

Editorial for the 100th Thematic Issue

As I write this editorial, I cannot help but think back to 1984, the year of the Brave New World. This was the first year that John Gladysz and I edited *Chemical Reviews*. At the time, we were colleagues at the University of Utah. After I moved to the University of Colorado, Robert Kuchta became a second Associate Editor when we decided to bring added emphasis to biochemistry.

I recall many consultations with my predecessor, Anthony Trozzolo, and others, eager brainstorming, and an intense search for new ideas. From somewhere, I no longer know where, came the suggestion that perhaps we could try to publish thematic issues focusing on a single topic. The idea excited me. I remember somber warnings by someone in the Publications Division of the ACS telling me that it is not at all clear that a society review journal is viable, let alone one with thematic issues, given increasing competition from commercial publishers. This I could not believe. How could a journal that does not need to make much if any profit fail to compete successfully with various *Advances* and similar books that do? How could a thematic issue, which does not need to wait for the last straggling author whose late article can always be published in a subsequent regular issue, fail to provide fresher and more current information than a book? We decided to try the experiment.

Today we celebrate our 100th thematic issue. From very tentative beginnings, thematic issues of *Chemical Reviews* have earned a place in the sun. Today, the journal appears monthly and half of the issues are thematic. Many colleagues have been kind enough to comment on the merits of one or another thematic issue. We have had an issue that sold close to a thousand single copies in addition to standard subscriptions. We have had one that was so huge that it had to be split in two. We have had issues that I have seen graduate students keep like the holy writ on their desks. Most recently, it has become possible for authors to extend the useful lifetime of their review articles by updating them electronically ("Perennial Reviews").

It is likely that the introduction of thematic issues had something to do with the gradual quadrupling of the journal's impact factor. I do not attach very much importance to this or other quantitative measures of journal quality, but I surely notice when world leaders in a field are willing to act as Guest Editors for *Chemical Reviews* thematic issues. It is the Guest Editors who set the tone for each issue, it is the Editorial Board that selects the topics, and it is the authors who provide the substance. The three Editors, and the chemical community, are immensely grateful to them all.

Josef Michl, Editor

CR078038I