

# The Brilliance of Our Teachers

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"Great spirits have always encountered violent oppositions from mediocre minds." – A. Einstein

A recent newspaper question and answer column raised an interesting subject. The query noted that, for a science course at a local school, there were two instructors. One of those instructors explained the concepts clearly and his students did well on standardized tests. The other instructor's teachings were scattered and his students performed poorly. The students, however, believed that the second instructor was brilliant and thought that his explanations are simply over their heads. The query went on to ask why such a misperception occurred.

The answer given was that both groups were easily misled into believing that mysterious people are highly intelligent. When those listeners heard material they didn't grasp, they assumed that the fault was theirs and not the teachers. And, since the listeners considered themselves fairly intelligent, it was obvious that the teacher must be brilliant!

Judging from the material posted in these Newsgroups, the effect would seem to be quite pronounced. It is quite plain that the posters ardently believe in the validity of what they have been taught. It is also quite obvious that they are aware, if only sublimely, of the inconsistencies and contradictions within that teaching. If that were not the case, the subject matter would be straightforward by now, the understanding of modern physics would not be so muddled, and the postings would not suggest such a high level of misunderstanding.

The truth of the matter is that the subjects, relativity in particular, seem mysterious and contradictory for one basic reason. The teachers of the subject do not themselves understand it. Because they don't understand the subject they hide behind sophisticated, often unnecessary and sometimes self contradictory mathematical explanations to prevent that lack of understanding from being apparent. In order to achieve this goal they have made Physics into the only Science where MECHANISM is not considered. This is illustrated by a quotation from Dr. Hawking who exclaimed, in an interview, that he was only interested in mathematics and observation and in the correlation of the two approaches. He didn't care about "reality" (for

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which we may read mechanism) because he didn't know what reality was. This is unfortunate because the present practice of ignoring mechanism, and overlooking the fact that nothing is known until observation, mathematics and understanding of mechanism are in agreement. Without such an agreement