

◆ CSE's First 50 Years: Blazing the Trail for Science Editors Everywhere

Devora Krischer

The Council of Science Editors (CSE) has come a long way in its first 50 years. The need for an organization to serve biology editors was first conceived in 1955. That's when a preliminary editors' meeting was organized by the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) and funded by the National Science Foundation. Planning for the first Conference of Biological Editors continued through early 1957. The conference, held in early 1957, attracted 46 editors and 13 observers. When the organization was incorporated in 1965, the name was changed to the Council of Biology Editors (CBE), and annual dues were set at \$10. Our current name was adopted in 2000, under CSE President Blaire Mossman, to include editors in the physical sciences and to reflect our widening scope. How far we've come!

Remarkably, the fledgling society began almost immediately to make an impact on the editorial profession. The first edition of the *Style Manual for Biological Journals*—all 92 pages of it—was published in 1960. It was such a success that the expanded second edition (117 pages) was published in 1964, and the greatly enlarged third edition (297 pages), now called the *Council of Biology Editors Style Manual*, in 1972. To make the reference more useful to Canadian and European editors, style recommendations in the 1978 fourth edition were based, wherever possible, on international standards and widely accepted practices.

The fifth edition, published in 1983, was largely rewritten and expanded to include chapters on ethics (historically, a CSE hot-button issue), illustration, copyright, and sec-

DEVORA KRISCHER, an active CSE volunteer, chairs the 50th anniversary task force.

ondary services. The 1994 sixth edition, widely praised as an authoritative major desk reference, was titled *Scientific Style and Format: The CBE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*. Foreshadowing the transformation of CBE to CSE, this edition included chapters on the physical sciences. The seventh edition, published in 2006, builds on that precedent.

CBE, early in its history, had a hand in improving the quality of scientific writing by educating writers as well. The Committee on Science Writing in Graduate Training was formed in 1961. Later, the name was changed to Training in Scientific Writing, and in 1967, the first workshop, "Graduate Training in Scientific Writing", was held at Rockefeller University. It was closely followed in 1968 by a workshop on "Teaching of Scientific Writing to Graduate Students" in Carmel, California—a sort of "training the trainers".

In concert with its educational activities, the Council also published *Scientific Writing for Graduate Students* in 1968 to quickly spread good writing practices across academe. The book retained its popularity for years, and in 1976 it was reprinted in paperback. The third printing, in 1983, was accompanied by transla-



Three members of the committee that prepared the 5th edition (1983) of the *CBE Style Manual*. L to R: Philip L. Altman, Gisella Pollock, and Erwin Neter, chairman. (The other committee members were Murrie W. Burgan, Noel H. Holmgren, and Elizabeth M. Zipf.) Altman was president of CBE in 1972-1973 and executive director of CBE from 1981 to 1991, Pollock was editor of *CBE Views* (the predecessor of *Science Editor*) from 1987 to 1991, and Neter was president of CBE in 1979-1980. Photo courtesy of Gisella Pollock.

tion of the book into Japanese. The book retained its utility well into the 1990s, with its fourth and fifth printings in 1986 and 1989, respectively. A completely rewritten, updated version, titled *How to Teach Scientific Communication*, appeared in 1999.

CSE has continued its focus on education through the years with its justifiably renowned short courses for editors, held every year at the annual-meeting venue just before the meeting.

The initial forerunner of *Science Editor*, the *Conference of Biological Editors Newsletter*, was first published in 1959, only 2 years after the first conference was held. The name was changed to *CBE Newsletter* and, in 1977, expanded into the newly cre-

ated *CBE Views*, the immediate predecessor of the publication you are holding in your hands (or reading online!).

Early CBE publications were not limited to the *Style Manual* and newsletter, though. In 1974, the Council published and distributed the proceedings of *Economics of Scientific Publications*, a workshop that had been held the previous year. Turning inward to formalize its structure, CBE produced the first *CBE Handbook*, a publication that endures to this day as the *CSE Organizational Guide* and continues to be reviewed and updated at board meetings each year. The first printed membership directory was distributed in 1980; membership in the following year numbered 525.

Other noteworthy publications included *Editorial Forms: A Guide to Journal Management* (1987), *Illustrating Science: Standards for Publication* (1988), *Financial Management of Scientific Journals* (1989), *Ethics and Policy of Scientific Publication* (1990), and *Peer Review in Scientific Publishing* (1991).

CBE also reached out to editors on other continents and in other disciplines early in its history, inspiring the establishment of several similar organizations. In 1962, at a special postconference meeting, CBE members met with Latin American editors, who founded their own society 2 years later. After a similar session in 1964 with European editors, the forerunner of the European Association of Science Editors (EASE) held its first planning conference late in 1965. Although no joint meeting was held with Japanese editors, they drew inspiration and assistance from CBE and established the Association of Biological Editors of Japan in 1968, and the second edition of the CBE style manual was translated into Japanese in 1969. The fourth edition was translated in 1979.

CSE and its predecessors have had an impact far beyond the size of the organization in the world of science editing. We have set the standards for style and format; educated generations of science editors and writers; inspired and facilitated the

establishment of editors' societies in Latin America, Europe, and Asia; and participated in the international scene through EASE, the International Federation of Scientific Editors' Associations, and the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.

As we face the next 50 years, our activities and influence—all accomplished by volunteers—can only grow in scope, number, and quality. What contribution will you make to CSE's future? 🧑🏻

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