

ments or policy, and in the environmental-sustainability indicators in resource use, especially agriculture. Sadly, to my mind, there is still too much theory and too many abstract equations, at the expense of gritty policy analysis. But one or two articles, for example on what to do when respondents to willingness-to-pay questions offer an infinite price, do stimulate the intellectual adrenalin. Hopefully, as the journal matures, more will follow. □

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## Time and space

*A. M. Mannion*

**The Holocene: An Interdisciplinary Journal Focusing on Recent Environmental Change.** Editor John A. Matthews. *Edward Arnold*. 3/yr. US and Canada \$225, UK £125, elsewhere £115 (institutional); US and Canada \$85, UK £49.50, elsewhere £55 (personal).

*THE Holocene* has been launched at a most opportune time: the cognizance of global environmental change is growing rapidly and environmental scientists are establishing hitherto unrecognized links between the various Earth surface processes. In geological terms, the Holocene consists of the past 10,000 years of the Earth's history and represents a period of change unprecedented



**Reversal of fortune — a glacier which loomed over the French alpine village of Argentière in the mid-nineteenth century. . .**

in the Earth's earlier history, change due, not least, to the emergence of modern humans. A journal that includes interdisciplinary representation, international coverage and methodological advances is thus to be welcomed.

The format is somewhat different from that of most journals of an environmental character. Each part consists of four sectors: research papers of around 6,000 words, which are full-blown contributions to original research; research reports of around 3,000 words, which are shorter synopses of new findings or

advances in methodology; forum articles of around 3,000 words, which are brief discourses on Holocene issues and may be speculative and provoke discussion; and book reviews.

The international tenor of the journal is reflected in its editorial advisory board and by the range of papers in the first volume. The United Kingdom is well represented, but there are papers on North America, China, the Middle East and South America; Australia is not represented, but it is early days for a journal with such a broad remit. The multidisciplinary aspect of the journal is also reflected in the contents of the first volume. Physical, chemical and biological evidence, either alone or in combination, for environmental change is presented. The forum articles are particularly stimulating and provide an arena for debate that is often lacking in related journals.

The A4 format of the journal is attractive and the quality of text and diagrams is very good, as are the subscription rates. The period between the initial receipt of manuscripts and publication varies between five and nine months.

In view of the quality that has been demonstrated so far, and the growing realization that the prediction of future environmental change is to a large extent dependent on understanding past environmental change, *The Holocene* deserves to succeed. □



**. . . has now retreated far up the valley. (Contemporary engraving, top, and photograph, 1966, both taken from *Global Warming* by A. Revkin, American Museum of Natural History Environmental Defense Fund, £20.)**

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