

# Re: The Dumbing Down of Astronomers

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- *From:* Martin Brown <|||newspam|||@nezumi.demon.co.uk>
  - *Date:* Fri, 24 Feb 2006 08:55:40 +0000
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offaxis2@xxxxxxxxxx wrote:

You look a lot like a troll.

YOU ARE A TROLL AND a TROG

Don't SHOUT!

Modern amateur astronomers now have access to world class research data via the internet and a chance to participate in various pro-am collaborations to cover monitoring transient objects expected to outburst like cataclysmic variable stars. The email and the internet has made this possible IAU circulars were too slow.

It is not by any stretch of the imagination dumbing down. You are offaxis.

Yet FEWER and FEWER amateurs actually care to participate in those things because the obsession is about equipment. Look at the obsession about which focuser is better, which COLOR LOOKS PRETTIER scattered across dozens of forums across a hundred websites.

I think you mix with the wrong people if this is your impression of amateur astronomers. I grant you I don't know what local societies are like over the pond. But I can't believe they are all as materialistic and equipment obsessed as you claim. Every society has at least one member with more money than sense or ability to use the kit.

Then turn to the actual observing forums on those same websites and compare the amounts of messages about one subject vs the other you will find 3 and 4 to 1 ratios for the appearance over the use.

Do I think everyone falls in this category NO I think too many do and

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those so easily offended here are the ones who are probably the most at fault . The ones who say I am a troll or offaxis and state their participation in active programs when you should see that many club memberships have gotten older and don't attract as many young participants as they use to is this because the are not as many people or is it its not slick enough for them? Maybe just maybe its that since we do not make it look enticing because the majority of amateurs stopped bothering to try to achieve something and thus stopped making astronomy a tempting experience.

Astronomy, like chess benefitted immensely in the 60's and 70's from the proxy cold war in space and over the chess board. What we really need to get the public interested again is a decent sized naked eye comet!

We now live in the Ipod & Playstation era – better get used to it.

Regards,  
Martin Brown

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