

(1) I know it *empirically*, via sensory experience. I cannot exist without seeing or hearing or touching or smelling or tasting physical things. I cannot live without manipulating physical objects such as food and clothing. In short, interaction with the physical is a given, a fact of daily experience.

(2) I know it by *reasoning*, via the dictum, *Interaction with physical objects is possible, therefore the physical world around me exists.*

But how do I know that the physical world is not merely a *mirage*, an *illusion*, or a *projection* of my fevered brain?

I can perform specific tests by which mirages and illusions are distinguished from real and substantial things. I can check my temperature (for fever). I can perform standard scientific cause-and-effect experiments, and I can compare my observations with those of other human beings (whose brains are not fevered).

I can emulate Samuel Johnson. In Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Boswell comments that he was satisfied that Bishop Berkeley's theory (that matter did not exist) was not true, but he didn't know how to refute it. Johnson struck his foot against a large stone till it rebounded, saying "I refute it *thus*."

**Step 6: I and other human beings and the physical world around me did not always exist as we do now. What is the explanation of our coming into existence?**

There are really only two current explanations. (The view which says that nobody knows is not an explanation, but an assertion that rejects all attempts at explanation.) There is the supernatural creationistic explanation, and there is the natural evolutionistic explanation.

The supernatural creationistic view provides answers to the crucial questions of origins: the origin of the matter-energy complex, the origin of the structured universe, the origin of life, and the origin of human beings. It provides an answer to the source of the enormous input of energy needed at the creation of the stuff of the physical universe at the first moment of its existence. It provides an answer to the unique arrangement and ordering of forces needed to develop the present structuring of the