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From : Mark Walker <mwalker5@math.unl.edu>
Sent : Tuesday, November 21, 2006 3:34 PM
To : "C. K. Raju" <c_k_raju@hotmail.com>
CC : mwalker@math.unl.edu, gjohnson@math.unl.edu, notices@AFTERMATH.math.ou.edu, amagid@ou.edu
Subject : Re: Sir Michael Atiyah's Einstein lecture

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References: <BAY131-F5395365097EE7B0FB3DB0CBEC0@phx.gbl>

Return-Path: mwalker5@math.unl.edu

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Dear C. K. Raju,

I am about to leave town for several days and therefore I can only, at this time, reply briefly to some of the points in your long message.

I had intended (but forgot to do so) to mention in my previous message that **Atiyah did indeed see a draft of this article prior to its publication.** You say you included copy of correspondence with Atiyah, but in fact you included a copy of an e-mail from someone else to Atiyah, his reply to that e-mail, and a short e-mail from Atiyah to you (but no messages from you). I have little idea of what you wrote to Atiyah. It is for these reasons that I suggested you contact him directly.

If you would prefer, I can forward your messages to us on to him.

Sincerely,

Mark Walker

C. K. Raju wrote:

Dear G. W. Johnson and M. Walker,

Thank you for your response. Your advice on what I should be doing seems completely unrelated to the issues at hand, which are the following.

Your article (Notices of the AMS, July 2006) has given rise to questions of ethical propriety because you have highly praised and given credit to Atiyah for some of my original ideas. Although my ideas were published from over a decade earlier, Atiyah has no published work in this direction, and your article is the sole published basis of his claim to those ideas. In my fax of 16 November (copy attached) I had clearly explained to you how this action of yours is contrary to the ethical guidelines of the AMS, and how this has caused me material injury. In my earlier email (of 31 October), I had explained to you how this action of yours has been instrumental in furthering a systematic process of concocting history by appropriating credit for revolutionary ideas---a process that has materially damaged the interests of entire communities, including specifically the Indian community, by reinforcing a racist stereotype. Finally, your actions have left thousands of readers of the Notices misinformed about the true facts about what is very probably the next big thing in physics. The question, therefore, is what you should be doing to correct this state of affairs that you have been instrumental in bringing about, whether by design or by accident.

To reiterate an example, the phrase "Atiyah's hypothesis" coined by you, and used in the impugned article, suppresses my past work in this direction. Under the section "A New Paradigm?" you state "Atiyah suggested an alternative to this paradigm", etc. etc., suggesting that these ideas linking functional differential equations to quantum mechanics are all original with Atiyah, when, in fact, I have already published on them, from over a decade earlier. Furthermore, this language has been used by you in the Notices, which is a common vehicle used to establish historical priority. Since these objectionable and incorrect claims were published under your signature, I have to ask you and not any one else to retract them.

As for the origin of the erroneous claims---whether you misunderstood Atiyah, or were misled by him, or had a prior understanding with him---I have not offered (or formed) any opinion so far, and I am sure the Editor of the Notices will provide you some space to present your explanation for the origin of the error.

I have only pointed to the indubitable error of your statements (of attributing to Atiyah ideas on which I have been publishing for over a decade), and asked you to correct your article. In doing this, I have allowed you the benefit of the doubt, and proceeded on presumed innocence. Benefit of doubt and presumption of innocence, however, is not something to which you are permanently entitled. If your error was an inadvertent or innocent one, then you would naturally have been eager to correct it at the first opportunity. If, however, you fail to retract your erroneous claims even after your error has been pointed out to you, the doubt is settled, for the inference is unavoidable that your error was wilfully intended, by design. Delay or reluctance in retracting will invite similar inferences.

Your excuse that you are not experts in the field is remarkable for its ethical insensitivity. A journalist need not be an expert in the field in which he reports, but if he fails to correct an error, even after it has been