

PAULA S. APSELL

*Senior Executive Producer, NOVA and NOVA scienceNOW,
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Paula S. Apsell got her start in broadcasting at WGBH Boston, where she was hired fresh out of Brandeis University to type the public broadcaster's daily television program logs—a job that Apsell notes is now, mercifully, automated. Within a year, she found her way to WGBH Radio, where she developed the award-winning children's drama series, *The Spider's Web*, and later became a radio news producer. In 1975, she joined WGBH's NOVA, a science documentary series that has set the standard for science programming on television.

After a stint as senior producer for medical programming at WCVB, the ABC affiliate in Boston, working with Dr. Tim Johnson, Apsell spent a year at MIT as a Knight Science Journalism Fellow. In 1985, she was asked to take over the reins at NOVA where she is now Senior Executive Producer and Director of the WGBH Science Unit. As well as overseeing the production of NOVA documentaries and miniseries for television, she has directed the series' diversification into other media—most notably online, where NOVA is the most visited site on PBS.org. NOVA can also be found in classrooms nationwide, where it is the most widely used television series among high school teachers.

In January 2005, Apsell introduced a NOVA spinoff in *NOVA scienceNOW*, a critically acclaimed science newsmagazine hosted by Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson. Other recent signature NOVA and Science Unit productions include *The Elegant Universe*, *Origins*, *Einstein's Big Idea*, *Forgotten Genius* and the large format feature *Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure*.

Today, NOVA is the most popular science series on American television and online. Under Apsell's leadership, NOVA has won every major broadcasting award, some many times over, including the Emmy; the Peabody; the AAAS Science Journalism award; the Gold Baton duPont-Columbia; and an Academy Award® nomination for *Special Effects*. In 1998, the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation awarded NOVA its first-ever Public Service Award.

Apsell has been recognized with numerous individual awards for her work, including the Bradford Washburn Award from the Museum of Science, Boston; the Carl Sagan Award given by the Council of Scientific Society Presidents; the American Institute of Physics Andrew Gemant Award; the Planetary Society's Cosmos Award; the International Documentary Association's Pioneer Award; the National Space Club of Huntsville Media Award; and the New York Hall of Science Distinguished Service Award for Public Understanding of Science. She has served on the board of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History; the Brandeis University Sciences Advisory Committee; and the International Documentary Association. Apsell was recently granted an honorary doctorate from Southern Methodist University.

She lives in Newton, MA with her husband Sheldon. The Apsells have two grown daughters.