

Chandra: A Biography of S. Chandrasekhar (Centennial Publications of The University of Chicago Press)

By Kameshwar C. Wali

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Chandra is an intimate portrait of a highly private and brilliant man, Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, a Nobel laureate in physics who has been a major contributor to the theories of white dwarfs and black holes.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The discovery in 1935 that certain dying stars might be too massive to evolve into white dwarves should have catapulted Indian-born astrophysicist Subramanyan Chandrasekhar into worldwide fame. Instead, his mentor Sir Arthur Eddington publicly denounced and ridiculed his findings. The young protege gracefully withdrew from direct confrontation, went on to make major contributions in stellar structure, moved from England to the U.S. and took a Nobel Prize in 1983. The irony is that either Eddington or Chandrasekhar, simply by following up the implications of the latter's discovery, could have been the first to chance upon black holes and neutron stars. In a dramatic, exuberant biography of one of the century's great scientists, Syracuse University physics professor Wali shows how a modest man with a love of elegant expression overcame racial prejudice and bureaucratic stumbling blocks. Photos.

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From Library Journal

astrophysicist whose major contributions were recognized very belatedly with the award of a recent Nobel Prize in physics. His style of work has been unusual in that he has concentrated on deep study of several topics that were not necessarily fashionable, yet his work on them is now regarded as "classic." Although this biography frequently alludes to Chandra's scientific contributions, much is also said about his personal life and struggles. Wali, like Chandra, is a physicist of Indian birth now working in the United States, and thus he is especially well-qualified to describe Chandra's origins and education in India, his years at Trinity College, Cambridge, and finally his long career at the University of Chicago. The scientific details are mostly nontechnical, thus rendering the book accessible to interested lay people as well as professional scientists. Highly recommended for academic and large public libraries.

- *Jack W. Weigel, Univ. of Michigan Lib., Ann Arbor*

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