

## Time for Geomicrobiology

K.L. Temple

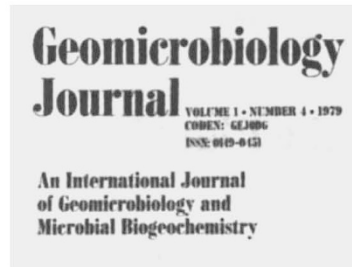
*Geomicrobiology Journal*. Editor H. Ehrlich. 4/yr. (Crane, Russak.) \$60.

The early years of *Geomicrobiology Journal* (GJ) have not been easy. Founded by Claude ZoBell, a notable name in the field, the journal was launched in 1978 but Vol. 2 was still incomplete in August 1981 — a bad sign.

Nonetheless such a forum was, and is, needed. Geomicrobiology papers are scattered throughout a number of established journals in diverse fields, and it was hoped that GJ would attract many of these. Unfortunately it has not yet done so; the quality of those papers that have appeared has been good, but too many of them have come from the editors.

With Vol. 3 the journal looks set for something of a re-birth. H. Ehrlich takes over as editor-in-chief and he will be supported by a large and wide-spread editorial board (14 of the 21 associate editors are from outside the USA). The list is truly distinguished; one expects high quality from such people. In addition to research reports, scientific reviews and book reviews, there will be letters to the editor, meeting announcements and discussion of previous papers. The format is good, the price reasonable and these new features should stimulate fresh interest in the journal.

With current concern over element cycling, curiosity about fossils and interest in old environments, GJ has a large potential audience. However, the casual reader in the USA will overlook the journal because the Library of Congress cataloguing department has seen fit to place it in a location remote from its associated fields of microbiology, sedimentology, geochemistry, palaeontology and ecology. Fortunately, I am told, this policy is to be changed.



Initiated by Beijerinck and Winogradsky, geomicrobiology has just come of age. Theoretical advances, industrial and environmental applications and the increase in interdisciplinary research make it an appropriate time for this journal.

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## What's New in Petroleum Exploration?

R.C. Selley

*Journal of Petroleum Geology*. Editor-in-chief E.N. Tiratsoo. 4/yr. (Scientific Press, PO Box 21, Beaconsfield, Bucks, UK.) £40.

THE advent of the new *Journal of Petroleum Geology* (JPG) is something of a nuisance. Previously the only essential journal for geologists engaged in petroleum exploration was the *Bulletin of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists*; one could generally be sure that any new petroleum exploration technique, or discovery of oil or gas in new regions, would shortly be reported within its pages. Unfortunately, the JPG publishes papers of such global scope and innovation that it, too, is now essential reading for any petroleum explorationist.

Each issue of the journal contains four or five papers, book reviews, discussions of previously published papers, reports of conferences and obituaries. The scope of papers is wide both geographically and in content. Few articles deal with North America, since this is covered by other journals, and fewer than one might expect

are concerned with the North Sea. Presumably the mighty conference volumes siphon off the majority of such papers. In so far as there is a regional bias, it is towards the Middle East, but the journal is essentially global in scope. The papers include reviews, technical research papers, and even humorous articles (Gold on earthquake outgassing, for example). The standard of production is high, and folding plates and colour maps occur in several issues. Since the dates of submission of papers are not given, it is not possible to ascertain the length of time that a paper is in press.

At an annual subscription of £36, and a rate of four 120-page issues per annum, the JPG will cost about 7½p a page for 1981. This can in no way compare with the value of the AAPG *Bulletin*; but it is not too different from some other geological journals, from whose subscription rates one might have thought the papers were not printed but embalmed.

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## Climate Cubed

Ann Henderson-Sellers

*Climatic Change*. Editor S. H. Schneider. 4/yr. (Reidel.) Dfl.60, \$30 (personal); Dfl.153, \$77.50 (institutional).

"THIS is obviously the decade in which climate is coming into its own. You hardly heard the word professionally in the 1940's . . . It was clearly not the age of climate . . . Now it is!" Ken Hare's acknowledgement of a "new" discipline (*Bull. Am. Met. Soc.* 60, 1171-1174) was echoed by Steve Schneider, the editor of *Climatic Change* (CC) in the first issue — "Climatic change . . . no longer a subject for small talk".

In my opinion, CC achieves its goal of providing a medium for review and interchange. It is intended to be a new vehicle for a rapidly expanding discipline. Papers of this type were only rarely published previously, the journals probably most often cited being those of the American Meteorological Society and Geophysical Union. The three basic editorial criteria for this interdisciplinary publication are stated as disciplinary accuracy, clarity of cross-disciplinary communication and originality of content.



Practically all of the individual contributions (papers, reviews, editorials and correspondence) measure up to this stringent reviewers' policy set forth in the inaugural issue. Perhaps this success leads inevitably to the sensation of a potpourri — for example a recent issue contained papers on daily weather mapping from 1781; winter thunder and climate in China; American forests and climatic change; mechanisms of rapid deglaciation; and winds, rain and sunspots. In an editorial in the final issue of Vol.2, Schneider notes that as authors have become familiar with the editorial criteria, the rejection rate has fallen. It seems that speed of publication may also be reduced from the eight to ten months typical of Vols 1 and 2.

Steve Schneider once compared the climate to an 81-element cube having axes of space (local, regional, global), time (weather, climate and geological) and impact (physical, biological and social) — suddenly I recognize Rubik's cube! If this new journal is an attempt to "solve" the climate cube then the apparently random juxtapositioning of high-quality material is probably essential — it is certainly attractive. I wish the puzzlers luck.

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