

of irrational fear, this fear will be substantially and permanently reduced."

Whether this study will provide the DOE with any useful knowledge is unclear. Baruch Fischhoff, a psychologist who studies risk perception at Decision Research in Oregon, says the literature on public attitudes toward nuclear power is already abundant. He says it is difficult to separate out either fear or perception of risk from the bundle of reasons an individual might oppose nuclear power. He also suggests that "irrationality" is a term that is difficult to define outside the psychiatric context. However, he believes the study might be useful if the DOE is looking for a deeper understanding of what concerns people rather than just a new public relations angle.—**CONSTANCE HOLDEN**

Congress Gives Archives Separate Status

Congress, after several years of being lobbied by historians and others, has arranged for the National Archives to be liberated from the General Services Administration and established as a separate National Archives and Records Administration.

Archivist Robert M. Warner, on leave since 1980 from the University of Michigan, plans to return there and make way for a presidentially appointed director.

The archives, founded in 1934, has been chafing in what many scholars regard as a bureaucratic misalliance with the GSA that has existed since 1949. Its fortunes reached an all-time low in 1982 when it was subjected to a disproportionate share of government-wide budget cuts and lost over 200 of its 2000 employees.

Prospects are now brighter than they have been in years. Congress withstood the President's attempt to delete money for its grant-making arm, the National Historical Publication and Records Commission. Its fiscal 1985 budget is \$98 million, an \$8 million increase over fiscal 1984. With independence, the archives will be able to make its own budget presentations to Congress, and, says Warner, has a "magnificent opportunity to be the master of its own destiny."

—**CONSTANCE HOLDEN**

Columbia Law Gets Chair in Science, Technology

Columbia University's School of Law is establishing an endowed chair in law, science, and technology. According to law school dean Benno C. Schmidt, Jr., "The chair is the first in this vital subject at any major law school."

The new professorship is made possible by a gift of more than \$1 million by Columbia law alumnus and New York attorney Julius Silver. Silver, who helped found the Polaroid Corporation, has been vice president and chairman of the executive committee of Polaroid since 1937.

Schmidt called establishment of the new chair a "first step in what we anticipate will be a developing commitment by us to the study of law, science and technology." The law school is considering the creation of a research center in the field, according to the dean.—**JOHN WALSH**

Total Doctorates Edge Up in Science, Engineering

The total number of doctorates awarded in science and engineering last year continued an upswing begun in 1979 after a period of decline that started in 1972. The increased number of degrees being earned by women and citizens of other countries accounts for the trend reversal.

The 17,900 science and engineering doctorates awarded in 1983 represented a growth of 1.8 percent over the previous year. Women earned 4470 science and engineering doctorates last year, some 300 more than in 1982. The proportion won by women has almost doubled over the past decade, rising from 13 percent in 1973 to 25 percent last year.

The number of engineering doctorates awarded last year was up 5 percent over 1982 to a total of 2780. The percentage of engineering doctorates won last year by non-U.S. citizens had grown to 56 percent from 36 percent in 1973. According to the survey conducted annually by the National Research Council for government research agencies, the overall increase

in production of doctoral degrees in engineering is attributable to the rapid increase in the number of degree winners who are in this country on temporary visas. In the last decade, the proportion of such degrees earned by those on temporary status rose from 19 to 44 percent. More doctoral degrees in engineering were awarded in 1983 to non-U.S. citizens with temporary status than to U.S. citizens.

—**JOHN WALSH**

Medical School Enrollment Still Edging Downward

For the third straight year, fewer students have been admitted to U.S. medical schools, according to a survey conducted by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). In 1984, a total of 16,395 students were admitted to the 127 medical schools in the United States, and slightly more than that number of applicants were turned away. Altogether, during the past 5 years there has been a decline of 515 first-year slots in medical schools.

There is little change in the percentages of women or of blacks and other minority group members being admitted to U.S. medical schools, according to the AAMC data. Since 1981, the percentage of women in the entering class has edged upward from 30.7 to 33.4 percent. For blacks, that figure has stayed level at about 6.8 percent during the same period.

Many applicants who fail to gain entrance to a U.S. medical school continue to enroll in foreign schools with the expectation of completing their training in accredited U.S. residency programs. The AAMC says these students "are in many cases unlikely to achieve their goal," noting that only 44 percent of last year's foreign medical graduates found residency slots, a drop of 5 percent from the previous year. John A. D. Cooper, president of AAMC, says that the U.S. medical education system already is providing "more than enough physicians" and that it is "unfortunate" that disappointed applicants "believe that by enrolling in unaccredited foreign chartered medical schools, they have attained a position of special privilege. . . ."—**JEFFREY L. FOX**