Bruce Alberts is Editor-in-Chief of *Science*.

A New Editor-in-Chief

IT IS WITH RECOGNITION OF UNDERTAKING A HUGE NEW RESPONSIBILITY THAT I WRITE MY first Editorial as Editor-in-Chief of *Science*. New science will be needed on our crowded planet to protect our environment, to insure our health, and to provide sufficient water and food for humanity. This publication is a major vehicle for the success of the scientific enterprise, both by spreading scientific findings and by promoting community standards.

My predecessor as Editor-in-Chief, the former president of Stanford University, Donald Kennedy, has done a masterful job of steering this ship to make it maximally effective on both scores. His nearly 8 years of leadership have created a new emphasis on the science of sustainability, on science education, and on standards of openness and honesty in science. He has exposed our readers to advances in the social sciences, as well as in a wide range of the natural sciences. He has broadened our international reach, establishing news bureaus in Germany, South Africa, and China, adding to those in the United Kingdom, France, Japan, and India.

Don's strong support of young scientists is reflected in the *Science* Careers Web site that he promoted. Never afraid of controversy, he has written more than 150 Editorials, many of them boldly defending the scientific point of view on everything from genetically modified crops to climate change. He has repeatedly insisted on the highest standards of scientific conduct. Urbane, witty, and engaging, Don has set a nearly impossible standard to follow. I salute his past achievements, which leave this magazine in excellent shape.

Why did I accept this position? In many ways I see it as an extension of my 12 years as president of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences (NAS). As part of the National Academies, the NAS published more than 200 reports each year. Most were in response to government requests, on topics that ranged from the health effects of arsenic in drinking water to the mentoring of science graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. I soon became painfully aware of the many opportunities to spread science and scientific ways of thinking that are being missed—in our failure to teach science as inquiry to most students, in our overly narrow definition of scientific careers in universities, and in the inadequate recognition of the truly international nature of science.

I also became aware that science is a remarkable social construct, which relies on constant vigilance to maintain the standards that make it so successful. It matters a great deal how we scientists treat our colleagues, reward excellence, share our data and resources, and relate to the public, whose taxes support the enterprise with generous research funding. Partha Dasgupta, Distinguished Professor of Economics at Cambridge University, has noted that "Today, we take it for granted that the Institution of Science has in place incentives which encourage researchers to disclose their findings for public use. But the emergence of those social contrivances which embody those incentives was not inevitable, nor did they emerge easily: It required the collective efforts of scientists and their patrons to establish them . . . the Institution of Science embodies a set of cultural values in need of constant protection . . ."

Science plays an important part in protecting this set of cultural values. It does so through the way that it selects the articles it publishes, enforces standards of honesty and data sharing, and makes all scientific articles freely available on the Web within a year after publication. Equally important, it produces a vigorous News section that attempts to probe every aspect of science and its interface with society with truth and integrity.

I am at heart a scientist, and scientists love to tackle important challenges. The challenge of this new job is to vigorously explore how I and *Science*'s outstanding staff might make this publication an even more effective agent for spreading science and its values throughout the world—a world that desperately needs much more of both.

– Bruce Alberts

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