



I Am a Strange Loop

Douglas R. Hofstadter

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Can thought arise out of matter? Can self, soul, consciousness, “I” arise out of mere matter? If it cannot, then how can you or I be here?

I Am a Strange Loop argues that the key to understanding selves and consciousness is the “strange loop”—a special kind of abstract feedback loop inhabiting our brains. The most central and complex symbol in your brain is the one called “I.” The “I” is the nexus in our brain, one of many symbols seeming to have free will and to have gained the paradoxical ability to push particles around, rather than the reverse.

How can a mysterious abstraction be real—or is our “I” merely a convenient fiction? Does an “I” exert genuine power over the particles in our brain, or is it helplessly pushed around by the laws of physics?

These are the mysteries tackled in *I Am a Strange Loop*, Douglas Hofstadter’s first book-length journey into philosophy since *Gödel, Escher, Bach*. Compulsively readable and endlessly thought-provoking, this is a moving and profound inquiry into the nature of mind.

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