

News

FQXi Essay Contest Results & New viXra.org Milestone

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Abstract

This news article is adapted from <http://blog.vixra.org>. The FQXi essay contest results [are out](#), and I am very proud of my fourth prize place. On June 16, 2011 is the turn of viXra.org to pass an important milestone with over 2000 papers now in the e-print archive.

Key Words: FQXi essay contest, winner, viXra, milestone.

[June 6, 2011: \[FQXi Essay Contest\] Is the Universe Digital or Analog? the results](#)

The FQXi essay contest results [are out](#), and I am very proud of my fourth prize place. Thanks to all of you who voted for me in the community round. The winner is Finnish Lecturer Jarmo Makela with his story based on an imagined encounter with Isaac Newton which looks at the discreteness of black holes. Well done to all the other prize winners too. Among them, Brian Whitworth who contributes to Prespacetime Journal also won 4th prize.

Among authors who made into the round and contribute to viXra.org and Prespacetime Journal include Lawrence B. Crowell, Ray Munroe, Jr. and Jonathan Dickau.

The following is the list of winners (source: FQXi):

First Prize

Jarmo Makela: Is Reality Digital or Analog?

Second Prizes

Tobias Fritz: Quantum Grapheniteny

David Tong: Physics and the Integers

Third Prizes

Giacomo Mauro D'Ariano: A Quantum-Digital Universe

Daniele Oriti: On the depth of quantum space

Moshe Rozali: Continuous Spacetime From Discrete Holographic Models

Ken Wharton: Quantum Theory without Quantization

Hector Zenil: The World is Either Algorithmic or Mostly Random

Fourth Prizes

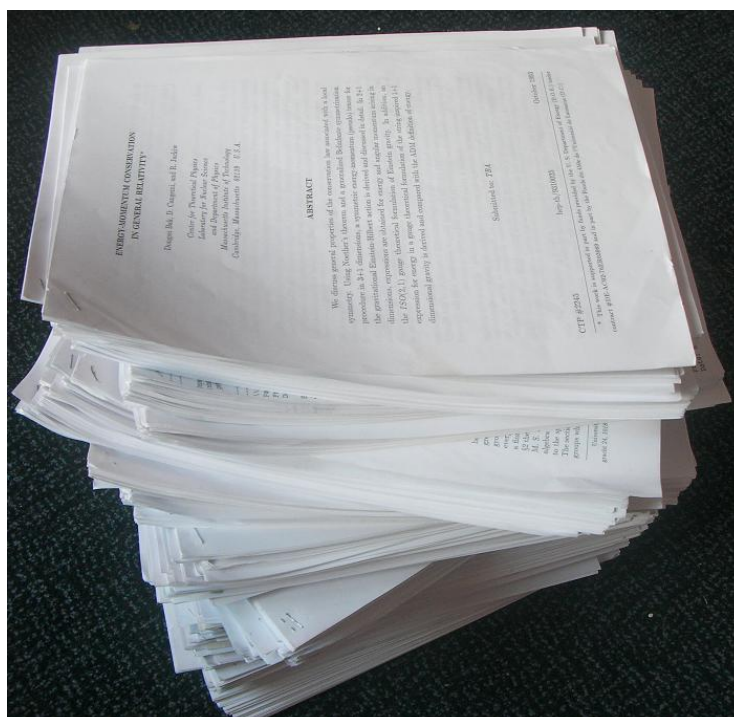
Julian Barbour: Bit from It

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Tommaso Bolognesi: Reality is ultimately digital, and its program is still undebugged
Donatello Dolce: Clockwork Quantum Universe
Ian Durham: In search of continuity: thoughts of an epistemic empiricist
Philip Gibbs: A Universe Programmed with Strings of Qubits
Thomas J. McFarlane: The Distinct Nature of Physics and Cosmos
Vesselin Petkov: Continuous and Discrete Aspects of Nature
Dean Rickles: It, Bit, and Us
Tejinder Singh: The 3.5 layers of dynamics: analog, digital, semi-digital, analog
Brian Whitworth: Exploring the virtual reality conjecture

June 16, 2011: [2000 papers at viXra.org](#)

Today is the turn of viXra.org to pass an important milestone with over 2000 papers now in the e-print archive. The total has been added since it started a little less than two years ago. When I started on this project I did not imagine that so many people would make use of the service, so I would like to take this opportunity to thank the 600 authors who have supported us by submitting their work. This is also a good moment to thank Huping Hu and Jonathan Dickau who have kindly provided mirror servers for the site and they have helped out with submission administration to keep the service running at times when I am away. Their backup and support gives me confidence to say that viXra.org will survive as a long-term repository. I am also very grateful to those who have made generous donations to help cover the costs of running the server.



Despite the unqualified success of viXra.org I still get a sense that there are a lot more people out there who could benefit from using viXra. Some of them simply don't know about it so this blog is one thing I do to publicize its existence. viXra.org is primarily here for scientists

who do not have access to a qualified endorser for arXiv.org, usually because they are non-professionals working independently of any academic institution. Many of them have left professional research to follow a different career but retain an interest and continue their research in their spare time. Of course viXra welcomes submissions from anyone and we do even get some contributions from people with .edu addresses along with the occasional highschool student and unqualified amateurs who like to think for themselves. To encourage more of these people to join in, here are a couple of answers to some of the questions people ask.

Does submission to viXra.org give you as much exposure as other archives such as arXiv.org?

It would be a plain lie to say that viXra is as well known or as well browsed as arXiv, yet the stats indicate that papers on viXra get just as many hits as they do on arXiv. Let's look at the numbers. According to the [arXiv usage stats](#) they typically get something like 800,000 web connections each day. From the logs of viXra.org our corresponding figure is around 4000 per day, just 0.5 percent of the arXiv number. But of course we have a lot less papers. ArXiv have reached about [6000 new papers per month](#) while viXra receives just 80 per month, or about 1.3% of their numbers, so relative to new papers submitted arXiv is getting about 2.5 times as many hits as viXra. Then again, arXiv has been around a lot longer and many accesses come from searches on its back-catalog. arXiv has 680,000 papers compared to viXra's total of 2000 which is just 0.3% . So relative to the total archive we actually get 60% more hits than they do. Real usage is a mixture of looking at old and new papers so within the uncertainties of this crude analysis I think it is fair to say that a paper submitted to viXra gets a similar number of hits as one on arXiv.

How can this be? In fact most hits do not come from people browsing new submissions. They come from people who search on Google and other search engines for keywords of interest to them. Since viXra is just as well indexed on Google as arXiv is, it actually gets just as many hits per paper.

Will submission to viXra.org damage your credibility because it is full of “crackpots” who cannot make it into arXiv.org?

It is really important to understand that it is not the purpose of an e-print archive to give you or your work credibility. Such recognition comes only from other sources such as acceptance in a peer-reviewed journal, use or citations of your work, or empirical verification of any predictions and the occasional Nobel Prize. All that you get from an archive such as viXra.org or arXiv.org is a longterm repository and a fixed link to your work so that people can find it and make links to it that will stay in place. It also provides independently verified timestamps so that others can check who reported any idea first in questions of priority.

Other scientists find papers in an archive mostly by searching on Google or by being referred from somewhere else. Once they find it they are not bothered about where it is. If they are

sufficiently interested in the subject to have come across it they will be qualified to judge it on its own merits.

As to the accusation that vixra.org is full of crank papers, I would be a fool to claim that the work of non-professionals who do not have access to arXiv.org is going to be of the same quality as the work of professionals who do, at least on average. But there are plenty of people who know their subject and have interesting work to publish who nevertheless do not have access to a qualified endorser as required by arXiv. Conversely, access to such an endorser does not mean someone's work is good either. There are good papers on viXra.org just as there are bad ones on arXiv.org.

On a lighter note, enjoy this video, (warning: bad words!):

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=zn7-fVtT16k