the general science journal

Example of ambiguity in how relativity is talked about

Roger J Anderton
R.J.Anderton@btinternet.com

Articles written on relativity are just full of ambiguities, an example is given.

Example of ambiguity in how relativity is talked about

Steve Carlip + Philip Gibbs at Physics FAQ say: “To state that the speed of light is independent of the velocity of the observer is very counterintuitive. Some people even refuse to accept this as a logically consistent possibility, but in 1905 Einstein was able to show that it is perfectly consistent if you are prepared to give up assumptions about the absolute nature of space and time.”

Says “if” – “if - you are prepared to give up assumptions about the absolute nature of space and time.”

So, “if” – you are not prepared to do that then it sounds like it is still okay to carry on using Newtonian physics and no need to change to do it by special relativity!

But after a lot more is said, Steve Carlip + Philip Gibbs end up saying: “Finally, we come to the conclusion that the speed of light is not only observed to be constant; in the light of well tested theories of physics, it does not even make any sense to say that it varies.”

Which is baffling, is that “conclusion” still based on assuming – “prepared to give up assumptions about the absolute nature of space and time.” - or not?

Because “if” – you were NOT prepared to do that then surely speed of light as NOT constant is still okay in Newtonian context.

Steve Carlip + Philip Gibbs is just an example of those who will make an assertation and not tell you the conditions/assumptions they are making in order to make that assertation; thus, leaving everything completely ambiguous!

Modern Physics by such people is thus built up on ambiguous assertations, where it has not been stated what is being assumed to make those assertations true.

Reference for article:
https://www.desy.de/user/projects/Physics/Relativity/SpeedOfLight/speed_of_light.html

- Rest of what is said in that article also makes little sense!

c.RJAnderton03June2020