

Editorial

Now, at the beginning of 2012, is the occasion, first, to thank our reviewers for dedicating their time to review manuscripts, give feedback to authors, help us decide to publish or to reject, or, as in most cases, to encourage authors to improve their articles. As we all know this is the crucial stage in the communication process among scholars, the commons we all have to care for and from which we all benefit. We are particularly grateful that the willingness to review has increased during the last two years.

We also want to thank the members of our board whose advice we seek from time to time, individually and collectively. Without it we would risk being one-sided, ignorant, parochial or all of that together.

Finally, we want to thank our authors, first to choose Minerva to publish their articles, then to endure the frustrations of the often drawn out process from submission to publication we would like to shorten ourselves (average response time from submission to final decision is three months), or in many cases to be rejected. We do not consider the 70% rejection rate an indicator of quality. (The statistics emerging from the automated 'Editorial Manager' tracking all activity surprised us, too). All the more gratifying for us is that 80% are satisfied with the publishing process, and 0% is not satisfied at all. 60% will definitely resubmit and another 20% says it is likely to do so.

An anniversary is also the occasion to take stock, to critically evaluate work past. Minerva's impact factor, for whatever it is worth, has remained steady (0.605) with a slight upward tendency. Clearly, the future is in online availability – up 250 institutions in 2010 to more than 6500 institutions whereas 127 institutions have subscribed to the printed version. The more indicative number is downloads: Minerva grew +10% in downloads in 2010, downloads per article are above average. A final indicator is the geographical distribution of readers: most are (still) from the US (17%), but, surprisingly, China is second (12%) followed by the UK (11%), Germany (8%), Netherlands and Canada (5% each), Australia (3%) etc. We are committed to broaden the geographical scope of Minerva both in terms of submissions and readership.

In 2012 we will have two special issues to celebrate the 50th anniversary. The first (50/2) will feature articles by young scholars looking at the future of science policy issues. The second (50/3) will look at what happened to issues raised during the last 50 years which had attracted most attention. Also, we have re-introduced a section that used to be of importance. In 'reports and documents' we will publish (as in this issue), when the occasion comes up, documents such as Charles Weiss' report on 'Teaching of Science, Technology and

International Affairs' at Georgetown University. Obviously, in the age of the internet Minerva does not have to disseminate official documents anymore as it did frequently in the days of Edward Shils, but we nevertheless want to invite readers to draw attention to institutional innovations in the broader field of science, technology and policy study as represented by Minerva.

Finally, we would like to mention that Marc Weingart who has done invaluable work in the background as language editor for some time already has assumed administrative tasks in the everyday editorial management and thus should be acknowledged as such. His contribution has become all the more important as the international scope of the journal is broadened.

Peter Weingart

Niels C. Taubert