

Re: Shrug

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.physics.relativity/2005-11/msg01566.html>

- *From:* surrealistic-dream@xxxxxxxxxxx
 - *Date:* 24 Nov 2005 09:24:10 -0800
-

Androcles wrote:

> <surrealistic-dream@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
> news:1132844305.577105.145210@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

....

> >> Einstein said "As has already been shown to the first order
> >> of small quantities (by Galileo, but the secret to creativity
> >> is knowing how to hide your sources so we won't mention him)
> >

> > Reference for this paraphrase, please.

>

> Certainly. <shrug>

>

....

>

> Google for Einstein's trivial quotations ("secret to creativity is knowing
> how to hide your sources") yourself.

OK, I did. But I didn't find the exact reference to the article, book, interview, lecture, or off-hand comment of Einstein's the quote was supposed to have come from. For all I know, the statement was a sarcastic quip meant to deride someone Einstein thought was unscrupulous. I can't know the truth of it until I can get hold of the actual source and know the context of the quote, assuming, that is, that the quote is truly from Einstein.

I'm not the only one to notice the lack of documentation for this alleged quote of Einstein's. In

<http://physicsweb.org/articles/review/16/4/2/1>

we find a review by Einstein expert John Stachel of the book *_Albert Einstein: The Incurable Plagiarist_*, authored by Christopher Jon Bjerknes:

"This book is primarily an industrious compilation of citations taken from various points of the intellectual compass. Well over half of the book consists of quotations in English and in various original languages, with source notes – all duly accurate as far as I checked. The one glaring exception is of a supposed quotation from Einstein that

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appears on the front cover of the book – "The secret to creativity is knowing how to hide your sources" – for which no source is given..."

In any case, Einstein did NOT hide his sources. In fact the opposite is the case. He loved to compliment those many physicists who lived before him, or published before him for his contemporaries: Galileo, Newton, Faraday, Maxwell, Hertz, Mach, Lorentz, Poisson, Poincare, Minkowski, Planck, Heisenberg, to name some of them. See Einstein's science essays in Ideas and Opinions (or in other collections of his essays) for references. He adored Lorentz! and regarded him as a physicist who made definite contributions to theoretical physics, on which he himself built. (See H.A. Lorentz, Creator and Personality, Ideas and Opinions, pp 73–76.)

It seems about as ludicrous for Einstein to admit to being a plagiarist as for a crook to announce to world that the police are looking at the wrong suspects because he committed the theft.

All I can say so far, is that the apparent success the quoters of this alleged quote from Einstein owe to their own successful use of it is that they have hidden its "source" from public view.

If you know the actual source of it, please provide it in your reply. Thank you.

• *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ **Re: Shrug**
◇ From: Androcles

• *References:*

- ◆ **Re: A little challenge for relativists.**
◇ From: shuba
- ◆ **Re: A little challenge for relativists.**
◇ From: Harry
- ◆ **Re: A little challenge for relativists.**
◇ From: shuba
- ◆ **Re: A little challenge for relativists.**
◇ From: John Kennaugh
- ◆ **Re: A little challenge for relativists.**
◇ From: Joe Fischer
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◇ *From:* Joe Fischer

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◆ ***Re: A little challenge for relativists.***

◇ *From:* Tom Roberts

◆ ***Shrug***

◇ *From:* Androcles

◆ ***Re: Shrug***

◇ *From:* surrealistic–dream

◆ ***Re: Shrug***

◇ *From:* Androcles

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- Next by Date: ***Re: Some Troubling Assumptions of SRT***
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