

edited by DIANA PARSELL

Beginning this month, "Inside AAAS" has a new name, one that better reflects the section's mission of keeping members and other readers informed about AAAS matters. For general questions or comments, contact the editor at: "AAAS News & Notes," AAAS Office of Communications, 1333 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20005. Phone: 202-326-6715. Internet: dpabst@aaas.org.

Dialogue Links Religion and Science

At the invitation of AAAS and the Boston Theological Institute (BTI), more than 150 theologians and scientists gathered in Boston this month to explore ways of making doctrines of environmental responsibility an integral part of religious teachings. It was the first activity in a new AAAS Program on Dialogue Between Science and Religion.

The meeting focused on the interrelationships among consumption patterns, population growth, and environmental sustainability, and ways religious communities can help people develop greater awareness of how life-style decisions affect the balance of world resources.

AAAS program director Audrey Chapman says the conference, supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts, was organized because "the religious community has become very interested in environmental issues at the congregational and denominational levels, but has not yet framed the ethical and theological issues in a scientific context."

One aim, according to coordinator Barbara Smith-Moran of BTI, was to develop a set of recommendations for religious leaders who want to help their congregants "reclaim frugality, equity, and genuine concern for fellow humans." Information from the talks and panel discussions will be used along with related curriculum materials to guide discussions in religious and academic settings.

For information, call 202-326-6600 or send an e-mail message via the Internet to: science_policy@aaas.org.

"Brain Books" Offer Basics

Many of the students in The Learning Bank's adult literacy classes dropped out of school before they got to biology, so they don't have a very good idea about how the human body works. The *Brain Book*, newly published by AAAS, offers some of the basics.

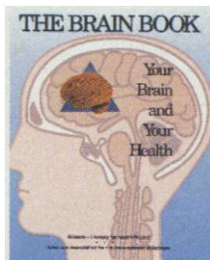
"They love it," says Carol Osgood, program coordinator at the community-based program in Baltimore, Maryland. "There was a real vacuum in their understanding, and this is helping to fill it."

The book describes brain anatomy, functions, and disorders in easy-to-read language, with clear pictures and diagrams. A companion volume, *Brain and*

Behavior, explains mental health and the neurological effects of life-style habits. Both were produced by Science + Literacy for

Health, a joint project of AAAS and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

The project is an offshoot of *Science Books & Films* (SBF), a AAAS guide to science materials. "We had become aware that people were using children's science books in adult literacy classes. There was clearly a need for instructional materials for adults that were scientifically accurate and relevant," says Maria Sosa, the AAAS project director and editor-in-chief of SBF. That awareness



dovetailed with interests of NIDA, which is funding the project and using the two "brain books" as the core of a pilot drug-education program.

The books, written at a 4th- to 7th-grade reading level, were developed and field-tested with extensive input from adults with low-level reading skills, to reflect realistic questions and concerns.

Osgood, a former chemistry teacher, would like to see similar books done for all the systems of the body. Already the "brain books" are spawning imitators. The U.S. Department of Energy is sponsoring AAAS development of a similar book that will explain the Human Genome Project, a major effort to map all the human genes.

For information, call Maria Sosa at 202-326-6453; via the Internet at: msosa@aaas.org.

Post-Communist Purge Hits Science

Democracy is taking root in Central and Eastern Europe, but thousands of scientists and professors in several post-communist countries have lost their jobs in a purge that's more characteristic of the former regimes, according to a AAAS report.

An analysis by the Science and Human Rights Program found that the academic and scientific communities in Bulgaria, Ger-

many, and the Czech Republic have been hard hit by lustration (cleansing) laws designed to weed out "politically tainted" public employees.

In Bulgaria, 3000 scientists and university teachers have been penalized, and in the German state of Saxony, 884 university professors and more than 10,000 other teachers were fired. In the Czech Republic, the dismissal rate is estimated at nearly six percent of all scientists and teachers.

Co-author Morton Sklar says the policies are "a variant of the concept of affirmative action," but the sweeping dismissals, carried out through automatic screening procedures rather than case-by-case adjudications, have been repressive and "pose a new threat to scientific and academic freedom in Central and Eastern Europe."

For a copy of the report, contact Sklar at 202-326-6799 or by the Internet at: msklar@aaas.org.



Synthesis of science and art: To mark the 10th anniversary of its Art of Science and Technology Program, AAAS is displaying a sample of works by a number of artists who have exhibited in the Association's galleries since 1985. Shown above is a 1992 aluminum and Plexiglas sculpture by Tony Robbin that was inspired by quasi-crystal geometry. The retrospective show runs through 12 January 1996.

Science Sources On-Line

Science Sources, a popular AAAS directory of more than 1000 scientific institutions, is now easier to use on the World Wide Web thanks to a new searchable format. Through key words, users can find contacts at research centers, government agencies, universities, and other scientific organizations in the United States and 22 other countries.

Names, addresses, phone and fax numbers, and Internet addresses are listed. The directory can be accessed in the News and Information section of the AAAS home page at: <http://www.aaas.org>.