



## **Trophy Wives Don't Need Advanced Physics**

Boris Korsunsky

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This is a hilarious collection of things said and written by American high-school physics students. The quotes have been collected over almost two decades of teaching. Many, but not all, come from my own students.

The book is highly entertaining and makes for a great gift for any physics student or physics educator.

Readers' thoughts:

"The funniest book I have ever read during my chemistry class!"

"More fun than The Principia and more brief than A Brief History of Time..."

"My students watch their language now."

"A great gift for the gifted and the ungifted alike!"

"Whether you like physics or not, this book will change your mind!"

"The coolest physics book since what's its name..."

"This book should have been written twenty years ago. That way, I'd be able to buy it second-hand now."

"Don't read this book on public transportation – you'll laugh so hard, people will think you are crazy!"

"As a trophy wife, I resent the title – and so does my dissertation advisor."

"I think my brother may have written some of those things..."

"I bought this book as a gift for my physics teacher and she gave me an A afterwards – my first. Must be a coincidence..."

Here is a short description:

#### **FAIR WARNING**

Smart people learn from their mistakes. Wise people learn from the mistakes of others.

Well, here is your chance to be wise.

Step one: buy the book. Done? Good. You are about to read a very funny (or sad, depending on your perspective) collection of student quotes that come from my own and many other physics classrooms. These pearls of wisdom were collected over many years, and I finally got around to putting them together using old notes, tests and papers and, as a last resort, the good old memory of mine. I hope this book will be the funniest sad cautionary tale you will ever encounter. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll start proofreading your

own papers more carefully...

Organizing the quotes was not easy: By using intelligent guessing, I ended up dividing them into four chapters.

Chapter 1 contains "statements with attitude": excuses, complaints, opinions regarding the task at hand, etc. It will leave you shaking, I promise.

Chapter 2 is devoted to "brain burps": completely random utterances born, I am guessing, out of boredom, desperation or just creativity gone awry. Lots of fun (for you).

Chapter 3 may require a little physics background to be fully appreciated. In it, I present the students' actual attempts to "do physics," loosely divided into three categories: answers to various test questions, excerpts from various lab reports and, finally, examples of really fuzzy math.

Chapter 4 deals with the students attempts to tell, in their own words, the life stories of various famous physicists. Just like Chapter 3, the last chapter is best enjoyed by a reader with some background knowledge about the subject.

A disclaimer: while many names of various individuals and institutions appear throughout the book, all of them have been changed in order to protect confidentiality.

There are two notable exceptions: Chuck Norris (duh!) and all names in Chapter 4. In addition, I did occasional minimal editing in order to preserve coherence and brevity. As mentioned before, some quotes have been resurrected from my "good old memory" (yes, I know it's an oxymoron) and may well reflect my own imperfections as well as their authors'.

Despite much help from various individuals, the book doubtless has its shortcomings. The blame for them rests with the author alone – with one important exception: all the misspellings in the student quotes are meant to be there.

Now that you've been warned – enjoy and be wise!



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