

PHILOSOPHY, SOFTWARE

INFINITE STUPIDITY?

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This is a new [Edge conversation](#) with Mark D Pagel.

A tiny number of ideas can go a long way, as we've seen. And the Internet makes that more and more likely. What's happening is that we might, in fact, be at a time in our history where we're being domesticated by these great big societal things, such as Facebook and the Internet. We're being domesticated by them, because fewer and fewer and fewer of us have to be innovators to get by. And so, in the cold calculus of evolution by natural selection, at no greater time in history than ever before, copiers are probably doing better than innovators.

I agree with that and disagree at the same time. Maybe the problem is that as scientists we are always on the shoulders of giants. Rephrasing something, being more accurate or adding new aspects to a theory always starts with copy and paste, but then the idea is heavily edited, sometimes even inverted. This process doesn't allow a clear distinction between copier and innovator, yea, yea.

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