

Good evening everyone!

I was wondering whether to give the two hour version [much continuing laughter heard] , or the only the three minute version. [More laughter heard.] I will take *that* to mean that there seems to be agreement that the short version will do.

Good evening, and welcome to the CTP orientation for the new academic year.

Now, just a few words.

It's the kind of periodical that most guys would only pick up at the magazine stand to pad a dubious purchase. But the December 2000 issue of the International Journal of Personality and Social Psychology has an article that gives as close as any scientific explanation for the ages-old conundrum:

“Why does bullshit baffle brains?”

The phenomenon is truly amazing, right up there with, “Where do elephants go to die?”

A professor of Psychology at Cornell University, David Dunning, (<http://dunning.socialpsychology.org/>), has researched this question. His findings show that the least competent people in life have the most confidence in their abilities. This would explain those scrawny little guys who pick a bar fight with Mike Tyson.

Now, knowing this, it all makes sense. We are talking serious delusion here. [laughter]

Dunning also found that the most able or psychologically together people were likely to grossly underestimate their own competence. This might explain why the jury's still out on the authorship of some of the great works of literature – Shakespeare was too embarrassed to sign it off.

Incompetent fools, Dr. Dunning found, are simply too thick to appreciate they are incompetent. Ignorance is bliss: they don't know what that means, but they are happy. [laughter]

This is because the skills required for competence often are the same skills necessary to recognize competence. This deficiency in self-monitoring skills explains why the humour-impaired insist on telling jokes long after family and friends have disowned them [laughter].

Competent people are too sharp for their own good, falling prey to those who carry no such baggage.

It's like dogs. As Freud said: "Dogs love their friends and bite their enemies, quite unlike most people, who are incapable of pure love and always have to mix love and hate."

I try to keep that in mind when I have a patient with an idealization transference towards me.

I wish you all the best success in the coming years.