

Announcements

IRAS
The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science

Purpose—IRAS (www.iras.org) 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 organizes a week-long conference. The 2011 conference will be held at the Chautauqua Institution in Chautauqua, New York, June 18–25. 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

\$70.00 Individual Member

\$80.00 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)

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:

Michael Cavanaugh
744 Dubois Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808
MichaelCav@aol.com

The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science

Fifty-seventh Annual Conference
Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, New York, June 18–25, 2011

Doing Good, Doing Bad, Doing Nothing: Scientific and Religious Perspectives on Human Behavior

What causes people to behave in ways that harm others? Benefit others? Why do some stand by and watch while others are hurt, inflicting “passive harm”? And why do some step in to help, even at risk to themselves?

How do organizations and societies develop systems that bring great harm while others are beneficent and peaceful?

What do we mean by “harm,” “benefit,” and related terms? What roles do our evolutionary roots, genetic factors, brain development, early child environment, life events, and social and religious systems play in shaping human behavior—good, bad, and indifferent? What can be done to decrease bad behavior and promote more beneficial behavior among individuals, in families, between peoples?

Recent understandings of behavior from the evolutionary, genetic, developmental, neural, and psychosocial sciences provide important new insights into these questions. The conference will seek to integrate these understandings with the teachings of the world’s philosophies and religions. The goal is to better articulate how it is that we humans identify, carry out, permit, respond, and/or avoid responding to human good and bad behavior, allowing us to become more “humane” humans.

Speakers include:

Melvin Konner (Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor, Department of Anthropology and the Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology Program, Emory University), <http://www.melvinkonner.com>

Mahzarin R. Banaji (Richard Clarke Cabot Professor of Social Ethics, Department of Psychology, Harvard University), <http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/banaji/cv.html>

Ervin Staub (Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and Founding Director of the Ph.D. concentration in the Psychology of Peace and the Prevention of Violence, Emeritus), <http://www.ervinstaub.com>

Cheryl Kirk-Duggan (Professor of Theology & Women’s Studies and Director of Women’s Studies at Shaw University), http://www.shawuniversity.edu/press_releases/lnotes/suds/kirk_duggan_domestic_violence.htm

Robert and Alice Evans (Executive Director and Director of Writing and Research, respectively, of the Plowshares Institute), <http://www.plowsharesinstitute.org>

Chapel Speaker: **Rev. Barbara Jean-Jamestone**, Ph.D. (Minister of the Unitarian Society of Hartford), <http://www.ushartford.com/bio.html>

Conference Co-Chairs: Karl E. Peters and Barbara Whittaker-Johns

There will be a professionally designed and led program for children and youth ages 3–17. There will be a refereed poster program for young scholars, and clergy and seminarians will meet regularly during the conference to shape conference materials for use in their ministries.

More information can be found at www.iras.org. Information on the Chautauqua Institution can be found at www.ciweb.org. Information on conference fees, room and board, and registration is at www.iras.org/Site/Conference.html, or contact Joan Hunter, Registrar, 33 Village Street, Medway, MA 02053; e-mail jbh_11@verizon.net.