

From: John Brockman <[REDACTED]>
To: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Subject: Re:
Date: Sun, 11 Jun 2017 16:35:50 +0000

You good?

Good...and busy. Here's my new project below - "The Deep Thinking Project".

At the farm all day. NYC tomorrow. Call.

JB
[REDACTED] (best number to use)

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THE DEEP THINKING PROJECT

I am now getting started on my new project which involves two dozen of the world's leading thinkers on AI and will result in a book, US rights to which have been successfully auctioned to Penguin Press. Tentative title: DEEP THINKING: ON THE PROMISE AND PERIL OF AI. The inspiration for framing the project came from Jaan Tallin, co-founder of Skype and science philanthropist, who, in the abstract for his essay, writes:

"An interesting cultural evolution is happening in the AI research community. Wiener's original warnings were buried for 50+ years, only to re-emerge within a small community of 'dissidents,' and are now slowly—and very encouragingly! — making their way to the mainstream AI community."

Thus, DEEP THINKING challenges the dominant AI narrative by identifying the leading "dissidents" in the broader AI and science communities and presenting their counter-narratives in their own voices — twenty-four erudite scientific thinkers who, for most of their careers, have thought deeply about Wiener's ideas in the context of their own scientific fields: the AI researchers Dario Amodei and Stuart Russell; the communications theorist Joichi "Joi" Ito; the complex adaptive systems researcher Geoffrey West; the computational social scientist Alex "Sandy" Pentland; the computer scientist W. Daniel Hillis; the cultural anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson; the arts curator Hans Ulrich Obrist; the genomics researcher George Church; the molecular biologist Ventraman "Venki" Ramakrishnan, the quantum mechanical engineer Seth Lloyd; the philosopher Daniel C. Dennett; the physicists Freeman Dyson, Neil Gershenfeld, Lawrence Krauss, Judea Pearl, and Frank Wilczek; the psychologist Daniel Goleman; the precision cosmologist Max Tegmark; the robotocists Rodney Brooks and Chris Anderson, the science historians Peter Galison, George Dyson, and David Kaiser; the technologist Jaan Tallin; the cognitive scientist Tom Griffiths, the writers Kevin Kelly and Pamela McCorduck.

As Daniel C. Dennett notes: "resurrecting Wiener as a major thinker (something I myself agree with) is a sort of thankless task. It will happen indirectly if we focus the book on the issues of today, and let Wiener emerge as the ghost at the banquet". In Stewart Brand's view, "revisiting pioneer thinking is perpetually useful. And it gives a long perspective that invites thinking in decades and centuries about the subject. All contemporary discussion, is bound to age badly and immediately without the longer perspective."

Cybernetics never went away: it came to be everything, and that it's time for an update from the field. In so doing, this is not looking through a rear-view mirror. Wiener's cybernetic idea is crucial to understanding what's happening in AI today and where its going; and his warnings and admonitions about AI are now very real again.

ESSAYS

- Delivery: Tuesday, September 5th day after Labor Day
- Length: 3,000 words
- Honorarium: \$1,000; \$500 signing, \$500 on first book publication. Kill fee: the \$500 already paid.
- Exclusive rights in all media and languages for two years following publication (no posting online personal blogs, websites, etc.), non-exclusive thereafter.
- Original material only, written specifically for the book.

In addition to the essays I am adding material from several conferences about the project during the next year and also the usual one-on-one video interviews I do on EDGE. Note: in the proposal, I make use of a combination of the very brief essay abstracts provided by essayists, text from talks at the September meeting, and material from individual EDGE interviews.

For insight into what the participants are thinking about, please see the following links....

the book proposal:

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user id: brockman | password: submission

transcript of a conference I ran with a number of Harvard-MIT participants in September. It's the first of several along these lines.

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