

Compiler's note: In honor of CSE's 50th anniversary, Science Editor has established a column, Council Classics, featuring material from its predecessors. We hope you will enjoy this column. To suggest items for inclusion, please write to Barbara Gastel at b-gastel@tamu.edu.

N E W S L E T T E R
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OBLIGATIONS OF AN EDITOR

The number of recent comments and questions regarding the editor's responsibilities and obligations prompt us to reproduce the following statement developed in the early days of CBE by Professor Joseph J. Hickey.

The editor has obligations to his readers, to the author and to the organization that publishes his magazine.

1. He should insist on articles of clarity and conciseness that will waste neither the precious reading time of his audience nor the limited publication funds of his publisher. He should recognize the international character of his readers and the need to protect them from colloquialisms.
2. He should insist that manuscripts be organized to satisfy not only the scanners among his readers but also those deeply interested in the subject matter of the paper.
3. He should secure for the author the best refereeing services that he can, protecting him at all times from hypercritical reviewers.
4. He should encourage referees to submit signed reviews, but, bearing in mind the time handicaps and conditions under which referees work, he should not reveal their identity to authors - unless specifically authorized to do so.
5. He should co-operate with other editors in endeav-

oring to preserve the bibliographical identity of each journal, keeping his editorial colleagues advised of critiques of mutual interest, and referring authors to them only when he feels that manuscripts have a reasonable chance of acceptance.

6. He should, after submitting critiques of a manuscript to an author, permit the author to retain his own interpretation of the data.
7. When forced by deadlines to modify a manuscript without the author's consent, he should advise the author of his right to reject these changes when correcting galley proofs.
8. He should not attempt to make a major overhauling of poor manuscripts submitted by recent graduates but should refer these manuscripts to the professors who directed the research.

April 7, 1959

Joseph J. Hickey