Let’s Call the Whole Thing off

Evan Scannapieco

Voice A: I say "string theory"

Voice B: And I say "astrophysics"

Voice A: I study string theory

B: And I study physics

A: String theory

B: Physics

A: Physical string theory

B: Physical astrophysics

A+B together: Let's call the whole thing off

A: I say 11 dimensional dual space

B: And I say "star"

A: Is say "tangent space to the fiber bundle of the M-brane"

B: and I say "Star"

A: Lie algebra of the representation group of the orbifold

B: O-star

A: Holomorphic mapping over the Calabi-Yau manifold

B: B-star

A+B: Let's call the whole thing off

A: I say "anthropic"

B: And I'm catatonic

A: Compactification
B: And wild speculation
A: Elegance
B: Irrelevance
A: Renormalize
B: And fantasize
A+B: Let's call the whole thing off

B: I say "Vega magnitudes"
A: ... don't give me that attitude
B: 70 km per sec per Mpc
A: why don't you just take 1 for c?
B: AGN, ULX, QPO, LMC, ERO, GRB, E+A, AGB, BAL, WNM, IGM, M31, LMXB, HD188753
A+B: Let's call the whole thing off

A: I say "Einstein"
B: and I say "Einstein"
A: I say "Black Hole"
B: and I say "Black Hole"
B: Dimensions?
A: Three plus one
B: Yeah?
A: Anti-de Sitter
A+B: Let's call the whole thing off!!!!
KITP rendition of

*Up on the Housetop*

Up on the tower Director pause
Out jumps good old David Gross
Down from the chalkboards with lots of chalk
All for the post-docs
Christmas work

**Chorus**
Ho ho ho
Who wouldn’t guess
Ho ho ho
Who would dread
Up on the rooftop
Work work work
Down from the ivory tower
Prof. Gross yells

First comes the papers
For all string theorists
Oh dear Professor
Cram it in
Give them an equation
That’s tough and long
One that can’t be solved
And shut the door

**Chorus**

Next comes the deadlines
For everyone
Oh just see how
Soon they can be
Here is a laptop
And lots of paper
Also many chalkboards
And coffee that’s burnt

**Chorus**
Sung to the tune of O’ Christmas Tree

*Julia Niessen*

KITP, KITP, your halls are so inviting
KITP, KITP, real slate outside for writing

The canopy someday they claim
Will truly hold out all the rain

KITP, KITP, your halls are so inviting,

Each day at three cookies & tea
If you’re luck-ee views of the sea

KITP, KITP, your halls are so inviting,

The staff is here to meet your needs,
Though some of you demand great deeds.

KITP, KITP, your halls are so inviting,
KITP, KITP, when is the next Nobel a coming?
12 Days in Stockholm

Steve Gubser

In the twelve days in Stockholm, they gave to David Gross:

Twelve Swedish meatballs
Eleven rice puddings
Ten crispy waffles
Nine jars of jam
Eight Baltic herring
Seven cups of Glogg
Six cured hams
ONE NOBEL PRIZE!
Four sugar cakes
Three smoked fish
Two tummy-aches
and a press interview with his host.
A BRIEF MEMOIR
by Jim I
KITP, December 8, 2005

To the tune of "When I Was a Lad,"
from H.M.S. Pinafore by Gilbert and Sullivan

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When I was a lad I served some time
As a junior professor in a northern clime.
I wore wool neckties and winter suits,
And I sometimes lectured in my hiking boots.

_He sometimes lectured in his hiking boots._

Those hiking boots looked so well on me
That now I am emeritus at Ki-T-P.

_Those hiking boots looked so well on he_
_That now he is emeritus at Ki-T-P._

&&

I grew so tired of the snow and rain
That I wandered off into the complex plane.
I danced over contours of the steepest descent,
And I never ever thought about experiment.

_He never ever thought about experiment._

The imaginary axis was just right for me
So now I am emeritus at Ki-T-P.

_The imaginary axis was just right for he_
_So now he is emeritus at Ki-T-P._

&&
From instantons I made such a name
That a Santa Bar-barian I soon became.
I wore a sportshirt and no tie at all,
As I slept through seminars in Ellison Hall.

*He slept through seminars in Ellison Hall.*

Those seminars so enlightened me
That now I am emeritus at Ki-T-P.

*Those seminars so enlightened he
That now he is emeritus at Ki-T-P.*

The Institute was short of space
So we had to move it to a grander place.
And this building built for theory’s sake
Was the only experiment I ever did make.

*Was the only experiment he ever did make.*

That experiment worked so splendidly
That now I am emeritus at Ki-T-P.

*That experiment worked so splendidly
That now he is emeritus at Ki-T-P.*

My fame as a theorist grew so great
That I was deemed an expert in affairs of state.
A life in high circles seems as good as it gets,
But it’s hard to make your office on United jets.

*It’s hard to make your office on United jets.*

The TSA protected me,
So I’m here to be emeritus at Ki-T-P.
The TSA protected he,
So he’s here to be emeritus at Ki-T-P.

&&

Now theorists all, wherever you may be,
If you want to thrive at the Ki-T-P,
If your math-imagination must ever run free,
Be careful to be guided by this strategy.

Be careful to be guided by this strategy.

Stay away from the lab, and just like me,
You’ll all become emeriti at Ki-T-P.

Stay away from the lab, and just like he,
We’ll all become emeriti at Ki-T-Pee.

&&
'Twas the night before Nobels, two thousand and four,
No theorist was sleeping, no physicist snored,
Web sites were marked, alarms set by all,
In hopes that the AP and Stockholm might call.

The news when it came proclaimed QCD
The blueprint to quantum reality,
The AP and Stockholm called David, of course,
But we’d known all along it should be our strong force.

Fred One had foreseen it, gave David his Chair,
Fred Two’s contributions brought Norway to bear,
Would a waltz with a queen close this chapter with grace,
Or is the prize just David’s new starting place?

Time now for vision, opportunities galore,
Meeting world leaders, feted by more,
The session with Dubya was hardest of all,
As physics of silence was the only good stall.

On comet! On qubit! On quasar and quark,
Fill the stockings of knowledge hung in the dark!
'Twas the night before Nobels, two thousand and five,
Weary physicists dozed by their phones world wide

*Apologies to Major Livingston’s “Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas”
(‘Twas the night before Christmas, when all thro’ the house...”)
O Come All Ye Faithless*
Sarah Vaughan

1. O come, all ye faithless, biophysics converts,
   O come ye, O come ye to N. I. H.
   Apply neural pathways to lead to fulsome funding,

REFRAIN
   O come let us corrupt you,
   O come let us corrupt you,
   O come let us corrupt you, systems rule!

2. Reductionist in mindset, models go molecular,
   O come ye, O come ye to pharm the grant!
   Monte Carlo methods randomly exploring,

REFRAIN
   O come let us support you,
   O come let us support you,
   O come let us support you, synapses rule!

3. Sing, peer reviewers, plump up those per diems,
   O sing all ye physicists seduced by the cell,
   Learn the bio jargon, entice the mathematician,

REFRAIN
   O come let us present you,
   O come let us present you,
   O come let us present you, power point rules!

* To the tune of “O Come All Ye Faithful
A Parking Space
To the tune of Two-front Teeth

All I seek on campus is a parking space
a parking space
Just a parking space,
But how will I ever find a parking space
Among all these construction fences?

It seems so long since I could park
Anywhere near where I would like to get.
Where do I park?
I’m in the dark.
Can you fix this ticket?

All I seek on campus is a parking space
a parking space
My own parking space,
Will I ever find that parking space
Before I just go mad and lose my senses …

senses …

Oh for goodness’s sake
Please open the structure!
To the Tune of Jingle Bells  
Lyrics by Mark Robbins

STZs, STZs, transforming to and fro  
Watch them as they gather up to make a shear band go o  
Fractal cracks, fractal cracks, why is H so high?  
Doesn't mother nature know that RG can not lie?

Three hundred years ago, Amontons wrote down his laws  
We try to explain them, and understand their flaws  
Does friction scale with load, or area times stress  
When we can't measure both of them, interpreting's a mess.

STZs, STZs, transforming to and fro  
Watch them as they gather up to make a shear band go o  
Fractal cracks, fractal cracks, why is H so high?  
Doesn't mother nature know that RG can not lie?

From atomic to tectonic, rate-state laws apply  
Contacts age logarithmically, I wish that so did I  
Friction weakening, leads to stick-slip motion  
Violin strings may sound quite nice, but earthquakes cause commotion

Complexity, complexity, fractals everywhere  
Generating local stress that's much too high to bear r  
D-branes here, M-branes there, black holes on each blackboard  
We still think their soccer team, never really scored.
The Maldacena,  
by Jeff Harvey (1998)

You start with the brane 
and the brane is BPS.  
Then you go near the brane 
and the space is AdS.  
Who knows what it means 
I don't, I confess.  
Ehhh! Maldacena!

Super Yang-Mills  
with very large N.  
Gravity on a sphere  
flux without end.  
Who says they're the same  
holographic he contends.  
Ehhh! Maldacena!

Black holes used to be  
a great mystery.  
Now we use D-brane  
to compute D-entropy.  
And when D-brane is hot  
D-free energy.  
Ehhh! Maldacena!

M-theory is finished  
Juan has great repute.  
The black hole we have mastered  
QCD we can compute.  
Too bad the glueball spectrum  
is still in some dispute.  
Ehhh! Maldacena!
The KITP
by Wati Taylor.
(To be sung to the tune of "Yellow Submarine").

In the town of Santa Barbara
Lives a man of QCD
And he told us to do research
at the K-ITP.

So we flew to California
where we found the Western sea
And we live a life of science
at the K-ITP.

We all think at the K-ITP
the K-ITP, the K-ITP
We all think at the K-ITP
the K-ITP, the K-ITP

Friends give talks, to which we listen
lots of physicists and mathematicians
and space-time is non-commutative ...

(instrumental interlude)

We all work at the K-ITP
the K-ITP, the K-ITP
We all work at the K-ITP
the K-ITP, the K-ITP

As we ponder fields and fluxes
every one of us has para-doxes
lots of equations, and cookies and tea
at the K-ITP

We all learn at the K-ITP
the K-ITP, the K-ITP
We all learn at the K-ITP
the K-ITP, the K-ITP

(repeat last refrain quietly)
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Think Different

Here's to the crazy ones:

The cond-mat's.

The astro-ph's.

The gr-qc's.

The stringers in hep-th.

The ones who see things differently.

They try to find out the rules.

And they are not satisfied with the status quo.

You can praise them, disagree with them, quote them,

disbelieve them, glorify or vilify them.

About the only thing you can't do is ignore them.

Because they write papers.

They meditate. They think hard. They discuss.

They calculate. They seminar. They write it down.

They push another paper to the arXiv

Maybe they have to be crazy.

How else can you stare at an empty blackboard and see a work of physics? Or sit in silence and hear a song from the extra dimensions? Or gaze at a PC monitor and see a miniature reality there?

While some see them as the crazy ones, we see physicists.

Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can find the laws of nature, are the ones who do.
The Earthquake song
(CHESTNUTS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE)

Earthquakes rupture supersonically
Thrust faults push mountain ranges high
Tectonic plates wander a-aimlessly
Tsunamis rise into the sky

Everybody knows the bi-ig one is coming here
It could happen on any given day
The earth's crust will shift filling children with fear
As their houses and toys all slide away

So tell your congressmen to send more funds
For KITP quake modeling workshops
So we can enjoy Santa Barbara sun
Until all crustal mo-o-tion stops
Let it Q.
The Station Q group  (Let it Be)

When we find ourselves in superposition,
we see opportunity,
to compute much faster,
Let it Q.

But decoherence thwarts our efforts,
do we need topology?
Will we find the answer?
Let it Q.

Let it Q, let it Q, let it Q, let it Q,
Will we find the answer, let it Q.

Despite strings, branes and David Gross,
we still can't quantize gravity,
baffled by the vacuum!
CFT!

And when I ask the earthquake experts
When will the big one come to me?
They don't know the answer,
Let it Q.

Let it Q, let it Q, let it Q, let it Q,
They don't know the answer, let it Q!

And when I boot up my computer,
even windows fails on me,
who will be my saviour?
Let it be.

Who will get us out of trouble,
Steven Ballmer or Bill G?
speaking words of wisdom,
Let it B.

Let it be, let it be, let it be, let it be.
speaking words of wisdom, let it be!