

# ◆ Highlights of the 2001 Annual Meeting

## Serving the Readers of Scientific Publications

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The 2001 CSE conference in Washington, DC, featured an all-star lineup of speakers who often ventured outside the usual trappings of scientific publishing to focus on serving the reader.

Plenary speaker Vitek Tracz comforted the audience about the controversy surrounding the free dissemination of scientific findings. Tracz is chairman of the Current Science Group and an entrepreneurial spirit at the leading edge of 21st-century publishing. He gave an overview of BioMed Central and reported on his attempts to revise the models for peer review and distribution of science.

Edward Tufte, scholar and author, gave the audience several thousand extra words in pictures distributed on posters at his plenary speech. Tufte specializes in the visual display of information and demonstrated how effective graphics can help readers grasp complex ideas.

The long and winding journey from peer review to newspapers was presented by Susan Okie, science writer for the *Washington Post*. Okie presented several case studies of how the media choose scientific stories from press releases, and she provided tips on how science publications should pitch their news.

In other nuggets at the conference, Web-design expert Dan Boyarski, professor at Carnegie-Mellon University, showed how to make Web sites user-friendly, and Maribeth Back and Victoria Bellotti, of Xerox, popularly called “the



photos by Grace Darling

**Participants at the 2001 CSE meeting chatting with colleagues during the president's reception.**

Xerox ladies”, talked about how and where people want to read.

The diverse topics attracted a large and equally diverse audience of more

than 400, including many from overseas.

Next year's conference will be held in San Diego, CA, on 4-7 May.