"Focus" Puts Science on the Radio

The top ten, football, and political announcements may seem to dominate the radio airwaves, but there are alternatives. Several individuals and organizations are making increased efforts to get more information about science and technology on the air. AAAS, for example, takes to the air four times yearly with the "Focus" radio series. Through this half-hour program, listeners hear discussions on a variety of issues and controversies.

"Focus" is a series of public affairs programs produced in Washington, D.C., by a consortium of nonprofit organizations, including AAAS, the Brookings Institution, the Conservation Foundation, the Overseas Development Council, Resources for the Future, and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The "Focus" consortium came together in 1975, with AAAS becoming an active member in 1977. Typically, programs feature two or three guests discussing a topic of relevance to the sponsoring organization.

Through its participation in the "Focus" series, the AAAS attempts to further the public's understanding of science by presenting interesting and thought-provoking subjects of a scientific or technical nature. AAAS programs have been far-ranging, from solar energy to the special needs and concerns of handicapped scientists.

The "Focus" segments contributed by the AAAS have been among the series' most popular. They are often used as program reruns, and many are replayed by the local stations over a period of several months. In addition, "Morning Edition," the new daily news and features program of National Public Radio, has broadcast segments from the AAAS portions of "Focus." An offer to provide more information, which is made at the end of each program, has elicited many queries from around the country.

Contributions to the "Focus" series are produced by the AAAS Office of Public Information. Staff choose a subject for each program, arrange for guests, hire a moderator, and prepare a script. The programs are taped and edited in Washington, D.C., and distributed by the Longhorn Radio Network at the University of Texas, Austin, to some 150 public radio stations across the country, many of them located in university communities.

Beginning with the current (fall 1980) season, "Focus" will be beamed to Austin via the communications satellite. This will enable additional public radio stations to pick up the program for possible broadcast.

Recent AAAS programs have included "Focus on Climate" with Edward Epstein, director of the National Climate Project Office, and J. Murray Mitchell, senior research climatologist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, discussing what might happen if the buildup of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere does alter the earth's climate. The program was based on symposia held at the 1979 Annual Meeting in Houston and the work of the AAAS Climate Project.

Heart disease was the topic of another program, with *Science* Research News writers Jean L. Marx and Gina Bari Kolata, authors of *Combating the #1 Killer* (AAAS, 1978), joining Jeffrey S. Borer, senior investigator, Cardiology Branch, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, to talk about what recent research has revealed about causes, prevention, and treatment of heart disease.

What happens when an individual scientist or engineer "blows the whistle"? What protections does he/she have? Is it safer for a government scientist to "go public" than for one working in industry? What is the role of the professional scientific or engineering society in such an instance? These questions were raised on a "Focus" segment on the social responsibility of scientists. Guests were Peter Raven-Hansen, attorney, Hogan and Hartson; Jeremy J. Stone, director, Federation of American Scientists; and Rosemary A. Chalk, staff officer, AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility.

To coincide with the premier of *Science 80*, "Focus" featured a two-part program with Washington, D.C., artist Anna Sofaer, one of the discoverers of the "Anasazi Sun Dagger," the giant sun calendar constructed by the Anasazi Indians in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, describing the find, and *Science 80* staff writer Michael Gold commenting on his article about the dangers of radiowave pollution.

The many ethical questions raised by new reproductive technologies, including amniocentesis, in vitro fertilization, and contraceptive drugs and devices were the basis of a session at the 1980 Annual Meeting in San Francisco. The technologies and their implications for use also were discussed on "Focus" by Marie M. Cassidy, physiologist, George Washington University Medical Center,

Grants Offered to Foreign Graduate Students to Attend AAAS Annual Meeting

Self-sponsored foreign graduate students studying in the United States or Canada are invited to apply for a limited number of grants of up to $200 toward travel and per diem expenses for attending the 1981 AAAS Annual Meeting, to be held in Toronto, Canada, 3–8 January 1981. Registration expenses for successful applicants will be paid by AAAS.

Applicants should submit (i) a curriculum vitae (including telephone number); (ii) a budget (round-trip to Toronto and living expenses); and (iii) a short statement (250–300 words) describing focus of current research, career plans (how training is expected to be applied on return to home country), and interest in attending the AAAS Annual Meeting. Materials should be sent to Denise Weiner, Office of International Science, at the AAAS address. Applications must be received no later than 14 November 1980.

and Robert F. Murray, Jr., head, Department of Genetics, Howard University College of Medicine.

The first program for the 1980 fall season will explore the controversies, described in a recent article in *Science 80*, involving the arrival of the first humans in the Americas. Archaeologists and anthropologists argue the merits of the "early" (for example, 50,000 to 100,000 years ago) versus the "late" (for example, 11,500 to 12,000 years ago) entry date. Guests will be William M. Gardner, chair, Department of Anthropology, Catholic University; Charles W. McNett, Jr., professor of anthropology, American University; and Dennis Stanford, director, Paleo-Indian Research, Smithsonian Institution.

Other segments for the fall season, still in the planning stages, include those on "cactus rustling," as featured in a recent edition of *Science 80*, and a look at the new field of behavioral medicine (see *Science*, 25 July 1980, pages 479–481).

The program's popularity and the increased potential audience to be reached through the use of the communications satellite have persuaded the AAAS to increase its involvement in "Focus." This fall AAAS will produce three programs, with possible expansion to four shows in the spring season.

In addition to "Focus," the Association is considering other ways to bring science to a radio audience. The production of short (approximately 1-minute) daily science news pieces, slightly longer (2- to 5-minute) science news features, or the use of public service airtime for science-related subjects are all being investigated.

For the present, AAAS reaches a growing radio audience through "Focus" and further contributes to improved science information on the radio by continuing to provide assistance to the networks, National Public Radio, and radio stations and producers.

For further information on "Focus," including the listing of stations on which the program can be heard, write to the Office of Public Information, at the AAAS address.

JOAN WRATHER
Office of Public Information

Alejandro Orfila, secretary general of the Organization of American States (OAS), accepts a copy of the Centennial Issue of *Science* magazine from editor Philip H. Abelson.

At the ceremony, which took place 14 August at the OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C., Orfila paid tribute to the magazine's 100th anniversary and congratulated Abelson for "demonstrating that science is not something arcane and remote, but something of immediate value and concern and of service to every human being." The exchange was reported by the Washington *Post*.

Speaking of the need to expand the role of science and technology in the Americas, Orfila noted that "through their century-long contributions to developing a scientifically literate public, the editors of *Science* have demonstrated that science and technology are at the service of society—if society knows how to use them wisely and well, for the good of every individual. In the Americas we seek to follow this path so well formed by your distinguished magazine. The OAS welcomes its continuing collaboration with *Science* as a clear symbol of optimism for the future of peace and friendship in the Americas."

James Rowe, project director for Western Hemisphere Cooperation of the AAAS Office of International Science, presented Orfila with a copy of *Interciencia*, the tri-lingual science journal of the Interciencia Association (IA). AAAS is one of the founding members of IA.

Audio-Visual Material on Career Opportunities Available

The Scientific Manpower Commission, with funding by the National Science Foundation, has prepared an audio-visual presentation on career opportunities in science and engineering, particularly as related to women. A 60-minute taped narration (cassette) accompanies an integrated series of 80 35mm color slides of charts and graphs showing the statistical measures of past, present, and future opportunities. A printed text with a bibliography of source materials completes the presentation, which was prepared by Betty M. Vetter.

The five-part narrative includes one half hour of general overview of science and engineering as career choices, comparing broad fields of science in terms of size, job opportunities, participation of women, and general information about the amount of formal preparation needed in various fields. Four remaining segments provide more detail in (i) the physical, environmental, mathematical, and computer sciences; (ii) engineering; (iii) the life sciences including the health professions; and (iv) the social and behavioral sciences. Enrollments, degrees, labor force characteristics, salaries, and other statistical measures of current and projected employment opportunity are charted in the accompanying slides.

The presentation is designed to be used intact or in a number of combinations for a variety of audiences. While the information is pertinent to students of both sexes and to their faculty advisers, it is particularly appropriate for undergraduate women or those who are seeking reentry into college or the labor force.

Individuals or institutions seeking this kind of information for presentation to groups may write to Betty Vetter, executive director, Scientific Manpower Commission, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, for information about obtaining a set of the mate-