

Science in the News

Ubell and Morrison To Receive AAAS-Westinghouse Awards

This year's AAAS-Westinghouse Science Writing Awards will go to Earl Ubell, science editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*, and Philip Morrison, professor of physics at Cornell University. The \$1000 prizes will be presented on 27 December at a dinner in New York (Commodore Hotel, 6 P.M.) during the Association's annual meeting.

The judges also selected two additional writers to receive honorable mention for excellence in science writing, one in the newspaper and one in the magazine field. William Hines, science reporter for the Washington (D.C.) *Evening Star* will receive the newspaper citation. Winner of the honorable mention in the magazine field is Edwin Diamond, science editor of *Newsweek*.

News Winner

Ubell won his award for an article entitled, "How Joke Begot Theory of Universe," which appeared in the *Herald Tribune* on 11 April 1960. His article, written while he was covering a series of lectures at Cornell, compared the "big bang," or expanding universe, theory with the "steady-state" theory. The steady-state theory was lightly tossed off by Thomas Gold in a conversation with Hermann Bondi at Cambridge University, England, in 1946, and he ended his brief exposition with the statement, "There. That should take you five minutes to rip apart!" But Bondi and others since then have found no basic flaw in the theory. Ubell explained the implications of both theories and showed what observations would be necessary to invalidate the steady-state theory.

Born in Brooklyn in 1926, Ubell attended high school there and graduated from City College, New York, with Phi Beta Kappa honors and a major in physics. He has received numerous other awards, including the Lasker Award for Medical Journalism and honorable mention in last year's AAAS-Westing-

house contest. Ubell joined the staff of the *Herald Tribune* in 1948, began to specialize in science writing in 1951, and has been science editor since 1953.

Magazine Winner

Philip Morrison's prize-winning article, "Cause, Chance, and Creation," appeared in the 30 April 1960 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* as part of the series "Adventures of the Mind." The piece contrasted the modern statistical picture of atoms and electrons with the older, strictly predetermined causality of Laplace and Newton.

Morrison was born in Somerville, N.J., in 1915, received a B.S. degree from the Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1936 and a Ph.D. in theoretical physics from the University of California in 1940. He has taught at San Francisco State College and the University of Illinois. After a year with the atomic bomb project at the University of Chicago in 1943-44, he became group leader in physics at the Los Alamos Laboratory of the University of California. He has been on the Cornell faculty since 1946.

Honorable Mention Winners

Hines won honorable mention in newspaper writing for his 23-part series of articles on "The Atomic Years" published from 12 June to 7 July 1960 in the Washington *Evening Star*.

In the magazine field, Diamond received honorable mention for his "Life in Outer Space," which appeared in the 22 February issue of *Newsweek*.

Judges

A group of distinguished representatives from the fields of journalism, science, and education selected the winners. The judges were Earl English, dean of the school of journalism at the University of Missouri; Alfred Friendly, managing editor, Washington *Post and Times Herald*; George Gallup, director, American Institute of Public Opinion; Morris Meister, president of Bronx Community College; Gerard

Piel, editor and publisher, *Scientific American*; and Alan Waterman, director of the National Science Foundation.

The AAAS-Westinghouse Science Writing Awards were established to give recognition and encouragement to outstanding science writing, to stimulate public interest in science, and to foster a deeper understanding of science by the general public. The awards are made possible by a grant from the Westinghouse Educational Foundation.

Sherburne To Head New AAAS Program To Improve Public Understanding

The AAAS takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of Edward G. Sherburne, Jr., to head the Association's new program to improve public understanding of science. Sherburne, who graduated in mathematics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1941, has some 12 years of varied experience in educational television, part of which has been devoted to significant science programs. At present he is statewide coordinator of educational television for the University of California and is responsible for budgeting, coordinating, and supervising television development on all seven of the university's campuses.

Background for the Appointment

For some time the AAAS Board of Directors has been considering ways in which the Association could be more effective in improving public understanding of science. More than a year ago the Board decided that it was time to find a staff member who could provide leadership in this increasingly important area—someone who would keep his eye on the entire realm of science communication to the public and use his influence to close gaps as they develop. Although no definite plans have been made, the Board's deliberations produced many ideas that are the basis for the new appointment.

At the outset, there was emphatic agreement that the appointee should not function as a news bureau chief or a public relations man. Rather, it was felt that he should have broad responsibility for helping groups and organizations of all kinds—especially those in the mass media—to provide better material on science for the public. In particular, he could help scientists and scientific associations explain their activities.