

P. van Inwagen “Composite Persons”

Human persons exist

If human persons exist, they are composite material things

If nihilism is the correct answer [to the SCQ], there are no composite material things

hence,

Nihilism is not the correct answer.

I exist

If I exist, I am a composite material thing

If nihilism is the correct answer, there are no composite material things

hence,

Nihilism is not the correct answer.

A variably polyadic relation R *underwrites* a property F just in the case that

For any disjoint xs , if those xs stand in R at t , then, necessarily, the xs compose something and the thing they compose has F at t .

It is obvious that there are fictions according to which there are human beings and all human beings are composite material thinkers. Call these *human-thinker fictions*. It is obvious that there exist variably polyadic relations such that it is true according to all human-thinker fictions that those relations underwrite the property “is thinking.” Call these *fictional-thought-underwriting* relations. Then, if I utter the sentence ‘I am thinking’ at t , the proposition I thereby affirm is true just in the case that the I-at- t particles now stand in at least one fictional thought-underwriting relation.

The way particles are arranged in space-time in the actual cosmos is sufficient for the existence of consciousness.