

Consciousness within the [i.i.] Model Explained

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A Three-Tier Informational Framework for Self-Referential Processing in an Information-First Cosmos

Abstract

This paper outlines a minimal, mechanistic account of consciousness within an information-first cosmology. The universe is treated as a writable medium whose behavior is governed by its capacity to encode, maintain, and propagate distinctions. Within this substrate, consciousness is interpreted not as a distinct substance but as a **self-referential informational process** arising from recursive writability. A three-tier classification—**I₁ (non-self-referential information), I₂ (self-modeling information), and I₃ (self-modifying information)**—is introduced to formalize the progression from simple transcription to reflective and adaptive processing. This framework integrates naturally with the Coherent/Corrupt (C/C) Axis, the Information Boundary Failure (IBF) hypothesis, and the broader Protophysical architecture, providing a substrate-level account of cognition without invoking emergent metaphysics or dualistic categories.

1. Introduction

In an information-first universe, the substrate must possess the capacity to encode and propagate distinctions before any material or cognitive phenomena can arise. Consciousness, under this view, is not an exception or an emergent anomaly but a **higher-order behavior of the same informational substrate**. This paper introduces a three-tier classification of informational processes (I₁–I₃) to describe how self-referential cognition arises from basic transcription mechanics.

2. Information-First Substrate

The universe is modeled as a writable medium whose behavior is governed by its operational condition along the Coherent/Corrupt Axis. All physical and cognitive structures are expressions of the medium's writability. Consciousness is therefore a **mode** of information, not a separate category. The three-tier classification provides a minimal vocabulary for describing this progression.

3. The Three Informational Classes (I_1 - I_3)

3.1 I_1 : Non-Self-Referential Information

I_1 denotes information that can be encoded and propagated but cannot represent or evaluate itself. Examples include stable physical states, rule-sets, and non-recursive transcription patterns. I_1 processes are foundational to the medium's coherent condition.

3.2 I_2 : Self-Modeling Information

I_2 denotes information capable of generating internal representations of its own state. This includes systems that can monitor, evaluate, or predict their own configurations. I_2 marks the onset of **self-awareness** in a minimal, mechanical sense: information reflecting itself to itself.

3.3 I_3 : Self-Modifying Information

I_3 denotes information capable of modifying its own encoding based on its self-model. This tier corresponds to adaptive, learning, and recursive feedback systems. I_3 processes constitute the substrate-level mechanics of what is conventionally called “consciousness.”

4. Consciousness as Recursive Writability

Consciousness is defined here as the stabilization of I_3 processes within a coherent region of the medium. No new substance or metaphysical layer is required. A conscious system is one in which information:

1. encodes itself (I_1),
2. models itself (I_2), and
3. modifies itself (I_3).

This recursive loop is mechanically identical to other feedback processes in the universe, differing only in complexity and stability.

5. Integration with Protophysical Architecture

The I_1 – I_3 classification aligns with the broader Protophysical framework:

- The **Planck Epoch** establishes the formatting conditions enabling I_1 .
 - The **C/C Axis** governs the stability of I_2 and I_3 processes.
 - **IBF zones** represent regions where I_2 / I_3 collapse into non-writability.
 - Cosmic cycles reset the substrate, enabling new I_1 – I_3 hierarchies.
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6. Conclusion

Consciousness is a recursive informational process arising naturally within an information-first universe. The I_1 – I_3 classification provides a minimal, mechanistic vocabulary for describing this progression without invoking dualism or emergent metaphysics.