

# Good joke – Einstein

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A documentary on Einstein's theories decides that even when Einstein was wrong, he was right.

The good joke is in 50 minute documentary program on Einstein's theories called "Einstein's biggest blunder". [1] It becomes decided that even when Einstein was wrong, he was right

Eventually the documentary program latches onto talking about the cosmological constant.

Einstein first thought the cosmological constant was non-zero.

He was then persuaded that the universe was expanding, so he decided that the cosmological constant was zero, and that believing it was non-zero was his Biggest blunder.

After waffling on about cosmology - the program decides that the cosmological constant is non-zero, so this is the joke – even when Einstein is wrong he is right!

That basically sums up Einstein—genius that he is declared by the program – he makes both a statement and its anti-statement; and is subject to a lot of different interpretations; so even deciding he is wrong, he can be re-interpreted as being right.

At the website it says:

“The theory of Relativity might be more usefully called the theory of the constancy of the speed of light. So what if the speed of light wasn’t constant? There is a general ground swell in physics towards exploring meta-laws which might govern the laws of physics themselves. These therefore might exist in different forms in different universes or at different times, within one universe. The heretical idea that the speed of light might vary, is part of this trend and has some serious proponents, who are interviewed in this Equinox [\*] special.”

[\*] – Equinox – the name of the TV program.

So according to this program - Einstein’s theory is really that the speed of light is constant, BUT reinterpret Einstein with all this stuff about the cosmological constant and so forth, and what he is really saying is that it is variable. Einstein is right whatever!

(However, not everyone interprets Einstein that way. Some treat lightspeed as variable in General relativity.)

It’s like an astrological forecast in a newspaper, if the forecast is written vague and ambiguous enough then it is right whatever happens. Same with Einstein – his theory is vague and ambiguous, his maths is vague and ambiguous, and whatever is discovered – Einstein is right. BUT the astrological forecast in the newspaper because it does not really predict anything is deemed pseudo-science (by many hardened sceptics); it is not real science. Thanks to Einstein – physics is the same type of pseudo-science. All we can now do is bask in the genius of Einstein as he is proved right even when he is wrong. Good joke – Einstein, turn physics into a pseudo-science so that you are a genius.

What Einstein was doing was – mathematical modelling. But he was not very clear what he was doing because he kept changing his mind. Having him as basis for modern physics from 1919 has tapped into that ambiguity. Einstein-followers rather than latch onto that as a weakness, decide instead that it was good that he was prepared to change his mind. Having him as basis of modern physics means he has a lot of discarded ideas, so if you have decided one of his ideas is wrong; he still has other options lurking out there. Meaning if one of Einstein’s ideas is wrong, then he has the opposite idea possibly discarded- and you can resurrect that one and say he was right after all.

The documentary tells the usual stuff that they thought observations by Hubble meant the universe came into existence from Big Bang. Now they are thinking there are multi-universes. The “universe” means everything,

so they thought everything came into existence from Big Bang. Now they think that everything was not really everything, that there was more so they have to call it a new name multi-universe.

The theory that they latch onto is João Magueijo's theory of varying lightspeed. But he does not seem to want to accept that lightspeed varies completely. He seems to want to restrict it as varying with the universe getting older.

He decided that to solve the Horizon problem could do so by breaking the rule that speed of light is constant; have early time in creation of our universe that the - speed of light as a different speed.

It's the idea that - changes in vacuum causes changes in speed of light

The void is not completely nothingness; it's a pool of energies. Presumably – like a quantum vacuum where particles keep popping into and out of existence.

From saying the speed of light in vacuum is treated as constant as per normal – we now take the next step and say that the vacuum now changes and so speed of light changes with changes in the vacuum.

These pools of energies in the vacuum change the speed of light and cause the Big Bang.

They end up saying the joke – that it's a measure of Einstein's genius even when he was wrong he was right.

Magueijo talks about it as showing respect to Einstein by going against Einstein, by taking things one step further.

As I mentioned earlier – Einstein was mathematical modelling and he could not get his models to work so he tried lots of different things. What Magueijo is similarly doing is mathematical modelling and he is still playing in the models that Einstein tried to work on. He does not seem to want to go so far as to abandon Special relativity – have lightspeed vary as per Newtonian physics, because being an Einstein-follower that is probably a step too far back. So he seems content to think in terms of lightspeed in vacuum constant, but have the vacuum change with the age of the universe so lightspeed varies with the age of the universe.

If we wanted to take a step too far back from Einstein we could say something like – Einstein was working on Poincare's theory; Einstein

misunderstood Poincare's theory and if understood it probably then would have realised Newtonian physics was still valid. There then being a conventionalism of either interpret from Newtonian paradigm of universal time or from paradigm have time vary and keep lightspeed fixed.

So the joke is – the mainstream is too scared to go too far against Einstein in unravelling the mathematical modelling he was doing, and Einstein well - he was just blundering away.

Einstein is like the professor in the following joke-

A student visited his old school, 20 years after his graduation, and met an old Science professor of his. The professor happened to be grading exam papers, and the student was surprise to notice that the questions were exactly the same as they were two decades ago. He asked the professor about the possibility of the leakage of the exam paper such that the students would have known the questions in advance.

The professor smiled wryly and answered, "Don't worry about that, my dear boy. I've changed the answers every year." [3]

Einstein is allowed to keep giving different answers.

## Reference

[1] <http://smashingtelly.com/2009/01/16/einsteins-biggest-blunder/>

[2] João Magueijo

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jo%C3%A3o\\_Magueijo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jo%C3%A3o_Magueijo)

[3] [http://jokes.christiansunite.com/Science/The\\_Wrong\\_Answer.shtml](http://jokes.christiansunite.com/Science/The_Wrong_Answer.shtml)

Note: The issue of what is a pseudo-science is really a difficult one because what is meant by theory can be different according to philosophy. (Issue of this I have taken up in earlier articles.) The point in

this article – is that Einstein is vague, unclear, allowed to keep changing his mind et al.

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