

Announcements

IRAS
The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science

Purpose—IRAS is an independent society of scientists, philosophers, religion scholars, theologians, and others who want to understand the role of religion in our dynamic scientific world.

Activities—each year IRAS holds a week-long conference on Star Island, ten miles off the coast of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Topics are selected to be relevant to current scientific thinking and to fundamental religious questions. (IRAS members pay a reduced rate for conference registration.)

IRAS organizes events at the annual meetings of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). IRAS has sponsored more than two hundred fifty meetings at universities, colleges, and theological schools.

Publications—*Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* and *IRAS Newsletter*. IRAS members receive subscriptions to these publications free of additional charge.

Special Relationships—Affiliated Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS); Member, Council of Societies for the Study of Religion (CSSR).

Membership Dues

\$60.00 Individual Member

\$65.00 Joint Member (two memberships but one set of publications)

\$40.00 Student Member (requires copy of student ID)

\$110.00 Institutional Member (supports IRAS's work; \$54.00 is tax deductible)

Overseas members are assessed a surcharge to cover mailing costs.

Invitation to Join—If you are in accord with the purposes of IRAS and would like to become a member, please submit an application to the IRAS Council, which reviews and votes on applications at biannual meetings in February and July. For an application write to:

Nancy Anschutz, 26 Turning Mill Road, Lexington, MA 02173

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The Forty-Eighth Annual Star Island Conference
Saturday, July 28, to Saturday, August 4, 2001

Human Meaning in a Technological Culture

We live in a technological culture. Our identities, our responsibilities, the communities we belong to, our hopes, dreams, and nightmares are shaped by rapidly evolving technology. This conference explores how our technologies, especially information technology and biotechnology, affect our visions of meaningful human life. What is it to be human if we are dependent upon (or in the service of, or even replaced by) a web of technological artifacts and systems? What concepts of 'the natural' and 'the sacred' are invoked by the accusation of 'playing God'? In what ways will our religious and humanistic traditions be transformed? What drives apocalyptic and utopian expectations? Whereas discussions on technology often concentrate on ethical issues, this conference will be unique in exploring and evaluating how these powerful technologies redefine, for better and for worse, human identity and meaning, as well as ideas about reality and God.

CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS: **Willem B. Drees** (Free University, Amsterdam, and University of Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands) studies the religious, anthropological, and philosophical dimensions of science and technology; **Bruce Naylor** developed major techniques for generating three-dimensional virtual realities for Bell Labs and now runs an information technology start-up in Silicon Valley.

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS TO DATE: **Rustum Roy** (Pennsylvania State University), engineer and professor of material sciences, studies the way cultures and technologies are interwoven and the religious engagement involved; **Albert Borgmann** (University of Montana), author of *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life* (1984) and *Holding on to Reality: The Nature of Information at the Turn of the Millennium* (1999); **William R. LaFleur** (University of Pennsylvania), professor of Japanese Studies, has a special interest in comparative analyses of Japanese and American debates on the ethical and social issues surrounding biotechnology and medical ethics; **William Grassie**, Director of the Philadelphia Center for Religion and Science, founder and editor of the science and religion listserv META, and theologian studying religion-and-science in our 'postmodern' culture; **Tom Rockwell**, artist and designer whose recent projects include exhibit design for an art and science museum, creation of "science parks," and computer illustrations for a best-selling book on string theory.

PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH: There will be a professionally designed and led program for children and youth, ages 3–17.

COST: Conference fees are \$125/person including children's program (\$100 for IRAS members who register by March 10 and non-members who apply for membership by March 10), maximum/family \$500. Children under 3 are free, but parents are responsible for their care at all times. Room and board are payable on the island and range from \$317 to \$411 per adult, and \$69 to \$270 per child.

For further information and registration, contact:
Bonnie Falla, Registrar, 810 1/2 North 9th Street, Allentown, PA 18102
Telephone (610) 432-8711
or see the IRAS web site at www.IRAS.org