

## Science Breakthrough Broken, Award Medal Intact?

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### HIGHLIGHT

Nilsson's research breakthrough in *Science* was retracted by *Science*. But what about the Marcus Wallenberg Prize awarded to him mainly based on the same now retracted publication?

### ABSTRACT

Scientific award should be given to those scientists who made some true discoveries. However, a major award was recently announced for a scientist whose research finding was found to be invalid. Moreover, some facts have led to a serious charge against his serious misconduct in scientific research and publishing. Should the Marcus Wallenberg Prize committee re-evaluate the appropriateness of its selection of this award recipient and at least delay the award ceremony until the truth is found?

### KEY WORDS

Discovery, Deception, Truth, Mistake, High-level misconduct, Nilsson, *Science*, Retraction, Award, Prize

Nilsson was chosen for receiving the 2007 Marcus Wallenberg Prize which will be presented by His Majesty The King of Sweden in Stockholm in the autumn. The citation for this award (<http://www.mwp.org/index.cfm?PageAction=ReadMore&id=26>) emphasized heavily his 2005 *Science* publication (309: 1694-1696, 2005) because it "was ranked as the third most important globally in the year 2005" (see "Breakthrough of the Year: The Runners-up" in *Science* 310: 1880-1885, 2005).

Now that the *Science* breakthrough has fully fallen apart because the publication was retracted (*Science* 316: 367, 2007) what basis is there any more for Nilsson to receive the Marcus Wallenberg Prize?

Considering the fact that not only Nilsson's scientific achievement is under question but also his

ethical standard is also under scrutiny (*Scientific Ethics* 2: 41-43 and 51-52, 2007; *The Scientist* <http://www.thescientist.com/news/display/53081/>), it is unwise to withhold an award medal for Nilsson. Thus, I appeal to the Marcus Wallenberg Prize to withdraw the award to Nilsson or, at least, withhold the medal until he proved the validity of his discovery and he cleared his name from the doubts of a potential ethical misconduct.

Let us be more responsible by honoring only those scientists with good moral values.

Plea initiated by:

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Plea followed by:

(See online list for most undated list)