

# Welcome Don Kennedy

Floyd Bloom

In a few days, it will be time to hand over the responsibilities of Editor-in-Chief of *Science* to Professor Don Kennedy of Stanford University. Time, as they say, flies when you are having fun, so the realization that this Editor-in-Chief has held the job for more than 5 years still seems hard to swallow. As Phil Abelson, *Science's* Editor-in-Chief from 1962 to 1984, said to Dan Koshland (Editor-in-Chief from 1985 to 1995), and Dan said to me, this has to be one of the best jobs in the scientific world. *Science* receives a constant stream of high-quality research papers and has published some of the most exciting and important scientific discoveries and ideas of our time. It has the wisdom of experts available around the world to help evaluate these results and explain them to our readers. And *Science* has a highly motivated and experienced staff of editors to help sift through the frequently polarized views of authors and reviewers. This job is a constantly moving dynamo daring to be contained.

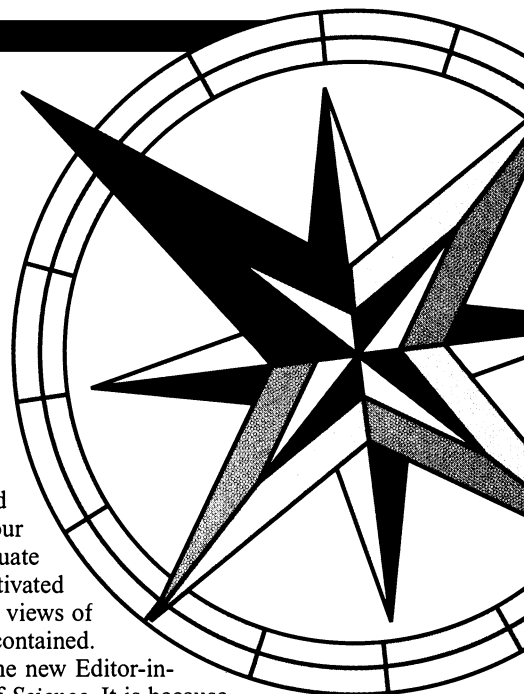
As a former neuroscientist and an active environmental policy mover, the new Editor-in-Chief will certainly take pride in the original research content in the back of *Science*. It is because of this segment of *Science* that the AAAS has long believed that the Editor-in-Chief should be a prominent active scientist. Our new Editor-in-Chief certainly qualifies. Other scientists will recognize him as someone who can analyze complicated situations and make logical and, at the same time, fair decisions. A "real" scientist at the top of the editorial masthead gives readers and authors the assurance that someone who understands the peer-review process from the inside out can keep it in tune. Of course, with rejection rates that often exceed 90%, *Science* Editors-in-chief have a particularly challenging task balancing referee reports across fields, retaining rigor of decisiveness, and sensing when it is time to take a chance with a new finding.

But the weekly issues of *Science* are far more than a sterling series of outstanding original research papers. For many readers, each weekly issue is a window on the news of the world of science. *Science* covers the policy issues, personnel changes, academic moves, and other noteworthy discoveries announced elsewhere in the literature or at scientific meetings. Situated between the News sections and the original research papers, *Science's* Compass offers opinions from scientists and policy analysts who put the original research and the policy issues into perspective.

It will not have escaped the new Editor-in-Chief's notice that the *Science* of 2000 has evolved a fair distance from its precursor of half a decade ago. Not only will the new Editor-in-Chief carry responsibility for the weekly print publication, he will also have four strongly complementary companion products within the *Science* family of publications: *Science* OnLine, *Science's* Next Wave, *Science* News on the Web, and *Science's* Signal Transduction Knowledge Environment.

Next week, we will take a look back at some of the changes that seem to have captured the strongest followings. But none of the changes and none of new products sprung fully formed from the mind of the Editor-in-Chief. They grew from readers' complaints, editors' concerns, and production pitfalls. The changes emerged from a constant effort to achieve the goal of serving the scientific community with the most accurate, timely, and comprehensive information needed to do their jobs optimally. Putting all of these new ideas into practice while accelerating the decision-making and workflow into print and online was only possible because of our highly effective art and production colleagues.

Finally, then, there is the Editorial column. This Editor-in-Chief's scientific career experiences benefited from limitless open-mindedness, a stance that readily accepts novel findings but seriously constrains critical editorial assertions and calls to action. For policy-wonk wannabes who aspire to greater wisdom, reticence is a virtue. But many issues have indeed inflamed us over the past 5 years, and our archives reflect the positions taken. Readers who look forward to new opinions will appreciate the in-depth profile of the new Editor-in-Chief by his Stanford faculty colleague Professor Paul Ehrlich, which appears on page 1349 of this issue. For now we say, welcome Don and fare well.



"[T]his has to be  
one of the  
best jobs  
in the scientific  
world."

EDITORIAL

LETTERS

ESSAYS ON  
SCIENCE AND  
SOCIETY

POLICY  
FORUMS

BOOKS ET AL.

PERSPECTIVES

TECH. SIGHT

REVIEWS

**dEbates!**

Respond online.  
All of Compass is now  
open to dEbates.