

$SOB=MC^2$

Albert Einstein taught the world about the relativity of things, but now it seems the benevolent image he projected to humanity may have been relative as well. Einstein had a darker side, and it appears in personal letters that were put on display to the public for the first time last week in Jerusalem.

—The Chicago Tribune,
November 17, 1996

Geneva
July 23, 1927

Dear Planck,

I am so very cross with Heisenberg. He messed up all my clothes and linen this morning while making some foolish point about indeterminacy. He protested when I asked him to leave my room, so I had to give him a thrashing [*verdreschen*] with my walking stick. As he made for the door, I yelled after him, "Come back here so I can hit you again!" But the coward fled.

I explained all this to the police—how Heisenberg had provoked me and how, if anything, he deserved a sterner rebuke than he had received. One constable was extremely sympathetic, but in the end they let him go.

Just wanted to warn you what sort of a mood he's likely to be in if you should hear from him.

Warm regards,
A. Einstein

Geneva
July 24, 1927

Dear Heisenberg,

As I was attempting to explain to you before you flew off the handle [*aus dem Häuschen*] yesterday, God simply doesn't play dice. To give you an example, Schrödinger and I were having beers on the rue du Mont-Blanc the other day when I turned to him and said, "I just realized I haven't any money on me." "Neither have I," Schrödinger replied. Suddenly we were approached by a blind beggar. "Kind sirs," he said, "won't you please help me feed my family?"

I exclaimed, "Of course, my good man," and reached into his tin as if to make a donation. In reality I removed twenty pfennig, precisely the sum Schrödinger and I needed to pay

for our beers.

Now what do you suppose is the likelihood that this man should have appeared purely by chance? Don't you think this speaks pretty strongly for an orderly universe?

Of course, when I put these questions to Schrödinger, he said we could always have stuffed the waitress.

Bring me a new walking stick and all will be forgiven.

Yours,
A. Einstein

Princeton, New Jersey
November 15, 1933

Dear Bohr,

Too bad I was unable to meet you in New York. I would have been there except for an unpleasant experience on the drive over from Princeton. You see, an elderly woman changed lanes ahead of me in such a manner as to force me to brake rapidly. Determined to teach her a lesson, I pulled in front of her and slammed on my brakes. Then I flipped her the bird [*Vogel gegeben*] for good measure. I'm sure you will agree that a crumpled rear bumper was a small price to pay for the revocation of the old biddy's license. But I still feel a burning anger inside of me whenever I recall the incident.

Yesterday, after having the bumper repaired, I was inspired to change the oil. Dumped the used motor oil into the Delaware River. No one seemed to mind. How I love this country!

Yours,
A. Einstein

Princeton, New Jersey
December 1, 1933

Dear Freud,

Do humans have an innate lust for destruction and war? I know I do. As I was telling Bertie Russell, I'm only a pacifist to attract babes [*junge Mädchen*]. Bertie said, "Whatever you're doing, keep on doing it—you look marvelous." I said to Bertie, "Do you think my hair stays like this by itself?" and I recommended some products. He said he'd look into them.

Toodles,
A. Einstein

Princeton, New Jersey
December 14, 1933

Dear Freud,

Yes, you are right—war is hell. Now

would you please send me some more nose candy [*Nasenkandis*]. It's not for me, mind you, but for my friend S-----, who pays me a pretty penny for it. You will be happy to know that the money I am able to raise in this fashion helps me buy new equipment, both for my laboratory and for my sideline of making and selling erotic postcards of undergraduates.

Enclosing latest catalog, *The Babes of Physics*.

Regards,
A. Einstein

Pasadena, California
April 10, 1936

Dear Planck,

An interesting development in my discussions with Schrödinger. While visiting Cal Tech last week, he and I went bathing at Santa Monica Beach. As we lay on the sand, he stared out at the ocean as if in a reverie.

After perhaps a quarter of an hour, he broke his silence. "Notice the curious interplay of the waves," he said. "Sometimes they join together and reinforce one another. At other times they cancel one another out, as if they had never existed."

I remarked, "Look at the hooters on that one."

Schrödinger acted as if he hadn't heard my witticism, or even seen the luscious [*zaftige*] bathing beauty who crossed our path. Sometimes I think the man is a complete pansy. And, as you know, I hate pansies. Also people with disabilities. And Native Americans.

With warm regards,
A. Einstein

Peconic, Long Island
August 9, 1939

Dear Schrödinger,

I am as convinced as ever that your wave representation of matter is an incomplete representation of the state of affairs.

But perhaps I can be persuaded otherwise if you put something up my nose.

Yours,
A. Einstein

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