

◆ Highlights of the 45th Annual Meeting

Connecting Scientific Communities

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The 45th annual meeting drew a diverse crowd of CSE members from all around the world for 4 days of workshop sessions, panel discussions, and lectures about scientific communication at San Diego's Hyatt Islandia Hotel on 4-7 May 2002.

As one of the organizers of the conference, I was particularly pleased whenever one of the sessions was crowded, because it meant that the topic had succeeded in attracting the attention of our members. One highlight on Sunday was the standing-room-only crowd gathered to hear *Journal of the American Medical Association* Deputy Editor Drummond Rennie, Merck researcher Larry Hirsch, and medical communication consultant Jim Sergi argue about ethical issues in industry-sponsored research.

One of the largest crowds gathered to hear Carol Tenopir and Don King present quantitative data about how scientists use electronic journals. Another well-attended session focused on the successful relaunch of the *Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine*.

The size of the crowd was not my only measure of a session's success, however; less well-attended sessions appealed to smaller segments of CSE's diverse membership. One example was "Getting Inside Your Advertiser's Head", at which Joetta Melton of *American Family Physician* discussed pharmaceutical advertising. Although only a small number of people attended this commercially oriented session, those who did said that they appreciated having sessions that appealed to their interests.



photo by Tiffany Inbody

Participants at the 2002 CSE meeting chatting with colleagues.

One of my favorite events was the keynote speech by Felice Frankel, a research scientist and photographer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She provided a welcome break from CSE's usual emphasis on words by showing dozens of fascinating scientific photomicrographs to illustrate her theme, "Making Good Science Look Good". Frankel emphasized how good illustrations can help communicate scientific discoveries accurately as well as draw attention to them. For example, to show how water drops could be separated by a thin hydrophobic boundary, Frankel added bright green and blue dyes to adjacent drops, creating a colorful checkerboard that not only explained the research but also put it on the cover of *Science*.

Many of us were disappointed in the cool and cloudy weather during the meet-

ing, which was apparently typical of the San Diego coast. Fortunately, it wasn't cold enough to prevent us from enjoying San Diego's restaurants and tourist attractions or watching the coastal wildlife at the hotel and its marina (such as herons standing at attention near the swimming pool, families of rabbits grazing on a patch of hotel lawn, and sea lions sprawled among the yachts).

Most important, the CSE annual meeting gave all of us a chance to meet colleagues from other disciplines, other states, and other countries and to catch up with old friends. I hope that, like me, all the meeting attendees had a chance to meet new people, learn new things, and bring new ideas home to enrich their working lives.