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Science, and the Scientific Community

In an age of narrowly specialized scientific journals, *Science* publishes an unusually broad collection of material. As a weekly magazine presenting important late developments, we face the same deadlines and experience the same pressures as the great news magazines. Yet we must seek to maintain the high standards of technical quality expected of a scientific journal.

In the work of producing *Science* we are especially grateful for the warm response of the scientific community. This response is manifested in the growth of circulation and in the devoted efforts of the thousands of scientists who make most of the judgments that determine the content of the journal.

Science continues to experience increasing and broad acceptance by an audience of high quality. During the past 4 years readership has grown by more than 60 percent, and it has now reached 126,000 paid subscriptions. The highest growth rate has been in foreign circulation, now over 11,000. The educational level of readers is high; about 60 percent have either a Ph.D. or an M.D. degree. All disciplines are represented, including the physical sciences. Among chemists, circulation of *Science* is greater than that of the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*.

Because of this broad and large audience, many contributors are attracted to *Science*. Pressure for space is especially great in areas of biology, medicine, psychology, and the earth sciences where publication is slow and journal circulation is often small. In some of these areas, we receive five times as many research reports as we can publish. In other areas we receive very few manuscripts. To improve the balance of content, some papers, particularly articles, are invited. Such material is sought on the basis of suggestions made by the Editorial Board supplemented by suggestions from hundreds of additional advisers. Currently we receive over 3000 articles and reports a year, besides 1500 other contributions—technical comments, letters, book reviews, and meeting reports. Most of the manuscripts submitted are of publishable quality. If all were printed, *Science* each week would be as thick as a metropolitan telephone book. This would be impractical financially, and such a mass of material would be burdensome to readers.

The problem of selection from among many deserving manuscripts is extraordinarily difficult. The diversity of the subject content makes it unfeasible for a small editorial staff or even a moderate-sized editorial board to do justice to the task. Selection of material for *Science* is a major effort that involves 4000 reviewers.

With rare exceptions, all scientific material, including invited articles, that appears in *Science* has been approved by at least two reviewers. Reviewers' comments are essential to sound staff judgment; the comments usually lead, also, to improvements in manuscripts. Most of the reviewers are very conscientious. In some instances constructive comments concerning a manuscript have exceeded the manuscript itself in length.

In the production of *Science* the staff of 35 is but a tiny fraction of the host of participants. The real work of *Science* is done by some of the best elements of the scientific community. Given their continued generosity and professional pride, the stature and value of *Science* will continue to increase.—PHILIP H. ABELSON