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Nobel Prize Winner's Lecture to Explore 'Why Can't Time Run Backwards?'

Apr-07-2010

The winner of the 2003 Nobel Prize in Physics will present "Why Can't Time Run Backwards?" on Friday, April 16, at Eastern Illinois University.

Sir Anthony Leggett, a physics professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, will speak at 7 p.m. in the Doudna Fine Arts Center's Lecture Hall. Admission is free, and the public is invited.

"We can all tell when a movie of some everyday event, such as a kettle boiling or a glass shattering, is run backwards," Leggett said in describing his topic. "Similarly, we all feel that we can remember the past and affect the future, not vice versa.

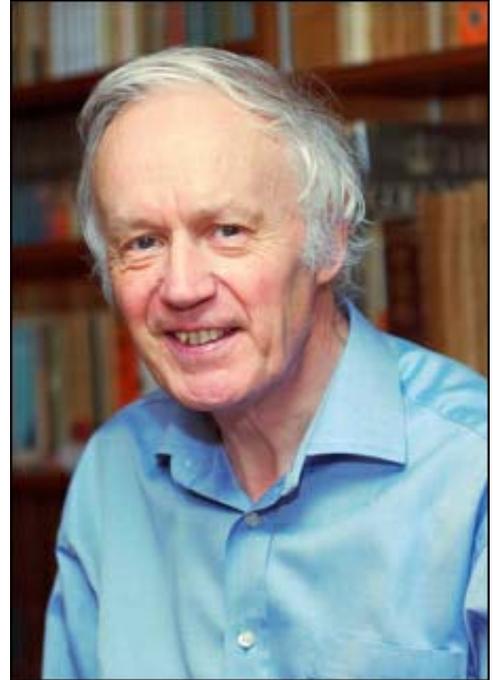
"So there is a very clear 'arrow' (direction) of time built into our interpretation of our everyday experience. Yet the fundamental microscopic laws of physics, be they classical or quantum-mechanical, look exactly the same if the direction of time is reversed.

"So what is the origin of the 'arrow' of time? This is one of the deepest questions in physics; I will review some relevant considerations, but do not pretend to give a complete answer."

Leggett will also discuss the process of winning the Nobel Prize. While he won't delve into the science behind his prize-winning work in superfluidity, he will discuss some of his classical training and how that related to his discoveries and innovations.

The event is sponsored by the Society of Physics Students and the Philosophy Club at EIU.

For more information on Leggett's lecture, please call the EIU physics department at 217-581-3220 or e-mail Professor Jim Conwell at jconwell@eiu.edu.



Sir Anthony Leggett