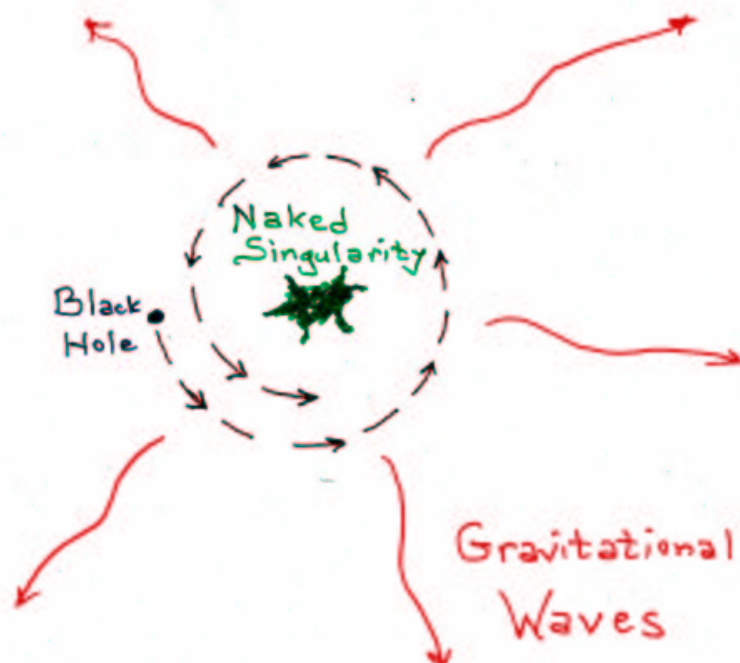


Can Naked Singularities Exist in Nature?



Whereas Stephen W. Hawking firmly believes that naked singularities are an anathema and should be prohibited by the laws of classical physics,

And whereas John Preskill and Kip Thorne regard naked singularities as quantum gravitational objects that might exist unclothed by horizons, for all the Universe to see,

Therefore Hawking offers, and Preskill/Thorne accept, a wager with odds of 100 pounds sterling to 50 pounds sterling, that when any form of classical matter or field that is incapable of becoming singular in flat spacetime is coupled to general relativity via the classical Einstein equations, the result can never be a naked singularity.

The loser will reward the winner with clothing to cover the winner's nakedness. The clothing is to be embroidered with a suitable concessionary message.



John P. Preskill & Kip S. Thorne

Stephen W. Hawking John P. Preskill & Kip S. Thorne
Pasadena, California, 24 September 1991

Hawking has conceded!