conclusion.

Claim 2

Solipsism cannot be scientifically falsified. Therefore it remains a genuine positive possibility that deserves nonzero credence.

Hidden premise: Any unfalsifiable proposition automatically deserves positive epistemic probability merely because it cannot be disproved. That premise is not warranted without a probability model or comparative evidential argument.

Claim 3

People and events surprise me. Therefore solipsism is false.

Hidden premise: If my mind were the sole source of experience, my ordinary conscious ego would know and predict everything that mind produces. A solipsist can reject that premise by introducing unconscious generation—though doing so creates other methodological problems.

Claim 4

Maybe I created the universe and intentionally hid my omniscience so existence would remain interesting. Therefore surprise and lack of control do not count against solipsism.

Hidden premise: An unobserved deeper self with whatever capacities are needed may legitimately be introduced whenever evidence conflicts with conscious-control solipsism. Once that premise is accepted without independent evidence, almost any observation can be absorbed.

Claim 5

I post messages expecting meaningful replies that I did not consciously compose. Therefore other minds exist.

Hidden premise: Independent conscious agents are the best available explanation for complex, context-sensitive responses that appear independently of my intentions. Unlike the previous premises, this one is not obviously unreasonable, but it supports an abductive conclusion rather than a Cartesian deduction.

The lesson is not that hidden premises are always bad. It is that they must be exposed and evaluated. That is the skill the thread most needs.

XXXIII

FALLACY AND REASONING INDEX

Non sequitur

Conclusion does not follow from stated premises. Examples: certainty of own awareness → only own awareness exists; nonfalsifiability → positive probability; insult by opponent → opponent has conceded.

Argument from ignorance

Because something has not been disproved, it is positively supported.

Equivocation

The meaning of “solipsism” shifts between epistemological uncertainty and metaphysical sole existence.

Genetic fallacy

A belief is dismissed because of its supposed psychological origin—trauma, loneliness, bitterness, or social failure.

Ad hominem

Numerous posts substitute insults for replies to premises.

False dichotomy

Either absolute certainty or complete ignorance. Contemporary epistemology contains many positions between those extremes. [SEP: [Certainty](#)]

Ad hoc rescue hypothesis

Example: a hidden omnipotent self intentionally erased its knowledge. Possible, but introduced specifically to neutralize contrary evidence without independent support.

Authority inflation

Example: Friston’s theory exists; therefore solipsism is logically invalid. The scientific theory does not establish the metaphysical conclusion.

Motte-and-Bailey pattern

Motte: I only claim special certainty concerning my own experience. **Bailey:** Everything literally is me. The modest position is defended under pressure while the stronger position reappears later.

Category confusion

Repeatedly confusing experience with ontology; epistemology with metaphysics; falsifiability with probability; scientific explanation with philosophical proof; and nondualism with ego-solipsism.

SCRIPTURE INDEX BY DOCTRINAL THEME

Theme	Passages	Relevance
Creator and creation	Genesis 1:1 ; John 1:1-3 ; Colossians 1:15-17 ; Revelation 4:11	Reality depends upon God, not the human observer.
Creaturely limitation	Job 38:1-18	Human absence from and ignorance concerning creation.
Dependence without identity	Acts 17:24-29	Creatures live “in” God while remaining distinct from the Creator.
Incarnation	John 1:14	Embodied, historical, relational revelation.
Examination	Acts 17:11 ; 1 Thessalonians 5:21	Testing claims rather than merely asserting them.
Witness	2 Corinthians 13:1 ; Acts 1:1-8	Multiple accountable subjects and public testimony.
Neighbour and moral otherness	Matthew 22:37-40 ; 1 John 4:20-21	Self and neighbour remain morally related yet distinct.

xxxv

METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

1. We cannot clinically diagnose anonymous posters

We possess text, not clinical interviews, psychiatric histories, validated measures, or informed consent. Psychological language must describe mechanisms and possibilities rather than individual diagnoses.

2. Science does not straightforwardly “disprove metaphysical solipsism”

An unrestricted solipsistic hypothesis can be formulated to reproduce any observation. That is precisely why the scientific criticism concerns empirical discrimination rather than a simplistic experiment that supposedly destroys metaphysical skepticism.

3. Philosophy has no unanimous solution to the problem of other minds

Analogy, best explanation, testimony, externalism, Wittgensteinian approaches, and transcendental arguments remain debated. [SEP: [Other Minds](#)]

4. Biblical incompatibility is not scientific falsification

This paper argues that metaphysical ego-solipsism conflicts with the Creator–creation–neighbour structure of Scripture. That is a textual and theological conclusion, not a laboratory result.

5. Logical possibility does not guarantee practical rationality

A hypothesis can remain logically imaginable while possessing weak explanatory advantages.

6. Ordinary realism is not infallibility

To defend rational belief in other minds, one need not claim complete access to their consciousness.

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THE CENTRAL FINDINGS

1. The statement that one has uniquely direct access to one’s own consciousness is philosophically serious.
2. It does not entail that other consciousnesses do not exist.
3. The move from epistemological privilege to metaphysical exclusivity requires a hidden premise.

4. Absolute certainty is not the only form of rational epistemic warrant. [SEP: Certainty]
5. Other minds can be supported through inference, behavior, language, testimony, and explanatory considerations even though none gives access identical to first-person consciousness. [SEP: Other Minds]
6. Surprise undermines conscious-total-control solipsism more effectively than unrestricted metaphysical solipsism.
7. Friston's free-energy principle does not scientifically disprove solipsism. [Friston 2010]
8. Nonfalsifiability does not mean falsity. It also does not confer evidential support. [SEP: Science and Pseudo-Science]
9. Trauma can be associated with depersonalization, derealization, and dissociation, but the thread provides no basis for diagnosing solipsists as trauma-driven. [Murphy 2023]
10. Buddhism cannot responsibly be summarized as the doctrine that one individual ego creates everyone else. [SEP: Yogācāra]
11. The Holocaust-denial comparison rests on a false historical claim. [USHMM]
12. The biblical worldview is incompatible with metaphysical ego-solipsism because Scripture places God before creation, creation before human observation, and genuine neighbours alongside the self.

CONCLUSION

THE SOLIPSIST'S TRAP

Solipsism begins from something difficult to deny. I encounter reality through consciousness. I do not crawl directly into another person's first-person experience. My senses can mislead me. My interpretations can fail. My memories can fail. My models can fail. There is wisdom in recognizing those limitations.

But humility about knowledge can quietly become extravagance about ontology.

I cannot be absolutely certain about everything.
Therefore I cannot be absolutely certain about other minds.
Therefore perhaps other minds do not exist.
Therefore perhaps only I exist.
Therefore perhaps I created everything.
Therefore perhaps I deliberately erased my memory of creating everything.

At each transition, another premise has entered. The final worldview is no longer the cautious conclusion with which the argument began.

That is the solipsist's trap.

Radical doubt begins by accusing ordinary people of believing too much. It can end by believing something vastly more ambitious than ordinary realism: that the finite observer secretly constitutes the entire field of reality.

A careful researcher should resist both extremes. We should not pretend that touching a table solves Cartesian skepticism. We should not pretend that neuroscience has experimentally refuted every metaphysical skeptical scenario. We should not diagnose anonymous philosophers because their arguments irritate us. But neither should we confuse inability to obtain absolute certainty with evidence that only one mind exists.

There is an enormous conceptual distance between “I know that I am” and “Only I am.”

The thread never successfully bridges it.

And when the question turns from philosophy to Scripture, the distance becomes greater still.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” — Genesis 1:1
[\[KJV: Genesis 1:1\]](#)

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?” — Job 38:4

[KJV: Job 38:4]

“God that made the world and all things therein...” — Acts 17:24

[KJV: Acts 17:24]

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...” — John 1:14

[KJV: John 1:14]

“Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” — Matthew 22:39

[KJV: Matthew 22:39]

Self and neighbour remain distinguishable. Creature and Creator remain distinguishable. Human ignorance and divine knowledge remain distinguishable.

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:21

[KJV: 1 Thessalonians 5:21]

That is perhaps the most fitting final method for the whole investigation.

Not ridicule. Not credulity. Not certainty manufactured out of ignorance.

Examine the claim. Expose the premise. Test the evidence. Distinguish what is known from what is inferred. Distinguish experience from interpretation. Distinguish psychological explanation from philosophical rebuttal. Distinguish scientific models from metaphysical conclusions. And when Scripture is invoked, distinguish what the text actually says from what someone wishes to place inside it.

The observer may doubt creation. Within the biblical story, however, he stands inside a reality he did not create.



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