

Annual Meeting Program Highlights

FINDING THE BALANCE: PRINT AND ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Adam's Mark Hotel
San Antonio, Texas
6-9 May 2000

Tom Lang
Chair, Program Committee

Written communication did not replace spoken communication: It extended speech in time and distance and improved the durability and accuracy of memory. Neither did television replace radio: It moved radio out of living rooms and into kitchens, bedrooms, and automobiles. How will electronic publishing affect print publishing in science? The One-Day-After-Cinco-de-Mayo annual meeting will explore the myths, realities, and possibilities.

Plenary Sessions

The keynote address will examine the concept of technologic determinism, the notion that the characteristics of a specific technology determine a variety of social and economic circumstances. To paraphrase media scholar Neil Postman, "I don't know what the Indians were talking about with smoke signals, but I know it wasn't philosophy. You can't DO philosophy with smoke signals." Technologic determinism may not be as academic as you might think. Consider the fact that science depends on writing and could not have developed without print communication. Only publishing allows scientific research to be public, reproducible, systematic, and cumulative—the characteristics that distinguish science as a way of knowing truth from intuition, tradition, and authority. So what will happen as the media of scientific publishing begin to include online documents?

The first of two plenary sessions will



consider the issues associated with free, unlimited, and timely access to information over the Internet. This topic has evolved from the specifics of the E-biomed and PubMed Central proposals made by the National Institutes of Health into a more general treatment of the issues involved in publishing peer-reviewed science on the World Wide Web.

The second plenary session will identify the human factors of reading printed and electronic texts, from the physiologic aspects of receiving images as light reflected from a page or transmitted from a computer monitor to how page size and screen size affect the formatting of text and visuals.

Concurrent Sessions

The committee has done a wonderful job of assembling the 30 sessions that make up the program. Finding the balance between print and electronic publishing has tremendous consequences for the cost, quality, and access of scientific information. The sessions address these issues with respect to print and online journals and address the knowledge and skills needed to publish in both media.

Journal editors will be interested in the

sessions on the relationship between the principal editor and the owner of a journal; on the economics of print and electronic journals; and on measuring a journal's impact. Sessions on digital archiving of data, handling of supplemental data, and editing and maintaining a Web site should appeal to managing editors. Manuscript editors can attend sessions on critical appraisal of manuscripts, the popular "Pet Peeves and Bêtes Noires" session from the 1999 Montreal annual meeting, and the current state of training programs for editors.

In addition, several sessions should have broader appeal: "Advances Across the Sciences", a recap of the major scientific events of the last year and the next decade; "How Scientists Read"; "Standards for Electronic Publishing"; "Copyright Law"; and "The Impact of Consolidation in the Publishing Industry".

Other Events

The meeting will also feature the Short Courses for Journal Editors, Managing Editors, Manuscript Editors, and Web Editors. Tours of Mission San Jose, Mission San Juan, and the Alamo are planned, as is a trip to the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research. A new schedule

makes more time available for networking (oh, alright: socializing) and should slow the pace of the conference.

San Antonio is a beautiful city with a fascinating history and an exciting future, both of which will be apparent to conference participants. The Adam's Mark Hotel is right on the famous River Walk,

San Antonio's signature restaurant and entertainment district that winds below street level through downtown. The eating and shopping should be very good, and the weather should be perfect.

The members of the 2000 Program Committee are Tom Lang, Chair; Ann Link, Cochair; Eleanor Albert; Jessica

Ancker; Mark Bullimore; Kat (aka Kimberly) Conner; Blane Cox; Peter Goldie; Margaret Hoppenrath; Cheryl Iverson; Michael Phillippe; Sarah Pierce-Rubio (local arrangements); Mary Scheetz; Diane Sullenberger; Crispin Taylor; and Maggie Winker.

Short Courses to Precede Annual Meeting; Offerings Include New Web Editing Course

This year, in conjunction with its annual meeting, CSE will offer members and non-members an opportunity to participate in four short courses. The 2-day Short Course for Journal Editors will take place on 5-6 May. The other three—the new Short Course for Science Web Site Editors, the Short Course for Managing Editors, and the Short Course for Manuscript Editors—will all be held on 6 May. Each course focuses on the actual everyday work that each type of editor faces, and each will provide participants with exceptional learning opportunities. Experienced faculty lead the breakout sessions. This article will give readers an idea of the topics that this year's short courses will cover.

Short Course for Journal Editors

The 2000 version of the Short Course for Journal Editors has been revamped to address online issues. The faculty are working hard on updating the syllabus so that participants can discuss the new PubMed Central, SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) initiatives, online peer-review systems, and the changing production and financial environments of journals in science, technology, and medicine. The course coordinators are Morna Conway, president of The Conway Group, and Joan Blumberg, president of Blumberg Associates.

Sessions will focus on editorial-office management (managing manuscript flow from receipt to production), online peer-review systems, peer-review dilemmas and

policies, journal finances, and conflict resolution. In informal, interactive breakout sessions, faculty and participants will discuss a wide array of topics, including graphics, quality, site licenses, style, and how to increase a journal's influence.

Short Course for Science Web Site Editors

In less than a decade, the Internet has become a major medium for conveying scientific information around the world. Web editors have the job of understanding not only the techniques of electronic publishing, but also how the Internet can facilitate communication. This course, for novice Web editors and those with more experience, will follow a syllabus that includes an outstanding collection of information about editing Web sites, online publication, and Web resources.

This 1-day intensive course is coordinated by Sally Edwards, managing editor at the Health Effects Institute. The course will attempt to answer questions that Web science editors deal with every day: How does editing a manuscript for online publication differ from editing a manuscript for print publication? What unique tools are available to help Web editors in their daily work? Do Web editors have to learn HTML? What are the up-front costs of editing a Web site? What are the continuing costs? How might Web editors work with service providers? How will the audience change when a publication moves to the Web? What is international English?

The course will include a hands-on segment on PCs. Breakout sessions will discuss successful Web sites, journal sites for peer review and publishing, software options, staffing, legal issues, costs, quality control, and maintenance.

Short Course for Managing Editors

This year's Short Course for Managing Editors will include several of the topics that last year's 45 attendees rated highly. The course coordinator is Penny Hodgson, managing editor of the *American Heart Journal*. Hodgson will open the day's work with a general overview of the roles and responsibilities of managing editors. The session will focus on difficult periods in the life of a managing editor: the transitional period during which one managing editor takes over from a predecessor and the years of responsibility for running the journal.

Morning breakout sessions will address staffing and the running of a small journal office, the latter a common interest of those at previous short courses. Participants will also hear a discussion of the interactions among the managing editor, the editor, the editorial board, and the publisher. The managing editor and publisher of the same journal will discuss how they work together on everything from marketing the journal to establishing the production schedule.

Probable afternoon topics are the increasing importance of the Internet in the daily management of a journal and how to deal with financial matters. This year's Short Course for Managing Editors, as did last