

Editorial

S Mahadevan, Chief Editor

When it comes to the gender issue, strangely, we face a dichotomy in our society. Though the worship of *Shakthi*, the feminine half of the universe, is practiced routinely, the status conferred to women in our society is often far from the ideal. This is particularly galling when it comes to science and technology. For a girl child to succeed in the area of science (mathematics and physics in particular), she has to be equipped to fight many prejudices and impediments put in her path by society. On the positive side, with increased sensitization of society over the years, these impediments are beginning to disappear slowly but surely.

India can boast of several successful women who have made outstanding contributions in all walks of life, including science. This issue of *Resonance* honours one such pioneer, Anna Mani, whose contributions in the field of meteorological instrumentation are unsurpassed by any standards. She set a very high benchmark of success for both men and women to emulate. The most endearing aspect about her life is that she refused to consider herself a victim of gender bias, though she had her share of battles to get what she more than deserved. Her life and achievements will surely inspire future generations of both men and women.

The Indian Academy of Sciences has also joined the battle to eradicate gender biases in our society, especially within the scientific community. Under the auspice of the Academy's Panel for Women in Science (WiS), the much awaited book, *Lilavati's Daughters*, outlining the success stories of several Indian scientists who also happen to be women, was released during the recently concluded Annual Meeting of the Academy



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in New Delhi. The most important message that comes out of the book is that the success of these scientists would not have been possible without the backing of a supportive family. It is indeed a good sign that there is a social transformation taking place. Empowerment of women is essential for this transformation and the steps taken by the Academy along with several other governmental agencies will go a long way in achieving this. Once the full and formidable potential of women is unleashed, it will definitely make this a better and more just society.



No, I haven't come for my PhD. In fact I have brought you a few gifts.

