

*History of science in stories and dramas:  
Dilemma between “story telling”  
and professional precision*

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ABSTRACT. The knowledge of history of science not only provides an often better understanding of crucial notions of physics, but also gives a better insight into the understanding of our history of civilization as well as the understanding of who are we, and how it happens that our world is as it is now. In teaching of history of science one has to cope not only with students' limited knowledge of physics, but also with their limited knowledge of history—a subject that students are often not interested in. Activities such as story telling, playing dramas attract students and increase their interest toward physics and history of science. Students expect entertainment and a clear message from it.

The question I want to raise is about necessary simplifications that we have to resort to, while introducing to students the history of physics. What do we consider as acceptable, what do we admit as useful indoctrination, and what as a cheating? Can stories about scientists' private life replace stories about their scientific achievements? What messages will we pass through histories where science was involved in politics? As examples, I will discuss the cases of Galileo, Einstein, Heisenberg and Oppenheimer.