Congressional Science Fellowships: Child Policy Applications Invited

The American Association for the Advancement of Science invites applications for the sixth year of its Congressional Science Fellow Program. (See *Science*, 2 December 1977, page 918).

The AAAS selects individuals from a broad range of disciplines and science-related professions to spend one year working in some area of Congress, and runs a program for its and other sponsors' Fellows. In the past five years 24 individuals, selected and sponsored by AAAS, have held Congressional Science Fellowships. Each program year includes more than ten other fellows selected by several cooperating affiliated sponsors. To date, 70 people have held such Fellowships. This year the AAAS will make five Congressional Science Fellowship Awards. One unrestricted and four in some area of child and family policy, that is, child development, education, health policy, and so forth.

The award is $16,000 for the period of one year, beginning 1 September 1978, and includes nominal moving and travel expenses. Interested applicants requiring a higher stipend are encouraged to discuss their situation with the program director. The AAAS provides a two-week orientation. Each Fellow chooses his or her own assignment with guidance from the AAAS.

Candidates may apply from any physical, biological or behavioral science or field of engineering, as well as any health-, education-, or child-policy related area. Candidates must be members of the the AAAS or concurrently applying for membership.

Information on the selection criteria, application procedure, and program details are available from **Dr. Richard A. Scribner, Director, AAAS Congressional Science Fellow Program, AAAS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.** Deadline for application is 15 March 1978. Announcement of the awards will be made before 1 May 1978.

psychology department had set up its own Ethics Review Committee to monitor research involving human subjects, *in violation of requirements* by HEW and the State of New York. Proper perspective would show that, because there was no overall institutional review process for nonsponsored research at the university, and because the psychology department was concerned that careful professional ethical standards be maintained in all human research, an ethics review process was voluntarily established in 1975. In our view, this was a responsible action by the psychology department, not an attempt to circumvent proper procedure. In fact, had this review process not been in effect, written research proposals, judgments of risk by committee members, and consent and debriefing procedures would not have been available for inspection by the state health department in their recent investigation.

The dispute between the New York State Department of Health and the university has now been resolved. The basic issue all along was the fact that the university did not have a properly constituted institutional review board and that nonsponsored research involving human subjects was not reviewed by the institutional review board. The university has admitted to these violations of state law and has taken all the required steps to remedy the situation.

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Although Gallup and Tedeschi say that SUNYA psychology students were not coerced into participating in experiments, an instruction sheet provided to the students by the psychology department says, "The majority of the faculty of the Psychology Department would prefer that students choose to participate in research for the following reasons" and then goes on at some length to elaborate on the faculty's position. In the settlement, SUNYA officials admitted that the voluntary consent of the students had not been obtained.—R.J.S.

Protease Inhibitors and Muscular Dystrophy

It was rewarding to have our research on the use of leupeptin in dystrophic muscle mentioned in a recent Research News article on protein degradation by Gina Bari Kolata (11 Nov., p. 596). However, the description of our studies leaves something to be desired. The focus of our research with protease inhibitors has not been to make chicken "muscles get larger," although this is a consequence of the in vivo treatment, but to prevent or inhibit degeneration of muscle tissue, especially in dystrophic cells. This we quite conclusively demonstrated in tissue culture (*1*) and in vivo, as reported at a recent symposium on muscular dystrophy (*2*). It is encouraging that Libby and Goldberg have corroborated our results. As we have suggested, the use of these low-molecular-weight nonimmunogenic protease inhibitors (first described by Umezawa and his coworkers) offers promise not only in the elucidation of the mechanism of protein turnover but also in the treatment of degenerative disorders.

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1. E. B. McGowan, S. A. Shafiq, A. Stracher, *Exp. Neurol.* **50**, 649 (1976).
2. E. B. McGowan, L. Siemankowski, S. A. Shafiq, A. Stracher, in *Pathogenesis of Human Muscular Dystrophies*, L. P. Rowland, Ed. Excerpta Medica, Amsterdam, 1977; available from Elsevier/North-Holland, New York).

Lignite-Fueled Power Plants: Radioactive Emissions

Unless the Texas Utilities Company is planning to surreptitiously operate advanced fission reactors, John Walsh incorrectly implies (News and Comment, 4 Nov., p. 471) that stack releases from lignite-fueled electric generating stations would contain measurable amounts of uranium fission products.

In fact, a study (*1*) of the radiological impact of gaseous effluents from a model coal-fired power plant indicates that radium-226 and radium-228 are the major contributors to offsite population doses. These radium isotopes are *decay* products of uranium-238 and thorium-232, respectively.

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References

1. J. P. McBride, R. E. Moore, J. P. Witherspoon, R. E. Blanco, *Radiological Impact of Airborne Effluents of Coal-Fired and Nuclear Power Plants* (ORNL-5315, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Tenn., 1977).