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Roy J. Glauber, 93, Dies; Nobel Laureate Explored Behavior of Light

By Dylan Loeb McClain

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Roy J. Glauber, a theoretical physicist who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2005 for using quantum theory to explain the field of optics and how light interacts with matter, laying the foundation for the field of quantum electrodynamics, died on Dec. 26 in Newton, Mass. He was 93.

His son, Jeffrey, confirmed the death. He said his father had entered Newton Wellesley Hospital that morning having difficulty breathing. No specific cause was given.

Dr. Glauber's seminal work addressed an area of research that had been largely ignored in quantum physics. For much of the first half of the 20th century, physicists had concentrated on trying to understand the nature of matter, neglecting the field of optics. That began to change with the development of the laser in 1960. Physicists wanted to understand how it worked vis-à-vis quantum mechanics, the mysterious rules that govern subatomic particles.