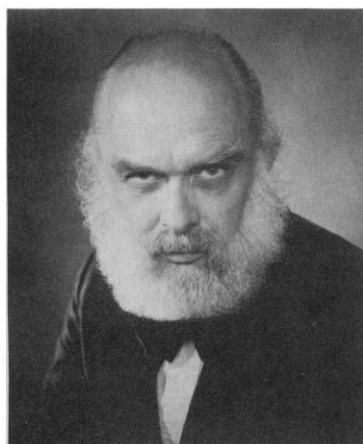


offerings are pharmaceuticals. A handful of firms involved in agricultural genetic engineering, including Molecular Genetics of Minnetonka, Minnesota, made shares available, but there has been less interest in them, says David Manyak, an analyst at Merrill Lynch. "Investors aren't used to agricultural biotech companies." They are also wary of these firms because they take longer to get their products on the market. Plant breeding, even with the help of genetic engineering, still requires a lot of time.

In the past month, a few more companies, including Biogen, located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Calgene in Davis, California, have notified the federal government that they intend to make an offering or have already sold shares. But it is unclear how long investor enthusiasm will hold for biotech stocks. Miller says, "it's started to taper off now." Behrens remarks, "I don't know how long this will last. But we may be somewhere near the end. In this kind of cycle, companies [which have already made offerings] have already soaked up a lot of investment dollars." ■ **MARJORIE SUN**

Amazing Randi One of 25 MacArthur Genius Winners

James Randi ("The Amazing Randi"), the magician known to scientists for shooting holes in research on paranormal phenomena, has been awarded one of this year's MacArthur Foundation grants for "outstandingly talented" people.



Randi was cited for his work in exposing the fraud behind "psychic surgery" and for his recent campaign against television evangelists for mulcting their audiences and gulling the sick.

Randi, 57, says he plans to use his \$272,000 award, to be doled out over the next 5 years, in expanding his office and computer system and hiring an assistant.

For the past year and a half, Randi has been on the trail of evangelist faith healers who he says are fleecing the public with the aid of advanced computerized information and mailing systems.

Randi says these men have an enormous amount of information, including everything from the health status of individuals to the names of their pets, gained through mailing lists from a variety of sources such as fundamentalist groups and purveyors of holy water from Lourdes.

Randi says many people are dying because at healing services they are told to throw away their pills. In undercover work in San Francisco and Houston, he says he went through the trash following a service held by the now "vanished" evangelist Peter Popoff, and found a great variety of medications tossed away by the audience, including nitroglycerin, digitalis, and oral antidiabetic agents.

He says he also intercepted transmissions to a receiver Popoff had in his ear as he walked among the audience. Popoff was getting information on peoples' identities, incomes, relatives, and diseases. "You're talking James Bond here," says Randi.

Randi has been spreading his message with appearances on the Johnny Carson show. He has contacted states' attorneys in seven states to alert them to the various violations including fraud and invasion of privacy but, he says, the law won't do anything because these are religious organizations.

The other 24 winners are:

Paul R. Adams, professor of neurobiology and behavior at the State University of New York (Stony Brook); **Milton B. Babitt**, composer, former professor at Princeton University; **Christopher I. Beckwith**, Tibetan studies professor, Indiana University; **Richard M. A. Benson**, Yale University specialist in photographic technologies; **Lester R. Brown**, Worldwatch Institute, Washington, D.C.; **Caroline W. Bynum**, Yale University historian; **William A. Christian, Jr.**, Spanish historian and sociologist in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain; **Nancy Marguerite Farriss**, director of ethnohistory at the University of Pennsylvania; **Benedict H. Gross**, Harvard University mathematician; **Daryl Hine**, poet in Evanston, Illinois; **John Robert Horner**, paleontologist at the Museum of the Rockies, Montana State University; **Thomas C. Joe**, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Washington, D.C.; **David N. Keightley**, Chinese historian at the University of California (Berkeley); **Albert Libchaber**, University of Chicago experimental physicist; **David Page**, geneticist at the Whitehead Institute, Massachusetts Institute of Technology;

George Perle, composer, professor emeritus at the Aaron Copland School of Music, City University of New York; **David Rudovsky**, University of Pennsylvania law professor; **Robert M. Shapley**, specialist in the neurophysiology of vision, Rockefeller University; **Leo Steinberg**, art historian, University of Pennsylvania; **Richard P. Turco**, "nuclear winter" theorist, Marina del Rey, California; **Thomas Whiteside**, New York journalist who has written extensively on Agent Orange; **Allan C. Wilson**, biochemist at the University of California (Berkeley); **Jay Wright**, poet in Piermont, New Hampshire; **Charles Wuorinen**, composer in residence with the San Francisco Symphony ■

CONSTANCE HOLDEN

Congress Considers Warning Labels on Liquor

Pressure is building up for an idea whose time may have come: health warning labels on alcoholic beverages. A measure to that effect (S. 2595) is now heading for the Senate floor.

Introduced by Senator Paula Hawkins (R-FL) as part of the reauthorization of the alcoholism and drug abuse institutes, the measure would follow the pattern of cigarette warning labels. Four different warnings are proposed, relating to pregnancy and birth defects; driving; combining alcohol with drugs; and the risk of hypertension, liver disease, and cancer. A possible fifth label, to be decided by the Surgeon General, would warn about possible death from massive rapid consumption of alcohol. The measure has the support of Senator Orrin D. Hatch (R-UT), chairman of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, and Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), among others.

Support for the labeling idea is widespread among various consumer and anti-drunk driving groups. The American Medical Association (AMA) has also taken a stand, having passed a resolution in favor of alcohol labeling at its annual meeting in June.

The measure is strongly opposed by alcoholic beverage manufacturers, who take the paradoxical position that labeling will have little effect since most people know too much drinking is bad and that problem drinkers will be unmoved by warnings. They also say labels will frighten pregnant women. According to the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) in Washington, D.C., brewers and vintners are particularly unhappy since beer and wine have the image of being "beverages of moderation." Indeed, this is a theory endorsed by many alcoholics