

To: jeevacation@gmail.com[jeevacation@gmail.com]; Jeffrey Epstein[jeevacation@gmail.com]
From: John Brockman
Sent: Wed 12/28/2011 3:40:03 AM
Subject: Edge Question 2012 - Update

PRESS EMBARGO UNTIL PUBLICATION
(12am EST, Sunday, January 15th)
DO NOT CITE OR CIRCULATE

JE,
Next month is the fifteenth anniversary of EDGE, and I am very keen to make the publication of the 2012 Question on January 15th a showcase for our ongoing activities. I look forward to your involvement and participation.

Here are the first batch of responses.

Happy New Year!

Best,

JB


.....
THE EDGE QUESTION 2012

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE DEEP, ELEGANT, OR BEAUTIFUL EXPLANATION?

<http://edge.org/annual-question/what-is-your-favorite-deep-elegant-or-beautiful-explanation&view=draft>

Contributors:

<http://www.edge.org/contributors/what-is-your-favorite-deep-elegant-or-beautiful-explanation&view=draft>

View All Responses to date

<http://www.edge.org/responses/what-is-your-favorite-deep-elegant-or-beautiful-explanation&view=draft>

45 Contributors [to date]: Emanuel Derman, Nicholas Humphrey, Dylan Evans, Howard Gardner, Jeremy Bernstein, Rudy Rucker, Michael Shermer, Nicholas Carr, Susam Blackmore, Scott Atran, David Christian, Andy Clark, Donald Hoffman, Derek Lowe, Roger Schank, Arnold Trehub, Timothy Taylor, Cliff Pickover, Ed Regis, Jared Diamond, Robert Provine, Richard Nisbett, Peter Woit, Haim Harari, Satyajit Das, Juan Enriquez, Jamshed Bharucha, Richard Foreman, Scott D. Sampson, Jonathan Gotschall, Keith Devlin, Clay Shirky, Steven Pinker, Gloria Origgi, Sean Carroll, Irene Pepperberg, Tor Nørretranders, Alan Alda, Jennifer

Jacquet, George Dyson, Nigel Goldenfeld, Aubrey De Grey, Nassim Nicholas Taleb,
George Church, Kevin Kelly

.....

Scientists' greatest pleasure comes from theories that derive the solution to some deep puzzle from a small set of simple principles in a surprising way. These explanations are called "beautiful" or "elegant". Historical examples are Kepler's explanation of complex planetary motions as simple ellipses, Bohr's explanation of the periodic table of the elements in terms of electron shells, and Watson and Crick's double helix. Einstein famously said that he did not need experimental confirmation of his general theory of relativity because it "was so beautiful it had to be true."

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE DEEP, ELEGANT, OR BEAUTIFUL EXPLANATION?

Since this question is about explanation, answers may embrace scientific thinking in the broadest sense: as the most reliable way of gaining knowledge about anything, including other fields of inquiry such as philosophy, mathematics, economics, history, political theory, literary theory, or the human spirit. The only requirement is that some simple and non-obvious idea explain some diverse and complicated set of phenomena.

.....

SUBMITTING ESSAYS: Email as text or attached Word file to me (brockman@edge.org).
DUE DATE: 5pm, Thursday, January 12th
PUBLICATION DATE: 12am EST, Sunday, January 15th
PRESS EMBARGO: Until publication. Do not cite or circulate.
EDITORIAL MARCHING ORDERS & Details:
<http://edge.org/annual-question/what-is-your-favorite-deep-elegant-or-beautiful-explanation&view=draft>

##