The Shared Mind: Simulation, Idealism, and the Quantum-Holographic Criterion

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Abstract

Competing accounts of consciousness—including Boström's simulation hypothesis (2003), Kastrup's analytic idealism (2019), and Tan's Quantum-Holographic Consciousness Criterion (2025)—highlight the limits of physicalism but remain conceptually fragmented. This paper develops a synthetic framework, the Field–Node–Cockpit (FNC) model, to integrate insights from simulation theory, idealism, and quantum-holographic approaches, while remaining open to empirical testing. A comparative philosophical analysis is combined with empirical findings from neuroscience (coma awareness, inter-brain synchrony), social neuroscience (hyperscanning), and quantum biology (coherence in microtubules). The analysis suggests that Boström's argument clarifies the epistemic contingency of reality but lacks empirical testability; Kastrup's idealism coherently grounds reality in consciousness yet struggles with mechanism; and Tan's QHCC proposes a falsifiable criterion but depends on contested quantum interpretations. The FNC model integrates these strengths: Field as universal consciousness, Node as biological/technical coupling points, and Cockpit as embodied experience. The synthesis suggests consciousness is both cosmic and individuated, distributed yet locally rendered. By relating philosophy to neuroscience and quantum biology, the FNC model reframes the hard problem as informational flow and invites testable hypotheses for future research.

Plain Language Summary

What if consciousness is not just inside our heads but part of a universal field? This article compares three theories—simulation, idealism, and a quantum model—and shows that none is sufficient alone. It then introduces a new model: consciousness is a Field, our brains are Nodes connecting to it, and lived experience is the Cockpit where reality appears. Evidence from brain scans of unresponsive patients and experiments showing synchrony across brains suggest that consciousness might indeed be shared.

Introduction

The “hard problem of consciousness” (Chalmers, 1996) continues to challenge both philosophy and science. Mainstream physicalism struggles with qualia, leading scholars to explore alternatives such as panpsychism (Goff, 2019), cosmopsychism (Shani & Keppler, 2018), and dual-aspect monism (Strawson, 2006). This paper focuses on three influential frameworks: Boström’s simulation hypothesis (2003), Kastrup’s analytic idealism (2019), and Tan’s Quantum-Holographic Consciousness Criterion (2025). Each highlights crucial aspects yet remains incomplete. The aim is to articulate a synthetic model—Field–Node–Cockpit (FNC)—that integrates these insights with empirical findings from neuroscience and quantum biology.

Methods

This paper employs a comparative philosophical analysis combined with empirical integration. 1. Comparative philosophical analysis: Key texts were analyzed for coherence, explanatory power, and falsifiability. 2. Empirical integration: Neuroscience (coma and hidden consciousness), social neuroscience (hyperscanning), and quantum biology (coherence in biological systems). 3. Synthetic modelling: Findings mapped onto the FNC framework.

Results

	Strengths	Limitations	Blind Spo
)	Rigorous trilemma; highlights contingency of reality	Lacks empirical testability; anthropocentric	Neglects qualia and liv
sm)	Coherent monism; explains unity of experience	Risk of abstraction; no clear mechanism	Weak empirical g
	Falsifiable criterion; physics-consciousness bridge	Relies on speculative quantum interpretations	Narrow focus on substrate; ne

Figure 1. The Field–Node–Cockpit model

Discussion

The FNC framework complements Integrated Information Theory (Tononi, 2008) and Global Workspace Theory (Dehaene, 2014), but differs by situating consciousness in a universal field. It resonates with Orch OR (Hameroff & Penrose, 2014) while embedding individual consciousness in a broader cosmic field, aligning with cosmopsychist accounts (Wager, 2020). Empirical support comes from hidden consciousness in unresponsive patients (Owen et al., 2006; Naci et al., 2018), inter-brain synchrony (Hinvest et al., 2025; Markus & Shamay-Tsoory, 2024; Reinero et al., 2021), and quantum effects in biology (Engel et al., 2007; Ritz et al., 2004). The model is falsifiable via neuroimaging of residual awareness, hyperscanning experiments predicting behavioral alignment, and assays of quantum coherence in microtubules. Limitations include risks of metaphysical overreach, dependence on speculative physics, and the need for operational definitions of “field” and “node.”

Conclusion

Neither simulation theory, nor analytic idealism, nor QHCC alone resolves the hard problem. Yet each contributes essential insights. The Field–Node–Cockpit model synthesizes them into a testable ontology: consciousness as a universal field, instantiated through nodes, rendered in cockpits. Future research should pursue empirical programs in hyperscanning, coma awareness, and quantum biology.

Disclosures

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