

Communications Department

The Communications Department, working closely with the AAAS Public Understanding of Science Committee, has been organizing programs to increase the critical awareness of science and technology among various segments of the public.

The AAAS Regional Seminar Program, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), attempts to initiate dialogues between scientists, engineers, and representatives of various regional policy-making institutions. A seminar on radioactive waste disposal, whose participants will include legislators and members of governors' staffs from several states, is being organized with the cooperation of the National Legislative Conference. It will be held 8 through 11 December in Las Vegas, Nevada, near a proposed AEC disposal site. A week later, on 14 and 15 December, a small San Diego group, brought together by AAAS and the Scientific Affairs Office of KPBS-TV, plans to discuss implementation of proposals to introduce alternate energy sources into the region.

A Mass Media Intern Program, funded by 3-year matching grants from the Russell Sage Foundation and the NSF, will be implemented for the first time during the summer of 1975. The program will permit up to ten graduate students in the social and natural sciences to spend 3 months or more as working members of specific mass media organizations. The deadline for the receipt of applications is 1 February 1975.

The Communications Department also compiles and disseminates several types of specialized information. A catalog containing descriptions of almost 6000 science films will soon be published. The quarterly publication *AAAS Science Books* reviews almost 1000 science books annually in various disciplines and at several levels. The next edition of *AAAS Science Book List*, based on reviews from *AAAS Science Books*, will be published early in 1975. Plans to initiate a new film reviewing service with the May 1975

issue of *AAAS Science Books* are now pending.

Consideration is also being given to the publication of a series of semi-popular, interdisciplinary books beginning sometime in 1975. Each of these volumes would discuss the scientific, technical, economic, and legal aspects of a topic of contemporary interest. Many of the books would be based on Annual Meeting symposia and on other AAAS-sponsored events such as the regional seminars.

The Communications Department receives requests almost daily for in-

formation on a wide range of topics. While lacking the resources necessary to respond immediately to many of these requests, a registry is being compiled of AAAS members who would be willing to be called upon as resource persons in their areas of expertise.

The Department is also encouraging self-selected groups of AAAS members to organize public understanding of science activities in their localities. These might conceivably be undertaken in conjunction with a local science museum or public broadcasting station. Wherever possible the Department will attempt to assist such groups by offering them specialized information and by putting them in touch with other individuals and groups who are organizing similar programs.

Office of Opportunities in Science

The Office of Opportunities in Science is attempting to increase the visibility of minority and women scientists. In this way it is carrying out the original charge given it by the AAAS Board of Directors, "to sharpen public appreciation and recognition of the scientific accomplishments" of those scientists. AAAS will have an opportunity to measure the Office's progress at the coming Annual Meeting in New York.

Minority scientists participating in the Annual Meeting increased their numbers from 23 at Washington in 1972 to 30 at San Francisco in 1974. The number of women participating in these same two meetings increased from 100 to 154. However, the fact that the percentage of participation for minority and women scientists remained slightly less than 2 and 9 percent, respectively, is discouraging. Also discouraging is the fact that the largest concentration was found in symposia dealing with issues of special interest to minorities and women.

In several other areas progress is more measurable. Association committees that had few minorities or women on them 2 years ago now have active scientists from both groups. Of special importance are the Nominating Committee and section offices, the latter

because they help shape the annual meetings and select their representatives to the Council—the Association's policy-making body. Some sections, such as Biology (H), have several women among their officers, while six—Industrial Science (P), Agriculture (O), Geology and Geography (E), Engineering (M), Pharmaceutical Sciences (S), and Dentistry (R)—have none. Their representation in the sections reflects in general their percentages in the fields. There are only two minority section officers that we can identify out of a total of 328. A highly visible president-elect and Board member stand as encouraging symbols to other women.

On the Association staff the women also have exhibited more upward progress in the last 2 years than have the minorities. The AAAS has an Affirmative Action policy and makes a genuine effort to recruit openly. As in most places of employment, however, the minorities and women are largely clustered on the lower levels. At AAAS there are many minorities and women in the clerical and other nonexempt categories, many women in lower-level professional jobs, and now two women senior department heads—the latter a significant change from 2 years ago.

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No minority persons of either sex have reached that level.

This last discouraging statistic presents the greatest challenge. To a considerable extent it reflects the paucity of minority scientists in the "pipeline" at any level. This scarcity led to the passage of a resolution by the Council that declares the science education of minorities and women to be a high priority of the AAAS's education program, and the major program development thrust of the Opportunities Office.

Notes from Other Offices

Office of International Science. The American Society of Photogrammetry has formally asked AAAS to affirm its support for the continuation of funding for the Earth Resources Technology Satellite (ERTS) beyond the initial period of 4 years. In conjunction with this request, the Office has prepared a memorandum on ERTS and on censusing with ERTS which provides background information and a review of the demographic potential of this new data source. It is available on request.

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Office of Science Education. The AAAS has been awarded a grant of \$42,000 from the National Science Foundation to support the preparation of the sixth edition of *Science for Society: A Bibliography* and to conduct a survey of users of the fifth edition.

NOVA Program Schedule

22 Dec. *Strange Sleep.* For the men who discovered and pioneered anesthesia—as this dramatized reconstruction vividly shows—the personal payoff was often bitter and tragic (a WGBH production).

29 Dec. *The Making of a Natural History Film* (Repeat). A film about how you make films about nature (a BBC production).

5 Jan. *The Long Arm of Politics.* A history of bombers and bombing and an exploration of the role of science and technology in warfare (a WGBH production).

12 Jan. *What Time Is Your Body?* Biological clocks in plants, insects, animals, and man; and what happens when they start running at their own speed (a BBC production).

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