

June 20, 1977

Mr. Bill Harvey  
University of Edinburgh  
Science Studies Unit  
34 Buccleuch Place  
Edinburgh EH8 9JT

Dear Bill:

Your letter of June 8 received. To answer your first question regarding how much contact I maintained with work on "The Interpretations of Quantum Mechanics," my contact consisted essentially of reading Physics Today. The first hint I gleaned of any resurgence was Bryce DeWitt's article which appeared there.

To answer your second question, shortly after his publication in Physics Today, Bryce contacted me and inquired into the existence of the original document (written in 1955), and inquired that if such existed, could I send him a copy. After some scurrying around the last existing copy was located and conveyed to Bryce. He then inquired if I were willing to have it published and I gave him my permission with the proviso that I would not have to devote any effort to editing, proof reading, etc.

The next event, from my point of view, was the arrival of several author's copies of the book and a royalty check. So, to answer your question, I certainly approve of the way Bryce DeWitt presented my theory, since without his efforts it would never have been presented at all.

As a final note, I should like to mention that I was invited to participate in a seminar on this theory in Austin, Texas, last month and met Bryce DeWitt for the first time. He is in all respects a delightful gentleman.

Sincerely,

Hugh Everett, III

P.S. As you point out, I have not followed the current literature in physics, in particular interpretations of quantum mechanics. I would be grateful if you could supply me with any references or reprints concerning this subject, which you might possess.

H.E.

HE/ne



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Dr Hugh Everett  
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8th. June, 1977.

Dear Dr Everett,

I am carrying out a study into the history of Quantum Mechanics, and I am particularly interested in the various interpretations of QM which have been proposed.

The theory which you proposed in 1957 has now received widespread attention, although for ten years it was, to quote Professor Jammer, "one of the best kept secrets in this century". However, there are certain aspects of the revival of this fascinating theory which interest me as a historian of science. I would be very grateful if you would assist me in clearing up these points.

First, you yourself played no part in the revival. I know that your career moved away from physics into such things as Operations Research, but I would like to know how much contact you maintained with work on the interpretation of QM.

Second, Bryce DeWitt played a major part in the revival. Did he make contact with you, e.g. to ask your permission to publish the book he edited with Graham? After all, you had a prior claim on this theory. Do you approve of the way DeWitt presented your theory?

I hope you will agree to help me by answering these questions. May I assure you that your help will be fully acknowledged in my research work, and that, should you wish, your comments will be kept strictly confidential. I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

*Bill Hanney*