

Anti-GMO activist Vandana Shiva earns \$40,000 per speech advocating policies harming poor

Vandana Shiva, the Indian activist who opposes modern agriculture and modern science — and well, modernity in general — is a popular guest lecturer on American campuses. Last spring, she held the Weissberg Chair in International Studies (2013-2014) at Beloit College and this fall is scheduled to lecture at Arizona State and Wake Forest universities.

Although she gets good press from left-wing and environmental publications, Shiva is widely considered by the scientific community to be [unbalanced](#) (in both senses of the word) for advocating unsound, anti-social policies and promulgating disproven theories about agriculture. One hopes her remarks to university students are placed in perspective by someone who knows better.

Shiva claims that the cultivation of genetically engineered, pest-resistant cotton is not only ineffective but has been the cause of hundreds of thousands of farmer suicides in India. But Shiva's statistics are cherry-picked, largely irrelevant and often wrong, and her argument relies on a fallacy of logic known as post hoc, ergo propter hoc—after the fact, therefore because of the fact. In other words, she confuses correlation with causation, the kind of “logic” that leads one to believe that autism is caused by organic food because of graphs like [this one](#).

Eminent Berkeley agricultural economist David Zilberman sums up India's experience with genetic engineering this way: “India [has] gained from adopting [genetic engineering applied to] cotton but has lost from not adopting it with other crops. The US, Brazil and Argentina adopted [genetic engineering] in corn and soybean, which led to increases in output and gains from exporting these extra crops. India and the rest of the world have also indirectly enjoyed benefits from the increased global supply of corn because of [genetic engineering].

While this upper-caste Indian gets little right about science, she is clearly adept at extracting money from sponsors on the lecture circuit. According to her speakers' agency, the Evil Twin Booking Agency (we are not making this up), Shiva's usual fee for an American university appearance is \$40,000 plus a business class round-trip ticket from New Delhi. Thus, we infer that Beloit, Wake Forest and Arizona State have probably paid Dr. Shiva close to \$50,000 each for exposing their students to her mendacious, baseless attacks on modern agriculture and science.

Read the full, original article: [Wealthy activist Vandana Shiva is a poor advocate for the poor](#)