

Here We Go: A New Editor for *Science Editor*

Jonathan Schultz

Allow me to introduce myself: I'm Jonathan Schultz, your new Editor-in-Chief of *Science Editor*. This year marks 40 years since the start of *Science Editor*,¹ and I begin my tenure with a full recognition of the history of this publication and importance of my new role. In this, my inaugural Viewpoint, I will outline my vision for *Science Editor* and preview just a few of the changes and improvements I hope to roll out over the coming months with the goal of keeping *Science Editor* interesting, informative, relevant, and reliable.

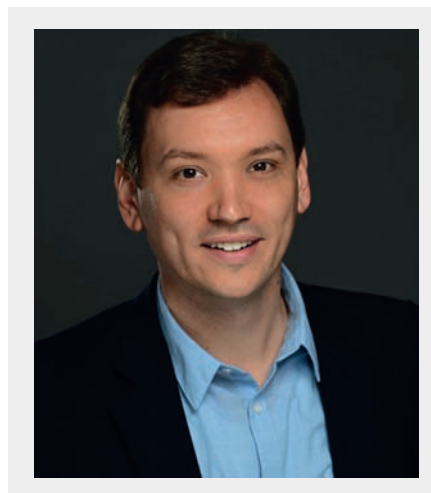
Science Editors

But first, I want to explore what it means to be a science editor. The Council of Science Editors (CSE) began in the 1950s as an organization for and by science editors, but 60 years since then, the definition of what exactly a science editor is (and does) has changed quite a bit. As was seen in 2017's special issue on careers (Volume 40, Number 1), "science editor" is a broad term encompassing professional scientific editors, part-time academic editors, technical editors, managing editors, copy editors, support editors, and so on. In many cases, the day-to-day work of these roles may be different, but what binds them, and why I feel calling them all "science editors" is appropriate, is we all share the common goal of improving the scientific literature, enhancing the scientific record, and ultimately advancing science and our understanding of the world.

I recognize that this all sounds a bit too grandiose, but it is tempered by appreciating the inherent humility in the scientific pursuit. There is very little in science that is definitive, and every discovery and advance is meant to be poked, prodded, broken, and replicated. This is true even in a field such as medical science, where advances that save lives now may one day be viewed as barbaric as new and less invasive or less destructive techniques are developed. Nothing is final in science; nothing is truly finished.

¹ Technically, *Science Editor* began life in 1978 as CBE Views (back when CSE was the Council of Biology Editors) and before that there was a CBE Newsletter, but why quibble with milestones.

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This humility should extend to scientific publishing, where the scientific article is never an end in and of itself. This is reflected in the metric with the most currency in scientific publishing: the citation. Articles are only successful when they are referenced, when they influence or inspire or provoke. An article that is never cited, that never drives further research, is considered effectively worthless: an end, but a dead one.

Going further, as editors it is helpful to remember that the scientific article is not the work itself, but a report of the work, a reflection of the research. If there are ways to improve the clarity of that reflection, new tools or new formats, we must explore and possibly embrace them.

There are some who will take this point and argue that the scientific article is superfluous, and by extension, science editors are unnecessary. But, I strongly believe this to be misguided and attempts to invalidate a vital community of science editors whose professional mission is to improve the understanding of science.

This goal is reflected in CSE's vision statement: "To be indispensable in the communication of science." Building on that vision, under my watch, the mission statement for *Science Editor* will be as follows: "To provide science editors with the knowledge, skills, and concepts they need to run the best version of their journal or publication in pursuit of improving the scientific literature."

I see CSE and *Science Editor* being the place where the different types of editors can interact and support each other. To put it succinctly, I want *Science Editor* to be the place where editors connect.

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A Vital Community

It is fitting then that the focus of this, my inaugural issue as EIC, is on articles from the recent CSE Annual Meeting held in New Orleans. Each May, hundreds of science editors and other scientific publishing professionals gather at CSE's annual meeting to discuss recent developments, share tips and tricks, and learn from each other. I had the honor to co-chair a wonderful program committee this year with Helen Atkins and just a handful of the interesting and informative sessions are described in the meeting reports in this issue.

As reported by Peter Olson, the meeting began with a truly fascinating keynote address by Dr Michael Mann entitled "The Hockey Stick and the Climate Wars: Dispatches from the Front Lines." The titular "hockey stick" describes the graph illustrating the increasing global warming trends over the last 1000 years with a sharp uptick in the last 200 years of human-influenced climate change. This graph adorns the cover of this issue along with a photo of the California wildfires, an increasingly (and depressingly) common image of one of the many effects climate change is having on our environment.

On a more encouraging note, Kristen Hauck reports on the session "It Takes a Village: A Strong Team Can Mitigate a Crisis," including stories of editors and journals who recovered from disaster; Nida Mohsin shares some tales from "At My Desk After CSE, Now What: Use Cases from CSE 2017;" Brit Stamey describes some "New Innovations in Peer Review;" Alison McGonagle-O'Connell explores "Innovation in Author Experience;" Mike Friedman describes "Using Production Metrics to Track Journals' Workflow;" and Stacy Christiansen details the "Short Course for Manuscript Editors," one of the many short courses offering by CSE in advance of the meeting.

A meeting report that highlights a session that typifies what makes CSE great is Kristin Inman's account of how editors-in-chief, researchers, and publishers go about "Learning from One Another." As with the full meeting itself, it is a session like this that exemplifies the mission of CSE as a "dynamic community of editorial professionals dedicated to the responsible and effective communication of science." CSE, both as an organization and at the annual meeting, provides a wonderful opportunity for networking and sharing ideas and skills among encouraging professionals and it is my sincere hope that this continues onto the pages of *Science Editor*.

Along those lines, you likely wouldn't be reading an editorial from me if outgoing EIC Tracey DePellegrin hadn't asked me to be her Deputy Editor a few years back, and for that I am forever grateful. Tracey put together an excellent team, and I'm thrilled that Managing Editor Beverly Lindeen, Copy Chief Jessica LaPointe, and Technical Editor Leslie Neistadt have all agreed to continue their contributions.

As she outlines in her farewell article that bookends this issue, Tracey shepherded the creation of a new online platform for *Science Editor* and worked to better incorporate the perspective of working scientists and editors-in-chief. An example can be seen in our ongoing Editor's Perspective series; in this issue, Ryen White, new EIC of the *Information Retrieval Journal*, discusses making the transition from author and reviewer to editor and provides a unique perspective as there are 3 co-EICs at his journal. I plan to continue this focus on editors, the work of editing and running a journal, and the advancement of science through improving scientific communication.

Moving Forward

As noted, one of our proudest achievements during Tracey's tenure was the redesign of the print journal and development of a new *Science Editor* website, <https://www.csescienceeditor.org>. Both have been well received, and I want to build upon these great foundations by ensuring that *Science Editor* publishes articles worthy of these platforms.

A question I have heard people ask in some form or another over the years is, "What exactly is *Science Editor*? Is it a research journal? A society newsletter? A blog?" Ultimately, it is all of those and more, and whereas this format fuzziness could be seen as a weakness, I believe it is an asset as it allows the publication to be everything an editor may need, be it case studies, original research, commentary, essays, or news. For more info on the types of articles we are interested in, readers should check out our new Author Information page (<https://www.csescienceeditor.org/for-authors/information-for-authors/>). *Science Editor* works best with a broad and diverse collection of authors, and I encourage all readers to contribute an article for consideration. Some other changes include the following:

Social Media. In 2018, any self-respecting new EIC will discuss how they plan to use social media to expand the reach of their publication and grow its readership. And I'm no different. We hope to leverage the solid social media presence of CSE's Facebook and Twitter accounts to see a greater distribution of, and discussion of, *Science Editor* articles online and will be implementing commenting on our site soon. I personally am only on Facebook to share photos of my kids, but I'm trying to be more active on Twitter and can be found at @jdgshultz. At least until someone tries to get me fired. In all seriousness, as much as Twitter can be a hellscape of screenshots and bad faith, it is also one of the best places to have your biases challenged and horizons expanded while meeting new people and finding exciting new voices.

Newsletter. Starting this September, in conjunction with the publication of this issue, we will begin distributing a

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monthly *Science Editor* Newsletter. Because *Science Editor* now publishes on a continuous basis, we feel that a monthly newsletter would be a good way to collect and promote articles on a more frequent basis and allow for a mix of links to new and older articles, along with some (hopefully) fun extras.

Print Edition. Lest readers fear that the print edition of *Science Editor* will be getting the short shrift, over the next year, we will be introducing a number of changes and additions to the print issue members receive in the mail each quarter. We continually hear from readers that they value this member benefit, and we want to ensure that it remains an interesting and enjoyable reading experience. I personally am a lifelong browser and I like to relax by flipping through magazines, reading brief snippets and appreciating the artwork. To that end, you'll soon see a few shorter pieces interspersed through the issue, some informative, some simply diversions. In addition, we plan to feature the work of science illustrators and artists more frequently. My hope is this will both serve to highlight the importance of artists to

science communication and provide editors with a pool of potential talent to commission for their journals and projects.

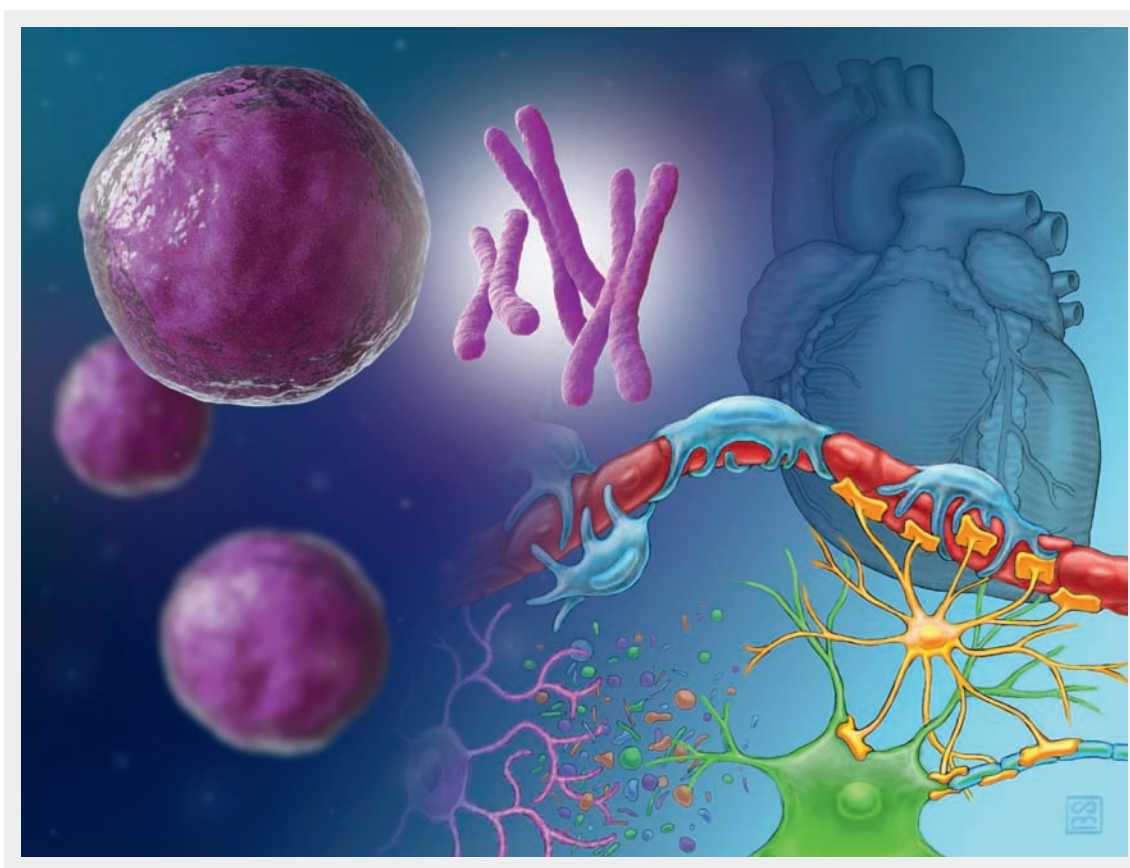
Let's Bring This to a Close

I began this article by introducing myself as "your Editor-in-Chief" and I mean that sincerely. As members (or potential members²) of CSE, *Science Editor* is your publication: We value and rely on your suggestions for potential articles, your ideas for improvements, or even your complaints.³ We love considering pitches or submissions and we want to hear from you, so please contact us at scienceeditor@councilscienceeditors.org.

Thank you for your readership and we hope you enjoy this issue and what we have in store for the future. We're just getting started.

² If you're reading this and not yet a member of CSE, you really should consider joining: <http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/membership/benefits/>

³ Please try to be nice.



Conceptual collage representing the link between genetics, cellular interaction, and organ system function by Ben Smith. A mix of 2D and 3D medical illustrations can be commissioned by contacting him at ben.smith6@gmail.com.

Scientific and medical illustrators interested in being featured in *Science Editor* can submit image via email to scienceeditor@councilscienceeditors.org.