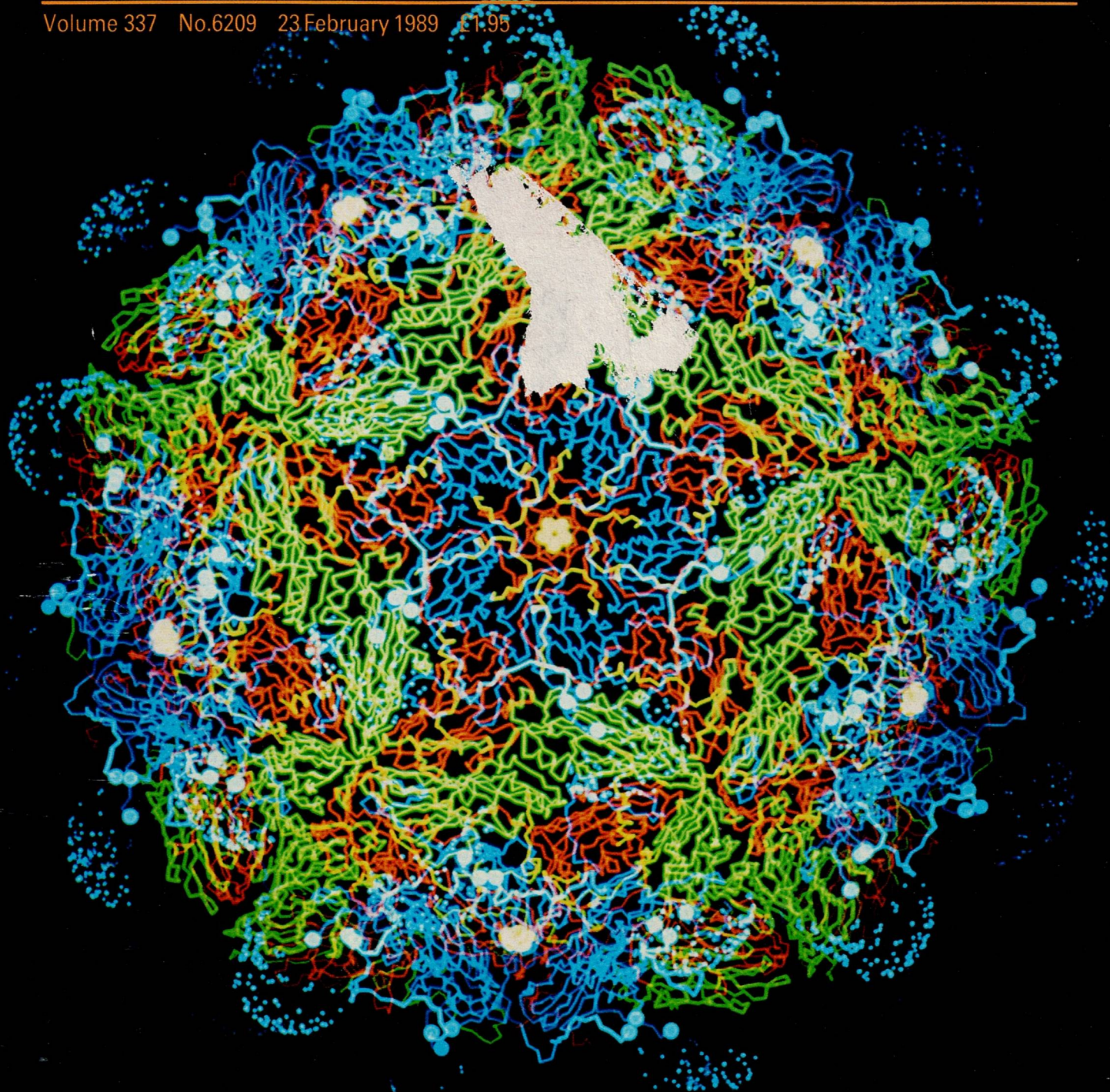


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**STRUCTURE OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH
DISEASE VIRUS**

Reprints: more for than against

SIR—Ivor Smith's criticism of the reprint, on the basis of costs and inconvenience alone, ignores the real merits of this form of scholarly communication. Reprints represent a direct, shorthand way for scholars to get in touch with others doing similar work. This personal contact is important, as it may lead to further communications, or perhaps later collaboration on some research. There is also the psychological value of knowing that others are interested in one's work. This immediate, favourable feedback undoubtedly inspires many authors to pursue their work with renewed vigour.


Contrary to Smith's belief, thousands of researchers around the world, especially in developing countries, do not have easy access to the published literature, so photocopying is a moot issue. For others, reprints are the only convenient medium for developing good subject collections, in cases where the literature is widely dispersed in various fields or simply unavailable because of inadequate distribution of the original journals.

Finally, reprints, printed on quality paper, are an excellent archival medium for personal libraries and ultimately research libraries which receive these materials as part of gift collections.

Arguably, some abuse the privilege of requesting reprints, but the case for reprints is too great to stop their use altogether.

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