

a fairly successful, commercially beneficial and environmentally harmless (apparently) application of plant genetic engineering. In contrast, several restrictions do exist in carrying out similar exercises in the animal world. The point I make is that a scientist cannot and perhaps should not have a free hand in his 'creations' as much as an artist has, and his pursuits are most often, if not always, limited by nature and other regulations imposed by man himself. Except for this variable degree of 'freedom', there may not be any fundamental difference between scientific and artistic quests for truth. The underlying similarities between science

and art have been presented in a brilliant portrayal of Newton and Michelangelo by Prof. Chandrasekhar⁵.

Finally, it is tempting to quote Leonardo da Vinci (cited by Dobzhansky⁶), the multifaceted personality par excellence: 'Even though the genius of man might make various inventions, attaining the same end by various means, it will not invent anything more beautiful or more economical or more direct than nature, for in nature's inventions nothing is wanting and nothing is superfluous.'

1. Chandrasekhar, M. K., *Curr. Sci.*, 1991, 61, 309-311.

2. Schattschneider, D., *Sci. Am.*, 1994, 271, 48-53
3. Nijhout, H. F., *Sci. Am.*, 1981, 245, 104-115.
4. Mol, J., Stuitje, A., Gerats, A., van der Krool, A. and Jorgensen, R., *Trends Biotech.*, 1989, 7, 148-153.
5. Chandrasekhar, S., *Curr. Sci.*, 1994, 67, 497-499.
6. Dobzhansky, T., *Cold Spring Harbor Symp. Quant. Biol.*, 1959, 24, 15-30.

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Distortion of Indian degrees

It is rather common to find that authors of research papers who are of Indian origin but now settled abroad mention their Indian degrees in a distorted form in their biographies. Here are some examples from recent IEEE publications:

1. '...received the B Eng from the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, in 1964 ...'
2. '...received the B S E E degree from the Indian Institute of Science in 1976 ...'
3. '...received the B S E E degree in Electrical Engineering from Bangalore University, India, in 1969 ...'
4. '...received the B S degree in electronics from the Bangalore University in 1981 ...'
5. '...received the B Eng (Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering) degree from the Bengal Engineering College, University of Calcutta in 1980 ...'
6. '...received the B S degree from Agra

University, India in 1969 and M S degree from Aligarh University, India ...'

7. '...received a B S (Honours) degree in Physics from the University of Delhi, St. Stephens's College, in 1956 ...'

8. '...received the B S in Electrical Engineering from the University of Madras, India ...'

The names and references have been suppressed for obvious reasons. All the degrees mentioned above are distorted versions, as one may easily verify. IISc neither offers a B Eng nor a B S E E; neither does Bangalore University award a B S E E or B S in Electrical Engineering or a B S degree in Electronics. Calcutta University awards a B E and not a B Eng degree. None of the three Universities at Agra, Delhi or Madras offers a B S degree. Also, Aligarh University does not award an M S degree.

Why do these authors, who are some of our very best products, distort their

Indian degrees? Is it their wish to conform to the US/Canadian degree? If so, why? If conformity is important, why is it that scientists of European origin do not have to resort to such distortions? Or, is it a reflection of an inferiority complex? Are B Sc, M Sc and B E inferior nomenclatures as compared to B S, M S and B S E E?

It is my impression that Indian degrees are well understood and well respected throughout the world. Such disrespect for Indian degrees, as shown by some authors, is, in my opinion, totally uncalled for, and almost amounts to falsification. What would happen to the individual concerned if one of our institutions writes to his/her employer that he/she was never awarded the stated degree?

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