Science in Its Second Century

A year after the special Centennial issue, the press briefings, and the 100-year birthday parties, *Science* is celebrating its 101st year a bit more quietly. But the magazine is hardly resting on its laurels.

Science is now more widely read than at any time in its past. Circulation is some 157,000 worldwide. The international circulation of *Science* is some 14,000. In addition to large numbers in Western Europe, it includes readers everywhere from the Azores to Zambia. Unfortunately, these foreign subscribers face an increasingly heavy postage charge. A 72 percent increase, effective 1 June, will cause foreign postage costs to escalate from $17 to $27 per subscriber.

Domestic postage rates, too, are cause for headaches at *Science*. The federal government may reduce its contribution for the distribution of scholarly materials; if that happens, it would likely mean a cost increase of 40 percent for the last several issues of this year. There is some fear that the Postal Service will do away with nonprofit rates altogether, thereby doubling the mailing cost to about $6 per year.

In addition to subscribers, millions more read of *Science* through the popular press. Because of its reputation for timeliness and accuracy, *Science* is widely used as a "source" by reporters writing for a general audience. A recent survey indicated that, over a 12-month period, items from *Science* were reported in newspapers with a potential audience of more than 230 million people. In fact, something from *Science* was reported five out of every seven days during the year.

Another indicator of an increasing readership for *Science* articles is the number of requests for permission to reprint *Science* material. These requests have been climbing steadily over the past few years, with approximately 6000 requests in 1978, 7000 in 1979, and 8000 in 1980.

The annual report prepared by the editors for the *Science* Editorial Board earlier this year reflects the range of the magazine's coverage. During 1980 the magazine published 194 articles, 30 dealing primarily with biochemistry, 30 having to do with biology and medicine, 26 on geology and geophysics, and 22 on physics. Other disciplines were also frequently represented, as well as science policy, energy, environmental science, history of science, and the impacts of science on society. In addition, 751 "Reports" and 67 "Technical Comments" covering the whole spectrum of scientific disciplines were published in 1980.

The selection mechanism for *Science* remains the peer review system, with some 6000 members of the scientific community participating each year in preparing and judging material for publication. The number of submissions is so great that *Science* can publish only about 20 percent of the manuscripts submitted to it.

An enlarged news staff reports not only the governmental actions affecting science and technology but also developments in industry, academia, and international science and technology. "News and Comment" frequently is the first publication to report controversial issues in any depth, while "Research News" records advances in scientific knowledge and their applications. Materials appearing in these news pages have been awarded recognition by the National Association of Science Writers and by the American Institute of Physics.

The publication of special issues was accelerated as a part of the Centennial year, with three special issues in 1980: High Technology Materials (23 May 1980), the Centennial issue (4 July 1980), and Recombinant DNA (19 September 1980). Special issues thus far this year have focused on sexual dimorphism (20 March 1981) and solid earth (3 July 1981). Another special issue will highlight electronics and computer technology. One issue will contain a special section on Canadian science and technology (based on presentations from the 1981 AAAS Annual Meeting in Toronto). Special issues will be a continuing feature for *Science*, with an average of two such editions each year.

In 1970 *Science* devoted an entire issue to the findings of the first lunar landing. Since then, special coverage of the U.S. space program has been a major endeavor for *Science*. Most recently, the 10 April 1981 issue featured Voyager I's mission to Saturn. These space issues were the first to use color photographs inside the magazine. The trend to more four-color photos has continued. It is likely that in addition to the cover, *Science* will increase its color illustrations inside the publication.

Philip H. Abelson, *Science* editor, does not anticipate a particular change in focus for the magazine in the foreseeable future. He does, however, point to a likely increase in coverage of industrial research and the industrial applications of research already in the pipeline. "With some 52 percent of research and development now being supported by industry, it necessarily becomes the area where the people and the research opportunities exist."

Other areas where Abelson sees a potential increase in *Science* reporting include agriculture and food science, neural biology, natural products, energy research and applications, and medical technology. The field of molecular biology, says Abelson, is growing so fast that *Science* will deal with it primarily through the publication of invited articles rather than individual reports.

The purpose of *Science* continues to be the dissemination of knowledge from all fields and on all aspects of the scientific endeavor.

JOAN WRATHER
Office of Communications

Media Fellows at Work Reporting Science

Composing lines for a radio theatre script on the summer solstice, interviewing Nobel prizewinning scientists, conjuring up new ways to write the classic "weather story" (how hot is it?, what are people doing to stay cool?), or filming animals at the zoo for a mini-series on animal behavior: that's how the Mass Media Science Fellows are spending their summer. The 20 Fellows began their 3-month summer fellowships at newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations around the country in June (see *Science*, 10 July 1981, page 198).

Administered by the AAAS, the Mass Media Science Fellows Program is sup-