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ticles to the same journals as now. Journals would be available in libraries on microfilm. Exceptions could be made for remote libraries if necessary. Editorial processing and refereeing would be conducted as it is done now until the article is in acceptable form. At this point, the manuscript would be typed on a justifying typewriter, then copied on microfilm, and these micro copies would be mailed to all library subscribers who must store the whole journal.

3) Titles and brief abstracts or keyword lists would be printed in an inexpensive format on newsprint and sent to individual subscribers. This weekly newspaper would contain all journals under broad headings, such as "Physical Sciences," "Biological Sciences," "Earth Sciences," and so forth. The divisions can be as general or restricted as practical. Each weekly would contain a numbered postcard for ordering papers by circling appropriate numbers. The individual gets only those articles he wishes to keep, and he can store them to suit his personal needs—by subject, author, journal, or what-have-you.

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If publication were carried out on this basis, the individual subscriber would get just what he paid for, the use of paper would correspond exactly to the need, bookshelves would be less cluttered, publication charges to authors' institutions could be reduced about 50 percent, and subscription costs to individuals and libraries might be substantially reduced. Subscribers' computerized interest profiles could be introduced as soon as the demand warranted and would be available at an extra charge (I don't believe any scientist should be deprived of the joy of getting a research idea by the chance juxtaposition of two titles or abstracts as he searches the current journals. If the literature has become so voluminous that we have no time to browse, we could at least let our fingers browse through our weekly abstracts).

Some of the mechanisms for adopting such a scheme are already here. *Current Contents* sends out a weekly list of

published papers giving authors' addresses. This has the major drawback in that it appears *after* the article has gone through the lengthy processes of typesetting, proofreading, lockup and make-ready of letterpress, and mailing. The above procedure would have the title and keywords or abstract in the readers' hands within a few weeks of acceptance by the editor, so they could read an edited and refereed copy of the paper within 2 or 3 months of its submission in most cases. If the reviewing process is inordinately long, the reader should probably be glad he doesn't have to read the original unrefereed manuscript.

A system almost identical to the above was proposed to me and to all his friends and acquaintances by my late colleague, Isador Fankuchen, about 15 years ago. The trends were clear even then, and unless we wish to be buried under a dual mound of unedited trash and elegant and unread archives, we had better all get together soon and do something about it. I have talked to many people about it and found that scientists range from mild interest to enthusiasm, but I have yet to meet a publisher's representative who favors it.

EPHRAIM BANKS

*Department of Chemistry,  
Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn,  
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## Egg Fanciers

Reynolds' letter "Well-rounded egg-head" (16 Jan.) prompts me to swiftly remind your readers that, while the rounded end of a macroscopic egg indubitably "has in it the most stuff," to a considerable extent the "stuff" consists of a pocket of gas. This may be readily noted when a hard-boiled hen's egg is peeled. In addition, the quantity of gas increases with the age of the egg.

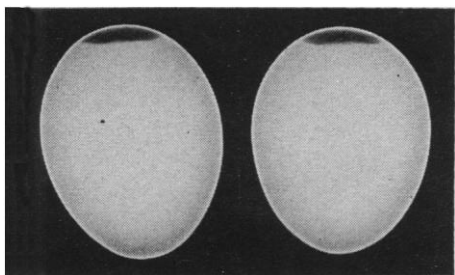
W. DAVID ENGLISH

*852 South Oakwood Street,  
Orange, California 92667*

Reynolds is correct in stating that eggs "have two ends, a rounded one and a pointy one," but he is mistaken in saying that the latter gets there first (when laid). I have observed many bantam hens in the act of oviposition and the rounded end appears first just about as often as the pointy one.

FRED P. JEFFREY

*97 Pine Street,  
North Amherst, Massachusetts 01059*



. . . If one can say either end of an egg is inferior, we submit that it is the blunt end that is relatively vacant and contains hot air (see illustration). We are proud to remain two pointy eggheads.

T. HEALEY  
D. E. PRICE

Departments of Radiology and Pathology, Beckett Hospital, Church Lane, Barnsley, Yorkshire, England

#### Open Letter to President Nixon

We strongly support your efforts to eradicate bacteriological weapons, and suggest that a most appropriate antidote would be to turn the activities of the Chemical and Biological Warfare services toward research that will aid in restoring a harmonious ecological balance.

The detrimental effects of the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers have now been devastatingly demonstrated by the volume of dying birds, dying fish, dying streams, and dying lakes. Unless other means are found to replenish the soil and attack insect pests, we face an environmental catastrophe. We therefore urge you to consider the possibility of diverting the personnel and facilities of CBW to the very urgent tasks of (i) finding strains of bacteria and parasites to be used against harmful insects; and (ii) developing nitrogen-fixing bacteria that would enrich the soil without creating harmful side effects. In this way the vast experience and equipment available through CBW can be salvaged and utilized for the improvement of our environment—a “swords into plowshares” program at the biological level.

TAHIR M. RIZKI\*  
RICHARD W. HILL

Department of Zoology,  
University of Michigan,  
Ann Arbor 48104

\* In addition, 81 people associated with the Department of Zoology signed this letter.

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