



- [NEWS](#)
- [OPINION](#)
- [MAGAZINE](#)
- [SPORTS](#)
- [ARTS](#)
- [MEDIA](#)
- [FLYBY](#)

[About Us](#) [Advertising](#) [E-mail Alerts](#) [RSS](#) [Subscribe](#) [Classifieds](#)



Current Cambridge, MA weather: 27F

NEWS



[Print](#) |



[SHARE](#)

The Politics of Science

**II Grande Grido Ethical Probe on Einstein's Followers in the U.S.A.-
An Insider's View By Ruggcro Maria Santilli Alpha Publishing: 354
pp, \$19.50.**

By [John Ross](#),

Published: Wednesday, March 20, 1985

MOST AMEFICANS are not usually concerned with research in theoretical physics, but according to Ruggero Santilli's new book they ought to be. In II Guande Grida, Santilli levels charges against some of the most respected members of the U.S. physics community and claims that; "under the deceptive vest of democratic peer review, the current U.S. academic community in physics is a most totalitarian (and internationally powerful) scientific organization which imposes a most questionable form of slavery, that of the human mind." Moreover, Santilli argues that the systematic obstruction of certain kinds of research in theoretical and experimental physics may be hindering important technological advances, such as controlled nuclear fusion, which could influence the economic and even the military security of the United States.

Santilli writes that there are compelling reasons to doubt the strict validity of Einsteinian relativity under the conditions found in the interior of subatomic particles, such as protons and neutrons. Over a period of several years, he and others working independently from him have attempted to conduct theoretical and experimental research to determine, whether or not Einstein's special and general relativity is actually violated under these conditions. This research has been met with such concerted and extraordinary resistance that santilli felt he

was left with no choice but to write *Il Grande Grido*; "the great-ornery."

The book's title is well chosen, for it is really written as a cry in the wilderness. Faced with systematic rejection from what Santilli claims are vested interests that exercise almost monopolistic control over physics research in the U.S. he saw no other option but to make a public appeal for recognition and redress of what he calls "scientific corruption at the highest levels of academia."

It is not unusual for visionaries or malcontents in the scientific community to make outrageous claims about disproving established theories, but Santilli's credentials are far too respectable and his claims too simple and well-documented for him to be dismissed as such a crackpot.

There is no denying that *Il Grande Grido* is a polemic. Santilli is clearly outraged and puzzled by much of the "scientific corruption" about which he writes-his appeals to the reader often betray a naïve faith in the inherent fairness of American society. Above all however Santilli is sincere. He has never learned formal English and admit from the start that his book is written in "broken" and "crude" language, but the issues he raises are so serious that they speak for themselves.

Santilli does not make outrageous claims about physical theories. Rather, he explains.

This book is, in essence, a report on the rather extreme hostility I have encountered in U.S. academic circles in the conduction, organization and promotion of quantitative theoretical, mathematical, and experimental studies on the apparent insufficiency of Einstein's idea in the face of an ever growing scientific knowledge.

Il Grande Grido is divided into three parts in the first part Santilli tries to explain in layman's terms some of the physical problems that he feels are being ignored. In the second part he recounts his personal experiences with leading academic institutions including Harvard and MIT with physics publications such as the *Journal of the American Physical Society* with U.S. government laboratories and with government agencies like the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy. In the third part he presents some tentative recommendations for improving intellectual freedom in the U.S. physics community.

While Santilli's explanations of some of the physical problems may not be accessible to the uninitiated, they will be comprehensible to anyone with an amateur knowledge of physics. Moreover, understanding the physical problems in question is not at all essential to understanding Santilli's book. Far more important is the obvious way in which certain kinds of research have been preemptorily obstructed.

Santilli's charges are far reaching--from the misconduct of individual physicists regarding his own work to general and perhaps conspiratorial activities at many institutions throughout the U.S. These charges are not made frivolously, he has amassed three volumes of correspondence, referee reports, and official documents corroborating every factual statement in his book.

Santilli recounts a series of incidents in which senior physicists at Harvard and M.I.T. obstructed his research although it was supported by government funding, reneged on agreements, and conspired to generally undermine his reputation in a highly irregular manner. He tells of how after he set up a private institution, the Institute for Basic Research, to sponsor physical research that had been obstructed elsewhere, the Boston area physics calendar refused to list all conferences and symposia sponsored by the I.B.R.-events which have included many distinguished scholars from institutions throughout the world.

There are limited funds available for physical research in the U.S. and more of it comes from government agencies Santilli claims that physicists at a few leading universities and research labs have a virtual monopoly on determining which research projects are supported and which are killed, because these physicists are always selected by government agencies, private foundations, and journals to review papers and grant proposals. Moreover, individual scientists cannot apply for grants without the endorsement of academic institutions and quite often, according to Santilli, the institution's name is the critical factor in the receipt of

public money. He observes that a disproportionate amount of federal money goes to a few leading universities.

Santilli cites many instances of what he feels was unethical behavior by leading institutions—all of it directed against research which raised questions about the strict validity of Einsteinian relativity. One example was the year and one half delay in publication of a research paper submitted to the journal of the American Physical Society—which normally publishes papers in a matter of weeks—while information on the paper was leaked to competing researchers so a rebuttal could be published soon after its release. Also mentioned were the categorical rejection of 13 grant proposals to the National Science Foundation submitted under the auspices of the L.B.R. by a variety of scientists. Some of the referee reports cited in these rejections contained offensive language and little substantive discussion of the physical issues involved others were edited before they were released to the grant applicants.

It would be easy to dismiss Santilli's claims as the dissatisfied grumblings of a misguided physicist, but his story is too well documented and his charges too serious. While Santilli might have aroused personal opposition in the physics community, the events he relates are too glaring to be attributed to mere personality conflicts. His case is compelling and deserves to be heard—that it has been suppressed so far is undeniable.

You may find it difficult to find *Il Grande Grido* in Cambridge. According to the book's publisher, several area bookstores have refused to carry Santilli's book for fear of alienating their Harvard customers. It would be a shame if after all his efforts, Santilli's case were never heard. However, the book can be purchased at the I.B.R. at 98 Prescott St. in Cambridge. If Santilli is right, it is a place a lot more people should be visiting.

COMMENT

[Community Page](#)


[Subscribe by email](#)



Add New Comment

You are commenting as a [Guest](#). You may select one to log into:



- Logged in as
-  [Logout from DISQUS](#)
- Logged in as
- using Facebook Connect ([Logout](#))

[Use Media](#) ▼

Trackback URL <http://disqus.com/forums>

[blog comments powered by Disqus](#)

MOST READ IN NEWS

TAGS

[College Columns](#) [Editorials](#) [Events](#) [Features](#) [Film](#) [Football](#) [For The Moment](#) [Game Recaps](#) [Harvard Square](#) [In The Meantime](#) [Men's Soccer](#) [Music](#) [On Campus](#) [Op-Eds](#) [Student Groups](#) [Student Life](#) [Theater](#) [Undergraduate Council](#) [Visual Arts](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Rights and Permissions](#) | [Archives](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Corrections](#) | [Subscriptions](#) | [RSS](#) | [Sitemap](#)

Copyright © 2009, The Harvard Crimson, Inc.