

◆ From the 1997 Annual Meeting
Program Chair



Faith McLellan

CBE celebrated its 40th anniversary during an annual meeting focused on editing, ethics, education, and electronics. The range of the topics explored reflects the spectrum of CBE members' responsibilities for the dissemination of information in the life sciences. Educational sessions were targeted to each segment of our diverse membership. In addition, breakfast forums provided an informal way for interest groups to discuss concerns specific to their professional roles. The deliberations of these groups could become a source of useful information for future program

committees and could provide opportunities for long-term networking.

The expanding scope of editorial responsibility was on full display in sessions devoted to the process of substantive editing, the special problems associated with grant applications, and common statistical errors in biomedical reporting. Experts in meta-analysis and evidence-based medicine described the potential of these applications to improve the quality of the scientific and medical literature. Editors gained insight into rhetorical practices in science, the evaluation of qualitative studies, and the internal logic of manuscripts, and they learned about how editors in other disciplines approach their work.

Ethical and legal dilemmas in scientific publishing were highlighted in several sessions. Real-life problems and solutions were presented and debated in lively conversation that continued long after the formal sessions concluded. Panelists emphasized the educational role of CBE members in communicating sound ethical and editorial practices to readers, authors, teachers, and trainees.

Most people agreed that all of us—editors of all types, publishers, production managers, information specialists, and others—are being asked to do more with less. Thus, many sessions were aimed at ways to increase quality, diversify products, and solve editorial, publishing, and managerial problems with fewer resources and smaller staffs. Many of our new activities are, of course, taking place in cyberspace, where changes often occur at an alarming rate. The challenges of networking, archiving, retrieving, profiling, and marketing were just a few of the many electronic topics explored throughout the meeting.

The sessions referred to here—and more—are detailed in this and future issues of *CBE Views*.

The complexity of contemporary research and the novel ways of communicating its results demand that everyone involved in the publication of medical and scientific information acquire new skills. Those who attended the 1997 annual meeting of CBE got a glimpse of what the new skills might entail. Stay tuned for the continuation of this educational process, which takes place at the 41st annual meeting, 2-5 May 1998, in Salt Lake City. ⑥

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