

SCIENCE



McGill
University

Foundations & Philosophy of Science Unit

1983.04.14

Dear Ms Gilbert

Thank you for yours of April 6th concerning my letter pointing out the error in the use of the term 'realism' with reference to the Aspect et al. experiments.

I find the reports of the referees ill informed and arrogant. The term 'realism' happens to have a traditional meaning in philosophy; in fact it is a philosophical term. This term was misused in the report in question, and this misuse can have very bad consequences for the world view of people who read it--particularly since the misuse occurs also in widely read publications by physicists such as Clauser and Shimony, and by d'Espagnat.

The whole thing is a big joke. It is as if SCIENCE were using the term 'living cell' to designate, say, a computer chip, and one were to complain that, contrary to SCIENCE's claim, chips are not alive--and then SCIENCE were to insist that, the way they use the term, chips are alive, so there is no cause for rectification.

Fraud is not the only way to distort the spirit of science. Another is dogmatism, the resistance to correct one's errors. I submit that this time SCIENCE has been guilty of just this sin.

Sincerely

Mario Bunge
Professor and Head

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