

Professional Society Ethics Group Exchanges Experience

In late October the office of the AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility sponsored the third meeting of the Professional Society Ethics Group. The group, comprised of 26 AAAS-affiliated societies, meets twice a year to discuss programs initiated by professional groups in response to contemporary issues involving ethics, science, and technology. At the October meeting, representatives from the American College of Physicians (ACP) and the American Psychological Association (APA) described the activities of their associations.

John Ball, associate executive vice president for health and public policy, ACP, discussed the new *ACP Ethics Manual*. The *Ethics Manual* was written by an ad hoc committee of the ACP to address major ethical issues confronting a physician in daily practice. Ball noted that although the *Manual* was not created to serve as a statement of legal principle or medical ethics policy, it is intended to guide physicians in making ethical decisions. The *Manual* touches upon such issues as the relationship between the physician and patient with regard to disclosure, informed consent, and conflict of interest; the physician's relationship with colleagues with regard to advertising and sharing patient files; and the obligation of the physician to society, other health professionals, the government, and news media. Through the *Manual*, ACP hopes to stimulate further discussion on medical ethics among physicians, other health care professionals, and the general public. Recently the ACP has formed a new ethics committee to continue its study of ethical principles in medicine.

David Mills, administrative officer for ethics, APA, described the investigative and adjudication procedures used by the APA for ethics complaints. He explained that APA first developed an ethics code in 1953, and that the code has been revised seven times since then (most recently in 1981) to incorporate experi-

ences from the review of ethics cases. Within the code are ten principles designed to cover ethics issues such as moral and legal standards for psychologists, public statements, confidentiality, research with human participants, and care and use of animals. The APA Ethics Committee handles complaints against members, with support from the APA ethics staff. They meet three times a year for case deliberation and adjudication. Every active ethics case is assigned to a Committee member who monitors and directs the investigation between formal meetings.

To protect members from capricious accusations of wrong doing, all inquiries must be written and signed. If a complaint is judged to involve possible violations of the society's ethical principles, a copy is sent to the accused member, who is asked by the Committee to respond within 30 days. The Committee member assigned to monitor the case and the APA Ethics Officer then review the case material.

If the case warrants further procedure, it is placed on the Committee agenda and each member receives a confidential copy of all material. The Committee may dismiss a case without sanction or it may exercise a reprimand or censure. Although the Committee has broad powers and can recommend that a member be dropped, only the APA Board of Directors can actually expel or drop a person from membership and notify the 60,000 APA members of this action. The Board also decides if a state licensure board should be notified of the violation.

The AAAS Professional Society Ethics Group will meet again in early March. All affiliated scientific and engineering societies are invited to participate in the Group. Further information may be obtained by writing Sally Painter, CSFR, 1515 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005.

SALLY PAINTER

Office of the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility

Arctic Division Holds 1984 Meeting—35th Alaska Science Conference

As in previous years, the highlight of the Division activities during 1983/84 was the annual science conference. Reflecting the new name of the Division, the conference for the first time was called the Arctic Science Conference. The meeting took place 2 to 5 October in Anchorage and was chaired by John Davies, the Division's 1983/84 president. The theme for the Conference was "Science and Public Policy." Some 350 people attended the Conference, a few less than in recent years.

The largest of the symposia was "Meteorology and Oceanography of the North American High Latitudes," organized jointly with the American Meteorological Society. Other well-attended symposia were those on "Science and Public Policy," "Science Education," "Credibility and Acceptance of Sciences in the North," and "Arctic Air Pollution," the latter funded by the Alaska state legislature and attended by villagers from remote areas. Some 150 papers were presented during the Conference.

Several Alaska state legislators attended the conference and two were given awards by president John Davies in recognition of support given to science-related bills in the state legislature.

The next Division conference will be in September 1985 in Fairbanks; Robert White, the new Division president will chair the conference. In 1986 the Division plans to hold its meeting in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

GUNTER WELLER

Executive Secretary, Arctic Division

Pacific Division to Meet in Missoula

The annual meeting of the Pacific Division of the AAAS will be held this year at the University of Montana, Missoula.

Symposia are scheduled on a variety of topics, including organismic speciation, dinosaur origins, modeling natural