

# 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-Ninth Annual Star Island Conference  
Saturday, July 27, to Saturday, August 3, 2002

### Is Nature Enough? The Thirst for Transcendence

Scientists search out naturalistic explanations, and today they sometimes seem able to propose such explanations for almost everything, including subjective experiences traditionally expressed in religious terms. Yet for many, some scientists included, there persists a feeling or belief that there is "something more," variously described as transcendent or supernatural or at least nonmaterial, which provides a basic context for their lives. This conference will explore whether our contemporary understanding of nature is or is not sufficient to satisfy our search for meaning and transcendence. Some speakers will argue that nature is enough and others will argue it is not, while others will examine the notion of transcendence itself. But each will offer a robust response to the question and its implications for human meaning. Although diverse positions will be taken, the speakers have been chosen partly for their ability to enter into constructive dialogue with one another and with conferees. Join us as together we seek common ground that is intellectually, emotionally, aesthetically, and morally satisfying.

The conference will explore many subsidiary issues. For example, we will explore the degree to which nature can:

explain human moral choices • account for the existence of Nature itself • help us make meaning out of evil in the world • explain consciousness • account for art • provide us a sense of gratitude and/or reverence • sustain us in times of suffering, and give comfort in the face of death

CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS: **Terrence Deacon** (Boston University), anthropologist and neuroscientist, and author of *The Symbolic Species: The Co-Evolution of Language and the Brain*; **Michael Cavanaugh**, author of *Biotheology: A New Synthesis of Science and Religion*.

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS TO DATE: **John Haught** teaches theology at Georgetown University and is the author of *God After Darwin*; **Jerome Stone** is adjunct professor at Meadville Lombard Theological School and author of *A Minimalist View of Transcendence*; **Lawrence Fagg** is Research Professor of Nuclear Physics at Catholic University of America and author of *Electromagnetism and the Sacred*; **Barbara Smuts** is an anthropologist and primatologist and co-editor of the classic *Primate Societies*. The Conference Chaplain is **Barbara Whittaker-Johns**, Senior Pastor at First Parish Unitarian-Universalist Church of Arlington, Massachusetts.

PROGRAM FOR 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 visit the IRAS web site at [www.IRAS.org](http://www.IRAS.org)