

been written from an economics and philosophy perspective. It would be beneficial to see more articles exploring the legal, ecological and political dimensions of environmental value.

The first volume is also uncomfortably dominated by UK and US writers. In developing countries the concept of environmental value can take on a very different form. Political and economic pressures may dictate that the environment is valued not so much for its aesthetic or amenity use, but because its very destruction helps to alleviate short-term poverty. More articles from authors in developing countries would certainly give the journal greater breadth and depth. But, these quibbles aside, *Environmental Values* is attractively produced and highly informative. It deserves to succeed. □

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Global concerns

Sara Naqvi

Down to Earth: Science and Environment Fortnightly. Editor Sunita Narain. *Society for Environmental Communications, F-6 Kailash Colony, New Delhi 110 048, India.* 26/yr. India Rs 1,000 (institutional), Rs 500 (schools), Rs 240 (personal); Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh \$80, \$45, \$40; Pakistan \$85, \$55, \$50; Sri Lanka and the Maldives \$90, \$55, \$50; elsewhere \$125, \$80, \$65 (airmail rates).

HAVING produced science programmes for the radio for more than a decade, I know that getting people to understand environmental issues is not an easy job. This magazine, however, covers these issues in such a comprehensible way that there will be few readers who fail to appreciate their global significance.

Down to Earth also publishes eyewitness accounts by people who are the real victims of those national and international policies that have caused these environmental problems. Creating a healthy balance between science, industry and the environment is an uphill struggle: the 1992 'Earth Summit' in Rio was a glaring example of this reality. The only way to overcome global problems is to make people aware of them, in particular scientists, industrialists, policy-makers and politicians.

The magazine's analyses are informative and provide many answers to common questions. Indian topics covered include child labour, women farm-workers,

deforestation and industrial pollution. Although many international agencies publish their own reports on these issues, reports at the grass-roots level are radically different in that they are truly down to earth. They also usually give insight into centuries-old problems from which millions of people are suffering yet which most Westerners find difficult to believe still exist.

A distinctive feature of this publication is that it does not foster any resentment towards science or industry; instead, it adopts a balanced approach and urges authorities to solve environmental problems by deeds rather than words. It will

Investigative zealousness

David Dickson

Probe. Editor David Zimmerman. *David Zimmerman Inc., 121 East 26th Street, New York, New York 10010, USA.* 12/yr. USA \$53, Canada \$63, Europe \$70.

THE best newsletters — like the best journalism — are those that combine information with insight, and independence with imagination. An all-time classic was *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, a one-man operation produced by the veteran Washington journalist, which successfully punctured many of the myths put out by the Nixon and Johnson US presidential administrations about the conduct of the Vietnam War.

David Zimmerman, an experienced medical writer, explicitly seeks to emulate Stone's achievements with his publication *Probe*, a newsletter on "science, media, policy and health". Like Stone, Zimmerman uses his newsletter to convey a deeply personal perspective on the issues he is addressing, ranging from anti-cholesterol campaigns to scientific fraud. Indeed, it is his crusading desire to expose the personal and institutional links between the actors in a particular topic that gives the newsletter much of its appeal.

But there is a big difference. Stone's target was the hypocrisy of the establishment, and in particular the way its actions in Vietnam were masked in a deceptive language of peace and democracy. Zimmerman, by contrast, seeks to defend the values of the establishment — and in particular those of the scientific establishment — against its critics. His argument is that these critics are essentially anti-rationalist and anti-scientific. His newsletter aims to expose them as such.

Take, for example, his coverage of the Baltimore/Imanishi-Kari affair at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Most of the media coverage has concentrated on Baltimore's treatment of Margot O'Toole, the postgraduate student whose

make a fine addition to all libraries. Readers will learn about the views of people in developing countries on many global problems and how these countries are coping with these dilemmas; they will also find detailed accounts of the attitudes of the developed world towards global policies and how much mess has been created by the developing countries' own policies and management. □

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questioning of the data published by Imanishi-Kari in a paper in *Cell* (co-authored by Baltimore) led to the paper being retracted by Baltimore.

Zimmerman takes Baltimore's side. For example, he emphasizes that the results reported in the *Cell* paper "had



been in large part confirmed and expanded by other researchers". And he draws attention to the minority view of a member of the congressional subcommittee that investigated the affair, who writes that anyone in his office who behaved as O'Toole had in copying Imanishi-Kari's notes would be "out of there in a flash".

Zimmerman's newsletter similarly defends geneticists against charges that investigations of the genetic precursors to violence have racist overtones. Indeed, it promotes the development and use of sophisticated drugs to curb violent behaviour. And it argues that the black community should welcome rather than criticize genetic studies, as these can be used to identify the precise African roots of black Americans.

The newsletter also goes in to bat for the medical establishment against promoters of "unconventional medicine", ranging from acupuncture (described as "mostly