

Elliott Sober Quotes

*Thinking, Theory, Groups, Biology, Mind, Example, Ancestry, Ideas, Law, Facts,
Natural, Hands, Philosophical, Interesting, Goal, Different, Two, Kind,
Environment, Doe*

The big picture, I think, is that common ancestry is evidentially prior to natural selection in Darwin's theory and in contemporary evolutionary biology as well.

~Elliott Sober

Deism claims that God creates the universe and the laws of nature and then is hands-off, with everything that subsequently happens in nature being due to natural processes.

~Elliott Sober

Earlier attempts to show that simpler theories always have higher prior probabilities have failed, but there is a restricted circumstance in which the claim is right.

~Elliott Sober

I think that the existence of Beethoven is remarkable, but I do not bristle at the suggestion that this event had a low probability given the initial state of the universe.

~Elliott Sober

Biologists now pretty universally regard vitalism as a vestige of a bygone age.

~Elliott Sober

When one theory is simpler than its competitor, this fact is relevant to saying what the world is like.

~Elliott Sober

Scientists often seek predictively accurate models, rather than models that are true.

~Elliott Sober

In many contexts, simplicity is not an aesthetic frill.

~Elliott Sober

Our own species evolved under the influence of group selection, as Darwin emphasized when he discussed the evolution of altruism.

~Elliott Sober

Creationists have long held that evolutionary theory is atheistic; defenders of the theory do the theory no favor when they agree.

~Elliott Sober

I disagree with those who argue that evolutionary biology and the existence of God are incompatible.

~Elliott Sober

Deism is compatible with evolutionary theory.

~Elliott Sober

Deism is logically compatible with evolutionary theory for the simple reason that the theory says nothing about the origin of the universe or of the laws of nature.

~Elliott Sober

I don't endorse deism or interventionist theism. My point is just that evolutionary biology is logically compatible with the former and with some versions of the latter.

~Elliott Sober

Some philosophical arguments (e.g., in connection with the mind/body problem) look pretty good, while others (e.g., those that criticize moral realism) do not.

~Elliott Sober

Philosophers of biology generally recognize that evolutionary fitness (roughly, an organism's ability to survive and reproduce in its environment) is multiply realizable.

~Elliott Sober

Just as thought experiments can't show that vitalism is true (or that it is false), they also can't show that dualism is true (or that it is false).

~Elliott Sober

I disagree with the widely held view that it is metaphysical necessity, not nomological, that matters in the mind/body problem.

~Elliott Sober

"Tiger is a natural kind" and "Tiger is a historical particular" are incompatible with each other, and evolutionary biology provides a reason for favoring the latter over the former.

~Elliott Sober

From the fact that E is evidence for T and the fact that T entails M, it doesn't follow that E is evidence for M.

~Elliott Sober

"Simpler is always better" is an overstatement.

~Elliott Sober

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