LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF THE AAS NEWSLETTER: A PERSONAL STORY

J.L. LINSKY
JILA
University of Colorado and NIST
Boulder CO 80309-0440, USA
jlinsky@jilau1.colorado.edu

Abstract. Since 1987 the *American Astronomical Society Newsletter* has published some 142 Letters to the Editor that provide the personal statements and concerns of astronomers about the policies, priorities, and experiences of being an astronomer. While these Letters do not provide a scientific sampling of the issues, they do provide an illuminating picture of the astronomical scene as seen from the perspectives of our colleagues. I describe the history and policies of the Letters section, then summarize the issues presented and debated in these Letters. The topics (in order of numbers of Letters published) are: (1) publishing and refereeing, (2) how the AAS and IAU conduct their business, (3) jobs and how to get them, (4) support for astronomy, (5) scientific units and time, (6) public policy issues, (7) planning for telescopes and space missions, (8) how astronomers do their work, (9) women in astronomy, (10) the work environment, and (11) other issues. A chronological list of the Letters by title and author is included.

1. History

There is an old proverb that says, if my memory is correct, "be careful what you ask for". Perhaps I should have thought about this earlier, but then I would not be writing this chapter. It is no secret that when talking to other astronomers, we discuss more than just our latest scientific results. We also talk about other matters that concern us such as the policies and priorities of the government funding agencies, the lack of opportunities for permanent positions, whether women and minorities are judged fairly, and concern about the quality of refereeing of our scientific papers and observing proposals. In short, the policies, priorities, and practicalities of our chosen field are matters of vital concern to all of us. Unfortunately, there has been no mechanism for widely disseminating such concerns as the refereed journals publish only scientific articles. The magazines of more general interest like *Science, Nature*, and *Sky and Telescope*, discuss some of these matters but without the give and take of a dialog or the benefit of personal perspectives.

After considerable thought about this lack of an appropriate communication channel, I teamed with some of my colleagues to write a letter to the American Astronomical Society requesting that the *AAS Newsletter* publish Letters to the Editor. In this 1987 letter, we pointed out that the *AAS Newsletter* had wide circulation among astronomers in North America and elsewhere, but the information flow in the *Newsletter* had been only in one direction. What was needed was a forum whereby individual astronomers could bring their concerns about vital issues to a large audience in order to influence how their issues would be addressed. We envisioned that the Letters to the Editor would be personal communications from the authors without either formal or informal endorsement by their institutions.

Apparently the AAS Council thought highly of this modest proposal as our letter was published in the March 1987 issue of the *Newsletter* together with an announcement that Letters to the Editor would now be welcome and should be sent to the new Associate Editor, Letters – namely myself. I had not volunteered for this august position, but I could hardly say no given our public statement. This is how the Letters section started, and after some 18 years and 142 Letters, it is a fixture of the *AAS Newsletter* with the same Associate Editor.

2. Policies for the Letters Section

When we started the Letters to the Editor section, the AAS Office and I agreed on a set of policies, which have not materially changed since then:

(1) The Associate Editor, Letters would be appointed for a one-year renewable term. I was appointed for this term but have never received formal notice of reappointment or termination, so I guess that I have been granted a lifetime tenure. However, I would not be adverse to standing down if someone else were to desire the position.

(2) The Associate Editor has the license to choose and edit correspondance for publication. Although the Editor of the *Newsletter* has the final say as to what is published, I cannot remember a single occasion when the Editor decided not to publish a Letter. In all likelihood, the AAS Office was pleased to have the task of saying no to authors placed outside of their responsibility. I have exercised my license with restraint. My main

concern is that Letters address only issues pertaining to astronomy and astronomers. Complaints about or attacks on individuals are not allowed. I also require authors to keep to one specific topic in a Letter and to write (or rewrite) their Letter in clear, unambiguous prose. If I am confused by what an author is trying to say, then the general reader would likely also be perplexed.

(3) Authors of Letters may not be anonymous. At the same time, the Letters represent what an individual wishes to say without the implication that his/her institution supports what the author says. To make this clear, the Letters are signed by the author with either his/her email address or city. While anyone can look up the university, observatory, or laboratory where the author works, not citing the author's place of employment makes it clear that the Letter is a personal statement. This is especially important for US government employees.

(4) We try to present both sides of a controversial topic in the same issue of the *Newsletter*. Since the publishing time between individual *Newsletters* can be as long as 2 1/2 months, I try to solicit a Letter with an opposing view to be published with the first Letter when an issue is clearly controversial and timely. However, deadlines often make this impossible. When this happens, Letters with contrary viewpoints are published in the next issue.

(5) Letters should be short, about 250 words. This requirement was instituted because of limited space in the *Newsletter* and because readers typically pay more attention to short articles than long ones. I must admit, however, that a number of Letters not meeting this criterion have been published. This typically occurs when an issue is just too complex to be addressed adequately in 250 words.

Contrary to my apprehensions, my interactions with authors have almost always been cordial, despite the strong words that some authors use when stating their case on controversial topics. When I have asked authors to tone down their rhetoric, or keep to the topic, or shorten their Letter by deleting some of their favorite prose, the response has always been positive. I hope that this cordiality continues.

Most of the time I request that authors revise their original draft to clarify their message or address related issues to improve the presentation. Authors usually make the changes and sometimes even thank me for suggesting them. One well-known astronomer sent me an email saying, "I was admirative [sic] of the way you were not automatically accepting what was written and were pushing me to explain what I meant exactly. A good exercise too and I am also grateful for the lesson or model in this respect."

Another well-known astronomer once asked me the purpose of the Letters section since most of the Letters involve complaints of some sort. I responded by saying that many Letters are constructive, proposing solutions to problems or calling attention to what needs fixing. I also said that it is important for people to be heard. My experience is that after people know that their concerns and opinions are in print and available for some 6,000 members of the AAS to read and think about, they feel satisfied that they have accomplished something positive. One happy result is that potentially heated issues are discussed in a rational manner rather than in emotional confrontations at meetings and elsewhere.

3. What are the issues that the Letter writers have chosen to address?

In the table at the end of this paper, I give a time-ordered list of the 142 Letters published in the *AAS Newsletter* between June 1987 and October 2004. The following is a topical summary of them.

3.1. PUBLISHING AND REFEREEING (23 LETTERS)

Given what astronomers say to each other in private conversations, it is not surprising that the publication process would be the topic of the largest number of Letters. Three Letters questioned the refereeing system for articles published in the astronomical journals. One Letter urged that authors be entitled to make the final decision on whether or not to publish a paper when there is a major disagreement with the referee. It further advocated allowing the journal editor to publish his remarks or those of the referee at the end of a paper. Another Letter stated that the quality of refereeing would improve if referees were strongly encouraged to make their identity known. Arguments for and against the refereeing of papers in conference proceedings were presented in another Letter. Six Letters tackled the question of why the change to electronic publishing was not leading to a decrease in expensive page charges for publishing in the astronomical journals. This exchange provided transparency into the actual cost of publishing and elicited statements from the journal editors that after a transition period while the journals learned to processes AASTEX manuscripts efficiently, there should be a decrease in page charges and more rapid publication. Two Letters addressed the validity of a survey on the desirability of electronic publishing. Even the term "electronic publishing" elicited a Letter in which the author argued that the proper term for describing the whole environment of dealing with documents electronically should be "electronic information handling". The question of why ApJ Letters papers occasionally exceed the four page limit (usually by a small amount) led to a response that the existing imprecise system of estimating the length of a paper would be replaced by a macro that would provide an accurate estimate. One author complained that footnotes acknowledging that data were obtained at a specific observatory supported by an identified funding agency are boring and should not be required by observatories. This lively issue led to three Letters supporting or opposing the deletion of such footnotes. Finally, reflecting the concern that astronomers have for the environment, one Letter asked why the Astrophysical Journal does not use recycled paper, eliciting a response that this issue was being considered as the technical problems were being ironed out.

3.2. HOW THE AAS AND IAU CONDUCT THEIR BUSINESS (19 LETTERS)

Voting procedures, the method of selection of Nominating Committee members, and the need for candidates to say in their published statements how they would address major issues were identified as ways to strengthen governance at the AAS. The question of whether a balance (in gender, age, and experience) of nominees for AAS Council positions is desirable or whether competence alone should determine nominees produced a lively debate. The Shapley Visiting Lecturer in Astronomy program was cited as an important tool for public education and the advancement of research, consequently, the program needed more funding. In the words of a retiring councilor, the rapid growth of the AAS was cited as the reason that the Society was becoming less of a community and more of an organization. He offered suggestions for enhancing the community feeling of the AAS. The question of whether it is better for individual AAS members or the AAS leadership to contact Congress concerning funding was discussed in three Letters, which concluded that the whole astronomical community should play an active role. Ten astronomers stated in a Letter that the IAU was making important decisions through votes by the national representatives without notifying or soliciting input from individual members. In response, the IAU President and General Secretary stated that according to the IAU Statutes, changes in the Statutes can only be made by votes of the representatives of the adhering national bodies, and that votes at General Assemblies are generally attended by only a small fraction of the membership.

3.3. JOBS AND HOW TO GET THEM (16 LETTERS)

Beginning in 1993, the difficulty that many astronomers faced in finding employment in the field stimulated a large number of Letters. Five Letters spoke of the difficulty of finding permanent jobs in astronomy. They argued that there was an overproduction of PhD astronomers and that, as a result, young astronomers should consider alternatives to astronomy research and teaching positions. Given the anguish that many young astronomers face after graduate school, one author advised that incoming students should be given a "full heart-stopping disclosure" of the job situation and encouraged to cross-train in other fields. A contrary view held that birth control is not good, since winnowing of the field is inevitable and even healthy for all professions. One positive Letter encouraged postdocs to acquire teaching experience to better prepare themselves for a permanent position. Two concerns of astronomers going into nontraditional fields were that (1) mechanisms for retraining astronomers, perhaps with the help of the AAS, need to be created and (2) astronomers should not look down on those who pursue nontraditional fields. Other concerns included age discrimination in employment, the glut of letters of recommendation (which could be reduced by requesting them only for candidates who survive the first cut), the need for a uniform application deadline for postdoctoral positions, and the need for a "consumer's digest" of astronomical departments.

3.4. SUPPORT FOR ASTRONOMY (14 LETTERS)

Concerns about federal funding for astronomy and its distribution were identified in eight Letters. Specific concerns included too few ground-based telescopes for coordinated observations with NASA's great observatories, the need for international collaborations to fund large new facilities, and the lack of travel support to observe at NOAO facilities. One Letter pointed out that while NSF's grant support for astronomy has been level or decreasing, NASA's astronomy grant funding had been increasing significantly. However, four Letters argued that the support for ground-based astronomy by the NSF had fallen to a critical level and could not be compensated for by NASA's increased support of other aspects of astronomy. One author proposed that the NSF establish a program of small support grants for retired or almost retired astronomers who are still engaged in research. Funding support was requested for the measurement of fundamental atomic and molecular data. Finally, one Letter urged astronomers to play a more active role in urging that NASA place more emphasis on scientific projects and less on manned exploration.

3.5. SCIENTIFIC UNITS AND TIME (14 LETTERS)

Only an astronomer could love (and perhaps understand) the very technical topics addressed in some Letters. A total of seven Letters discussed the pros and cons of astronomers adopting and using the International System of units (SI) whose basic units include the meter, kilogram, second, and prefixes every factor of 10^3, but not the Ångstrom, Jansky, parsec, or other units that astronomers love. The responses to this Letter were mainly negative with some authors decrying "political correctness". The cumbersome way of expressing time in terms of hours, minutes, and seconds led another astronomer to propose that we decimalize our units of time and even rationalize the stellar magnitude system. Three technical aspects of timekeeping raised in Letters were the potential change to coordinated universal time, discussions about whether or not to abolish leap seconds, and methods for standardizing how to express calendar dates in journal articles.

3.6. PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES (14 LETTERS)

The single largest public policy question, addressed in four Letters, was how astronomers should respond to attempts by states and local school boards to require that creationism be taught in public schools. A related concern was the public's inadequate understanding of scientific methodology. These Letters provided advice on how scientists can effectively deal with both issues. The AAS has a policy on creationism adopted in January 1982. The proposal that the AAS make an official statement concerning global climate change stimulated three Letters opposing the statement on the grounds that the topic was a highly controversial political issue and that, as scientists, we may have only a limited understanding of this highly complex problem. A responding Letter argued that, as scientists, we have the responsibility to educate the public on matters within our scientific expertise. Other Letters on public policy raised concerns about light pollution in Southern California, opposition to the building of telescopes on Mt Graham, and the deterioration of the space environment for astronomical satellites. One Letter provided advice to astronomers on how to interest young people in astronomy, while another Letter advised astronomers to take steps to prevent the media from "spinning" statements made during an interview into a colorful, but inaccurate, story.

3.7. PLANNING FOR TELESCOPES AND SPACE MISSIONS (13 LETTERS)

Astronomers are always planning for the future because new telescopes, especially observatories in space, have very long gestation periods. Arguably, astronomers are better at reaching a consensus and at presenting our requests in a coherent way to funding agencies than most other scientists. Some Letters discussed issues, such as future planetary science missions, the need for international collaborations, the balance between small and large facilities, and adequate infrastructure, that upcoming Astronomy Survey Committees should address. One Letter called for the continuation of a specific observatory, specifically the International Ultraviolet Explorer (IUE). The need for astronomers to serve as program officers at the NSF and NASA was stressed in another Letter. Three Letters described the importance of virtual observatories and on-line catalogs. The absence of tangible rewards, like guaranteed observing time, for astronomers who spend an enormous effort to build instruments for ground-based telescopes was cited in three Letters as a major discouragement to building important new instruments in the future.

3.8. HOW ASTRONOMERS DO THEIR WORK (9 LETTERS)

Many Letters expressed concerns about how astronomers do their work. With respect to observing, astronomers noted the importance of timely observations of targets of opportunity, the need for advice concerning imaging IR arrays, and the desirability of timing for IR cameras. NOAO budget cuts and the construction of 3 to 4 meter class private telescopes led one astronomer to propose the formation of a national small telescope network. While astronomers now consider data bases as essential tools in their work, an August 1990 Letter requesting information on establishing an interactive data base for multiwavelength programs was visionary. Another Letter pointed out the value of participating in high school science fairs as a means of recruiting future astronomers. One Letter requested that professional astronomers recognize the abilities of many amateur astronomers in obtaining high quality observations. Finally, several Letters provided practical advice to astronomers presenting posters and giving talks about their work at professional meetings.

3.9. WOMEN IN ASTRONOMY (8 LETTERS)

These Letters addressed the question of whether there is a level playing field for women in employment, salary, and recognition of achievements through the awarding of prizes by the AAS. One Letter pointed out that young women astronomers face fewer problems than the older generation did when they were young and continue to face even today. Another requested that surveys about employment of women astronomers be done correctly, and another requested that the existing strict age limit requirements for the AAS awards makes it difficult for those whose careers are interrupted by things outside of astronomy. The endorsement by the AAS of the "Baltimore Charter for Women in Astronomy", which called for affirmative action in the hiring and advancement of women and action to end sexual harassment, elicited concerns in one Letter and support in another. I am surprised that there have not been any Letters concerning problems faced by minority astronomers.

3.10. THE WORK ENVIRONMENT (5 LETTERS)

The presence of degrading images of women at astronomical facilities was raised by a 1987 Letter signed by 51 astronomers. This Letter led to two responses. Another Letter discussed life as a gay astronomer. Out of concern for safety, one Letter advised astronomers not to drive after a long night of observing.

3.11. OTHER ISSUES (11 LETTERS)

The remaining Letters included public thanks for service to the community, requests for historical information or data (sky spectra at the times of intense solar flares and information concerning Project Moonwatch in the 1950s to 1970s), information about international meetings, and requests for help for astronomers and observatories in other countries.

4. Final thoughts

Looking back at the Letters published over a period of 18 years, I am pleased that many issues of concern to astronomers have been addressed in a rational way in the Letters section. In many cases, there have been important dialogs in which different astronomers dispute or support the statements made in the original Letters, leading to a fuller understanding of the issue. In some cases, I believe that Letters have actually led to solutions or at least ameliorations of problems.

Are there some issues that have become less or more important as measured by the publication rate of Letters? The issues of refereeing of journal articles and page charges appear to be of less concern recently as the most recent Letter on these topics was published in 1997. The last Letter pertaining to problems or opportunities in the job market was published in 1998, but I seriously doubt that such problems have disappeared. On the other hand, public policy issues such as global climate change and "scientific creationism" are generating an increasing number of Letters.

There are some issues that have not been raised at all or addressed in only limited ways. One is the funding priorities of NASA and the NSF. A second is the consequences of the huge oversubscription of observing time on large telescopes, especially those in space. A third is the appropriateness of the recommendations made by advisory committees such as the Astronomy Survey Committees run by the National Academy of Sciences each decade. A fourth is the working environment and frustrations of faculty, postdocs, and graduate students. Given what I hear astronomers say to each other, I would have expected to receive and publish more Letters concerning such matters. While astronomers are often highly opinionated individuals, few of us apparently have the guts to go public on some issues that affect us all in major ways. In particular, the important question of Hubble refurbishment has never been mentioned in a Letter. I am uneasy and disappointed at the number of times that astronomers who have voiced important problems to me also refused to put their concerns into print despite my strong encouragement.

In any case, I look forward to receiving your Letters on key issues of concern in astronomy. I promise to give your Letter careful attention and will most likely offer suggestions for making your case more cogent.

Acknowledgements

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List of Topics Appearing in the Following Table

A	How astronomers do their work
B	Publishing and refereeing
C	Jobs and how to get them
D	The work environment
E	Thanks for service to the community
F	Support for astronomy
G	Astronomy outside of North America
H	Planning for future telescopes and space missions
I	How the AAS conducts its business
J	Public policy issues
K	Women in astronomy
L	How the IAU conducts its business
M	Historical information
N	Scientific units and time

A time-ordered listing of the Letters to the Editor.

Date	Topic	Title	Authors
6/87	A	Target of opportunity observations	R. Stencel
6/87	C	Management fees for the journals	H. Abt, & J. Huchra
12/87	C	Application deadline chaos	R.J. Havlen
12/87	D	Degrading posters in observatories	51 authors
12/87	E	Thank you to the people who produced the AAS Photo-bulletin	B. Schoening
3/88	D	Degrading images and the first amendment	J. Felton
3/88	D	Degrading images and the first amendment	G.S. Brown
3/88	F	"Crack" in federal funding	J. Stocke
3/88	G	Eastern Europeans need journals	M. Slovak
6/88	B	Who feels the need to reform journal refereeing procedures	H. Arp
6/88	A	How to improve posters at AAS meetings	G. Verschuur
6/88	F	A modest proposal concerning funding for astronomy	D. Harris
8/88	B	Alternative to proposed journal referee system	Ph. Hughes
8/88	A	A proposal to establish a national small telescope network	J. Cardelli
8/88	E	James C. Kemp: pioneer	R. Stencel
10/88	H	Questions for astronomy in the 1990's	Br. Balick
10/88	H	Role of planetary science in the next ASC	R. Brown
3/89	I	Important issues not included in the candidate's statement	D. Harris
3/89	A	Advice to speakers	K. Krisciunas
6/89	F	No travel money to observe at Kitt Peak and Cerro Tololo	C. Ambruster
10/89	J	Protecting the space environment for astronomical research	D.E. Harris & 2 others
10/89	K	More on "a comparison of university salaries for women and men"	M. Kaufman
12/89	F	The funding problem for astronomy is not the total funds available, but their distribution	D. Morrison
12/89	N	Request for input from astronomers using imaging IR array data	M. Burton
3/90	F	Responses to David Morrison's letter concerning the funding problem	P.A. Vanden Bout
3/90	F	" " "	R. Humphreys
3/90	F	" " "	J. Mathis
3/90	F	" " "	N. Devereux
3/90	N	A plea for builders of IR cameras to allow for accurate timing	E. Dunham

A time-ordered listing of the Letters to the Editor (continued).

Date	Topic	Title	Authors
3/90	A	How "not" to succeed in giving a poster presentation	A. Heck
6/90	I	Election reforms and the real issues confronting the AAS	H. Arp
6/90	A	Members should get involved with future astronomers	A.Nash
8/90	F	NASA and NSF funds benefit all disciplines	D. Morrison
8/90	I	AAS is democratic	D. Osterbrock
8/90	J	Call for involvement in promoting astronomy	L. Jacobson
8/90	B	A response to Helmut Abt's call for refereeing conference papers	S. van den Bergh
8/90	B	Recycled paper for the AAS journals	R. Elson & A. Campbell
8/90	A	Request for input to "MultiWaveLink: an interactive data base for the coordination of multiwavelength programs"	Fr. Cordova
10/90	J	A reply to Peter Boyce's editorial	D. Shaffer
10/90	I	A reply to Don Osterbrock concerning democratic procedures	H. Arp
12/90	K	Reconsidering age limits for AAS awards	S. Madden & M. Barsony
12/90	B	Reply to Elson-Campbell letter	H. Abt & E. Conner
3/91	N	Coordinate decimalization: an astronomical revolution for the millennium	R. White
6/91	B	Why publish material of no interest to readers?	D. Popper
8/91	I	A much closer look at the membership survey results	A. Campbell
8/91	B	Response to Popper's letter - I	H. Abt
8/91	B	Response to Popper's letter - II	P. McCullough
8/91	B	Response to Popper's letter - III	S. Wolff
10/91	A	An open letter to directors and chairs of observatories and other astronomical departments and institutions	M. Cummins & P. Dominy
10/91	B	A final note concerning footnotes	D. Popper
10/91	J	Development threatens southern California observatories	Sh. Rush
10/91	H	The future of IUE is up to you	S. Starrfield
6/92	B	ApJ Letters policy	T. Statler
6/92	B	A respone to Tom Statler	A. Dalgarno
8/92	E	Congratulations to the winners of the NASA Exceptional Scientific Achievement Metal	E. Wright

A time-ordered listing of the Letters to the Editor (continued).

Date	Topic	Title	Authors
12/92	K	Objections to proposed feminist bylaw	J. Felton
3/93	H	A letter to all astronomers: we are needed in Washington	M. Rieke
6/93	M	Let's have the truth about Gemini	L. Robinson
8/93	B	Electronic publishing should reduce journal page charges	M. Elitzur
8/93	B	Reply from the editor of the Astronomical Journal	P. Hodge
8/93	B	Reply from the editor of the Astrophysical Journal	H. Abt
8/93	N	When and how should astronomers move to the International System of Units?	H. Bradt
10/93	I	AAS must communicate with members not on internet	V. Slabinski
10/93	I	Response concerning communications with members not on internet	P. Boyce
10/93	N	Response to Hale Bradt concerning SI Units, 1	B. Gawne
10/93	N	Response to Hale Bradt concerning SI Units, 2	D. Grey
10/93	N	Response to Hale Bradt concerning SI Units, 3	H. Abt
12/93	N	Page charges are not needed	M. Turner
12/93	B	Page charges are needed	H. Abt
12/93	B	Michael Turner's response	M. Turner
12/93	I	An open letter on the future of the Shapley program	S. Shore
12/93	N	A recommendation concerning SI Units	H. Bradt
12/93	C	Over the hill at age 35?	G. Clayton
12/93	K	Sexist "Baltimore Charter" should not become AAS policy	J. Felten
12/93	B	Journal page charges	P. Boyce
12/93	M	More astronomers have won Nobel Prizes	J. Tenn
3/94	G	Support needed for astronomers in Eastern Europe and the Third World	C. Barrow
3/94	F	Support for basic research and education is required	A. Melott
3/94	K	Support for the AAS Council's endorsement of the Baltimore Charter	Cl. Canizares
3/94	N	Is pc not PC?	M. Seaton
3/94	C	The status of non-traditional positions in astronomy	J. Cardelli
3/94	H	This old observatory	R. Stencel
6/94	C	Reorienting and retraining astronomers for non-traditional careers	R. Foster

A time-ordered listing of the Letters to the Editor (continued).

Date	Topic	Title	Authors
8/94	G	Appreciation of support for the national observatory of Venezuela	N. Calvet
10/94	C	Letter of recommendation overkill	J. Murthy
10/94	N	A uniform system of calendar dates	Tr. Kohman
12/94	B	What is electronic publishing?	A. Heck
3/95	C	The need for a "consumer's digest" of astronomical departments	H. Marshall
3/95	H	Small telescopes are critical for astronomy	S. Hawley
8/95	I	Who should contact members of congress - I	N. Devereux
8/95	I	Who should contact members of congress - II	Fr. Shu
8/95	I	Who should contact members of congress - III	P. Boyce
12/95	F	Molecular spectra data center terminated	L. Snyder & M. Hollis
3/96	B	Are the results of the electronic manuscript submission survey flawed?	W. Sullivan, III
3/96	B	Reply: the community is connected	J. Barnes
8/96	I	Thoughts from a retiring AAS Councilor	Br. Balick
8/96	I	Individual lobbying not working	12 astronomers
10/96	C	Sage advice concerning the overproduction of astronomy PhDs	M. Pound
12/96	C	Careers beyond the confines of academia can be rewarding	J. Roth
12/96	I	Nominating committee's slate lacks charisma and balance	J. Felton
3/97	I	A reply to Jim Felton	A. Harris
6/97	C	Anguish in the job market - a response to Joshua Roth	P. Barnes
8/97	A	Recognition of AAS amateurs who have demonstrated abilities for astronomical research	R. Fried
8/97	C	Advice concerning the overproduction of astronomy PhDs	G. Reaves
8/97	C	Is there a social cost to "excess" astronomy PhDs	J. Pitesky
8/97	C	Another view of the job market	A. Filippenko
10/97	B	Peer review as a measure for amateur-professional collaboration	R. Wilds
10/97	D	Drinking, driving and observing	S. van den Bergh
6/98	C	How to insure that no new instruments are built for ground-based telescopes	J. Cohen
8/98	E	Thanks	V. Dixon

A time-ordered listing of the Letters to the Editor (continued).

Date	Topic	Title	Authors
8/98	C	There is a positive side to instrument building	L. Thompson
8/98	C	Those who fund telescopes must invest in	
		and encourage promising instrumentalists	R. Ellis
10/98	J	Beware of spin doctors	B. Haisch
10/98	C	Post-docs that include teaching	D. Haarsma
10/98	E	Correcting an error in the Cannon citation	J. van Gorkom
12/98	H	The importance of the SETI program	T. Wabbel
8/99	J	Don't provide ammunition for creationists	A. Melott
10/99	J	Concerning ammunition for creationists - I	P. Noerdlinger
10/99	J	Concerning ammunition for creationists - II	L. Golub
12/99	J	How to confront "scientific creationism"	W. Bridgman
3/01	K	Concerning the status of women in astronomy	M. Merrifield
3/01	K	Author's response to Michael Merrifield	M. Urry
3/01	H	Virtual observatories or rather digital	
		research facilities?	A. Heck
6/01	K	The status of women in astronomy	E. Griffin
6/01	H	Concerning virtual observatories	E. Griffin
6/01	H	A modest request concerning online catalogs	St. Shawl
8/01	D	A good time to be gay in astronomy?	R. Danner
3/02	I	Establishing a Schommer Education Fund	E. Olszewski
8/02	F	A model for research grants in retirement	Br. Partridge
12/02	M	A request for sky spectra at interesting times	T. Slanger
			& D. Huestis
6/03	N	A problem with the proposed change in the	R. Seaman
		coordinated universal time	& St. Allen
10/03	J	Concerning global climate change	J. Felton
10/03	J	" " "	D. Finley
			& M. Claussen
10/03	J	" " "	E. Zweibel
10/03	L	The IAU is undemocratic	G. Kaplan
			& 9 others
3/04	L	IAU undemocratic?	R. Ekers
	L		& O. Engvold
3/04	M	Were you a participant in Project Moonwatch	P. McCray
6/04	N	The AAS should weigh in on the leap seconds issue	R. Mansfield
6/04	L	Democracy in the IAU	C. Scarfe
10/04	J	Opposing the AAS endorsement of the AGU	
		statement	H. Greyber
10/04	F	A response to the reorganization of NASA	D. Smith