

Re: Are There Any Actual Physicists/Scientists Here?

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.physics/2005-08/msg02965.html>

- *From:* Paul Stowe <ps@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 20 Aug 2005 20:10:21 GMT
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On Fri, 19 Aug 2005 09:21:35 -0400, Andy Resnick <andy.resnick@xxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

>Paul Stowe wrote:

>> On Fri, 12 Aug 2005 09:54:26 -0400, Andy Resnick <andy.resnick@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>

>> wrote:

><snip>

>>>

>>> I'm not sure what you mean here, and what is this "certain knowledge".

>>

>> Oh, let's see if I can give a simple, extreme, PURELY HYPOTHETICAL

>> example. If one discovered a means of tapping the ZPE and extracting

>> most of that energy (on a per cubic cc basis) in a simple manner,

>> should this information be widely distributed? The consequences should

>> be obvious.

>>

>>> I doubt you mean numerical methods of PDE solutions,

>>> renormalization/scaling, viscoelasticity, image formation, or contact

>>> line motion. All of these are active areas of research, and AFAIK,

>>> none of these (with the possible scattered exception to the first)

>>> are presented in undergraduate courses. Even in graduate school, the

>>> student sometimes must take courses elsewhere: the materials science

>>> department, EE or computer science department, etc etc.

>>

>>

>> I mean fundamentals that could quickly lead to, for example, extreme

>> weapon technology (like nuclear) or if uncontrolled rapid dissemination

>> could lead to tech that could destabilized the existing economic

>> infrastructure.

>

> Ok, I'll take your bait.

I'm certainly not trying to bait you.

> My position is that all knowledge should be freely available to all,

> period.

Ah, while philosophically this is a laudable position, given

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demonstrated human nature, sadly, it is not a viable one. For it takes only one amoral bad apple out of the billions of people on this planet that, with the right knowledge and intent, could destroy all.

> No exceptions.

Would you freely give Osama and his ilk the knowledge to build a viable superflu?

> I am concerned that knowledge is gained in an ethical manner...

Indeed, and that is, indirectly, that which places filters upon knowledge.

> ... (this is more applicable to biological research, especially human research), but I have nothing to say on the ethics of *applications* of the research.

Lucky for us all, those in the know, do...

> Ethics evolves, what we consider ethical now is different than was what considered ethical in the past, and is surely different from what will be considered ethical.

There exists a primal core of ethics, that has never changed.

> <snip>

>

>>> I disagree with this— my feeling is that it's like Churchill's definition of democracy: "It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except {for?} all the others that have been tried." Our chair just left to spearhead a renovation of the NIH peer review system. I am curious as to what will result. He's definitely the right person for the job.

>>

>> The peer review process lacks independent overview. This fosters as you say, dogma.

>

> Ah yes... who watches the watchers? Not a new problem, nor unique to peer review.

Thus my earlier comment,

"... But, to devise a system of checks as well as balance would be daunting."

Paul Stowe

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• *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ **Re: Are There Any Actual Physicists/Scientists Here?**
◇ From: Andy Resnick
- ◆ **Re: Are There Any Actual Physicists/Scientists Here?**
◇ From: Autymn D. C.
- ◆ **Re: Are There Any Actual Physicists/Scientists Here?**
◇ From: donstockbauer

• *References:*

- ◆ **Re: Are There Any Actual Physicists/Scientists Here?**
◇ From: Gregory L. Hansen
- ◆ **Re: Are There Any Actual Physicists/Scientists Here?**
◇ From: Paul Stowe
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◇ From: Timo Nieminen
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