

Sir:

As a physicist, I was filled with great satisfaction when I saw that Albert Einstein was selected Time's Person of the Century. Along with Joe DiMaggio, Einstein was my teenage hero in the late 40s and early 50s. I would fantasize that I could swing like the former and think like the latter (It turned out I was much better at physics!). Einstein was the Titan that stood on the shoulders of those other Millennium Giants, Newton and Gaileo. His contributions to science, and their combined impact on our own 20th Century lives and those of our progeny in the 21st that begins next New Year's Day, are immense. Not only his theories of relativity, which brought him popular acclaim and comprise the basis of our current understanding of the universe and its creation, but his explanation of the photoelectric effect, for which he won the Nobel Prize, both form the cornerstone of quantum mechanics, the theoretical foundation of essentially all the technology we enjoy and benefit from today. Moreover, Einstein's later critical analysis of the interpretation of quantum mechanics is now paving the way for the exploitation of the almost Star Trek-like effects of quantum teleportation and computing.

Einstein's accomplishments in physics can only be compared to the sports records of Wayne Gretsky and Michael Jordan combined and raised to the tenth power. As they say, we will not soon see his likes again.

Now, having congratulated Time on its choice, I must finally point out that St. Albert, as we called him in graduate school, with that penchant for precision shared by we, his followers, must somewhere in the Pantheon of Science be muttering, "They gave it to me a year too soon!"

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