Our Readers Write ...

Resonance, **Vol.18, No.6, June 2013**

G N Nagendrappa, Alfred Bernhard Nobel – The Founder of the Great Global Awards

I don't read *Resonance* regularly but, due to a nice coincidence, I came across G N Nagendrappa's 'explosive' article.

There was as complete a coverage as possible and it was nice, informative reading.

S N Balasubrahmanyam
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Today I happened to read the article by G Nagendrappa about Nobel published in *Resonance*. I just write you this email to thank you for writing in a simple and understandable language. It gives new information and bit troubled personal life of Nobel despite being very good at science.

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Salvador E Luria, *Resonance*, Vol.19, No.5, May 2014

Of Slot Machines and Broken Test Tubes by S Mahadevan

I found this to be a masterpiece of historical writing. it is clear, highly readable, illustrative of the ideas of the time, and insightful of their progression.

Moselio Schaechter
Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Tufts University, USA
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I was able to read your remarkable essay on the life and career of Salva Luria. You really did an outstanding job and I hope that many students have a chance to read it as they learn about microbial genetics. If I were still teaching, I would definitely assign it and will recommend to those who still teach microbial genetics here that they do so.

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A Slot Machine, A Broken Test Tube, Book Review by Vinita Shivakumar and Dipshikha Chakravortty

It's extremely well written, balanced in view, and helpful in understanding the causes for some of his discoveries. In a real sense, it's a fine corollary to the book itself.

I have become a fan of your magazine and would like to encourage others to read it.

Moselio Schaechter
Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Tufts University, USA

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Niels Bohr, *Resonance*, Vol.18, No.10, October 2013.

I read with great interest your articles on Niels Bohr,and am indebted to you for my enlightened state of mind.If not for such articles,to know about eminent scientists through their biographies is a costly and painful exercise, as most authoritative biographies are foreign publications with a high price tag attached to it. Secondly I have always felt that our science programmes lack the personal touch in that they do not delve into the personality much but only on their work. I can understand it from the utility point of view, but the history of technology or for that matter science can teach budding scientists about the characteristics they should possess for a successful career and also how things evolved.It can also improve their language skills.

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I enjoyed your October 2013 issue on Niels Bohr and his work. However, I have some comments. I presume that one of Resonance's aims is to help develop critical thinking in the student community, which would, hopefully, produce some 'independent thinkers and scientific leaders'. For this purpose, it is desirable that even articles about the greatest scientists should adopt a sceptical attitude. I have read that Niels Bohr's overpowering personality forced dissenters like Louis de Broglie and Erwin Schrödinger (also scientists of roughly equal standing) to suppress their own ideas and follow Copenhagen in their research. Both Heisenberg and Dirac didn't think much of the complementarity principle, and Dirac's view of the uncertainty principle was similar. Einstein was of the view that Quantum Mechanics was a theory of ensembles. Dirac's views of quantum physics in 1930 and, say, 1970, were diametrically opposite (see The *Physicist's Conception of Nature* edited by Jagdish Mehra). In the book *Foundations of Quantum Physics*, Toyoki Koga exhibits a solution to the Schrödinger equation for one particle, adapting old ideas of de Broglie. This represents a localised field. He also shows how an ensemble of such solutions gives a de Broglie wave, thereby partly supporting Einstein. The above information may be of some interest to your readers.

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I had the opportunity of reading the special issue of *Resonance* dedicated to Niels Bohr.

The articles are wonderfully written from education point of view and capture the era and personality of young Bohr quite well. How he deviated from the existing path and dared to propose something which is adhoc mixture of classical and quantum mechan*ics. Bohr's ability to synthesise results from different experiments was remarkable and has been brought out well by Prof. Avimash Khare and Prof. Durga Prasad.*

Over all its a monograph very well dedicated to this great scientist. My compliments to you and contributors for such a good issue.

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R B Woodward, *Resonance*, Vol.19, No.7, July 2014.

The issue of *Resonance* which carries Prof Ranganathan's tour de force article on Woodward and his vitamin B_{12} synthesis is truly a collector's item. May I congratulate you and the *Resonance* team for this exceptional effort? I was so impressed by the language, the treatment of the complexities in such a lucid fashion, the challenges that lay ahead, the approach towards the synthesis that was so artistic and creative, the way it was done in an 'unnatural' yet simpler than the biosynthetic way- and the personality of Woodward – all these came out so lucidly.

It would also be nice to have a seminar/tutorial session on Woodward's synthesis of Vitamin B_{12}, as discussed by Ranganathan in this issue of *Resonance*. This would be essentially to the organic/biochemical researchers and students, where the intricacies and the creative leaps can be discussed. This would be somewhat like a group of art aficionados discussing a masterpiece.

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