

of this type may well find a niche as the natural home for short reports of new insights and methods that have wide relevance but which would sit uneasily as subsections of more substantial papers published elsewhere.

It is perhaps appropriate that there is now a journal devoted to the main component of paper, at least until the relentless march of electronic information rids us of the joys of holding journals in our hands. *Cellulose* sets itself a narrow scope in that it deals with reports only on cellulose and its derivatives; lignin and hemicellulose, the two materials with which cellulose is most commonly associated in nature, are specifically excluded. Production and presentation are excellent, and the quality of articles is high. There is a mix of detailed review articles and full research papers, although only 18 contributions in total were published in the first year.

Cellulose has enormous potential as a renewable raw material, and one could argue that a dedicated journal is needed to serve the community of scientists devoted to cellulose and its derivatives, as well as the many industries (pulp, paper, fabric) dependent on these materials. Whether *Cellulose* becomes such a house journal will depend on whether experts in the field would rather instead submit good-quality manuscripts to journals with a broader remit. For so specialized a field, *Cellulose* could provide a perfect vehicle for comments on articles in other journals concerned with cellulose, but evidence of such community-building is so far sadly lacking. This apart, *Cellulose* is off to a promising start. □

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No empty vessel

Peter Clark and Tony Firth

Endothelium: Journal of Endothelial Cell Research. Editor-in-chief G. M. Rubanyi. *Harwood Academic*. 4/yr. ECU462, \$601 (companies); ECU296, \$385 (libraries); ECU99, \$129 (personal).

ALTHOUGH some might argue that a journal devoted entirely to one cell type is too narrow in scope, others may feel, given the interesting biology and wide-ranging clinical issues concerning endothelial cells, that it is surprising that a journal called *Endothelium* has only recently appeared. *Endothelium* publishes invited reviews, mini-reviews, full research papers, short communications, conference reports, technical notes and correspondence. It aims to cover all aspects of endothelial biology, including the effects of endothelium-derived

agents on other systems. The members of the editorial board, including several distinguished names, represent this broad scope.

IMAGE UNAVAILABLE FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS

Flesh and blood.

The research papers are generally concise and of good quality, although the really big stories in endothelial cell research are still more likely to be found in broader and more influential journals.

The journal adopts the standard double-column layout, and the text and diagrams are readable and clear. There is, however, still room for improvement in the quality of the reproduction in micrographs. There are no page charges, and colour illustrations can also be included for free. The publishers even go one step further by making 'negative page charges': principal authors receive credit (ECU15 or \$20) for each article, which individuals or institutions can put towards the purchase of any of the publisher's products. Here surely is a practice that should be encouraged!

The increase in endothelial research in recent years has created a niche for a new journal. *Endothelium* might fill it, at least in part. Other vascular journals, such as *Microvascular Research* and *Circulation Research*, overlap in areas of content, but *Endothelium* could provide a forum that brings together information of a variety of types, and as such would provide a focus for endothelial research. Much will depend on the ability of the journal to attract a reasonable share of high-quality papers in basic endothelial cell biology. We urge workers to consider sending their work to *Endothelium* and hope that the journal flourishes. □

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Recipes at a glance

Andrew Griffiths

Molecular Biotechnology. Editor-in-chief John M. Walker. *Humana*. 6/yr. USA \$180, elsewhere \$200.

THIS journal is difficult to pigeonhole. Published as Part B of *Applied Biochemistry and Biotechnology*, it aims to publish protocols for nucleic-acid and protein manipulation. These are sensibly presented in a step-by-step cookbook style, removing the need for users to decode tortuous prose into working instructions. They also contain useful warnings about potential pitfalls and troubleshooting suggestions. This is the sort of priceless time-saving information that one can get from a colleague down the corridor but which is rarely found in the sanitized methods that appear in most other journals.

The protocols themselves are something of a mixed bag, and arguably some are rather too trivial to merit publication. Most issues also contain one or two review articles. I particularly enjoyed the review on "Critical Assessment" of catalytic antibodies by Tawfik and colleagues in the first issue, which discusses the limitations of antibodies as enzymes, something that many authors in this field tend to gloss over.

The few original papers are definitely the journal's weakest aspect and it is not clear if the editors intend them to constitute an important section or appear as something of an afterthought.

Molecular Biotechnology is not a journal to which I would take out a personal subscription, although I would certainly scan it on a visit to the library. □

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TEN out of ten

Simon Wolff

Toxicology and Ecotoxicology News: International Reviews, Opinions and Updates in Toxicology, Environmental Toxicology and Ecotoxicology. Editors Sheila O'Hare and Chris Atterwill. *Taylor and Francis*. 4/yr. £115, \$193 (institutional); £45, \$76 (personal).

Now here is a nice little journal. Taylor and Francis have decided to publish a popular reviews and opinion journal on toxicology, in all its aspects. *Toxicology and Ecotoxicology News (TEN)* contains no original papers but is very well constructed

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Slick operation: clean-up operation of the rocky coastline of Knight Island, Alaska, after the Exxon Valdez oil-spill in 1989.

and will have broad appeal.

At the time of writing, my radio tells me that the French have finally tested their nuclear bomb in the South Pacific. Fuss was made about the immorality of pulling such a stunt so far from their own backyard. But justification for the fuss was based on the supposed effects on human health. Similarly, when a well-known oil company recently tried to dump some unwanted hardware in the Atlantic, a lot of noise was made about heavy metals and organic carcinogens accumulating in the food chain. Open any newspaper, any day, and there is a story about real, possible or imagined injury through environmental exposures. Worrying about being poisoned by some villain seems fundamental to human nature.

Unfortunately, it is only recently that toxicologists have become more aggressive in their mission to explain their subject, long seen as the poor relative of pathology and pharmacology. *TEN* represents the maturing of that determination. The journal contains leading articles, subject reviews, legislative matters, general news in the field, book reviews and news of meetings. The reviews are the real meat and provide good background reading in a variety of areas. Areas covered (taken at random) include bacterial endotoxins (accounting for two per cent of premature mortality worldwide); modelling of biological toxicity through structure-activity relationships (part of attempts to reduce animal testing); immune reactions of agrochemicals (of interest to food faddists and those with a serious interest in multiple chemical sensitivity); and the metabolism of chemicals (such as cosmetics and mineral oils) by skin. The level of these review articles is such that they are of benefit to active researchers while providing good background material for, say, undergradu-

ate projects. The material covered in the reviews, opinion pieces and open discussion sections, intelligently explores the wide range of toxicology. Legitimate areas of coverage range from the endogenous toxins associated with burn injury and kidney failure to the regulation of water contamination by chemicals toxic to fish.

Is the journal a good buy? It is certainly well put together and worth, in my opinion, the asking price for four issues. It will be even better value when publication goes bimonthly at the end of this year. The journal should be prescribed reading for everybody involved in the broad area of toxicology and adverse reactions. Because the review articles are useful to undergraduate and postgraduate students in a variety of disciplines (from biochemistry to zoology), the journal should be on the shelf of most university libraries. In many ways *TEN* steals the thunder from Elsevier with its range of *Trends* journals. Elsevier managed *Trends in Biochemical Sciences (TIBS)* and *Trends in Neurosciences (TINS)* but, for reasons which totally escape me, failed to produce *Trends in Toxicological Sciences*. It relegated the area instead to a subsection of its pharmacology journal. Taylor and Francis have filled the gap. □

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Journal prices

Details of editors and frequency of publication, and the subscription dates given at the top of each review are in most instances for 1995. Readers interested are therefore advised to check prices with the publisher before subscribing.

^{SPL} Environmental briefing

Andrew Jordan

Human Environment: The International Environmental Policy Analysis Newsletter. Edited by Ingar Palmund. *Gron Ide HB, Stockholm*. 12/yr. USA \$85, elsewhere \$110.

It can be frustratingly difficult keeping abreast of events in such a fast-moving and wide-ranging field as the environment. Policies constantly change as politicians come and go; new and potentially costly legislation is adopted and implemented; and, behind all of this, scientific understanding continues to accumulate, often gradually but sometimes abruptly. *Human Environment* joins several publications that have sprung up in recent years to provide a ready briefing service for researchers, business people and bureaucrats who may not have the time, or resources, to consult the specialist literature or follow policy-related events as closely as they might wish.

Human Environment is published monthly. Each issue contains around eight pages and is fronted by a one-page leading article that normally deals with a topical event or set of issues. The bulk of each edition consists of short, abbreviated reviews of recent magazine or newspaper articles drawn from mainstream publications (for example *Science*, *Nature*, *New Scientist* and *The Economist*) and the broadsheet press. Each issue also normally carries a one- or two-page 'focus' piece that explores a particular policy issue in greater depth. Early issues have also included a discussion of resource management problems in the Baltic Sea, a couple of book reviews, an interview with a United Nations official and a series of 'viewpoints' from experts.

Human Environment is attractively produced and considerably cheaper than some of its potential rivals. But unlike *Global Environmental Change Report*, *International Environmental Reporter*, *Environment Watch*, *Environmental Data Services Report* or *Energy, Economics and Climate Change*, it simply does not provide the detailed coverage and in-depth analysis of events and personalities that more discerning readers may be looking for. It seems unlikely that *Human Environment* will flourish if it continues to reproduce articles that can be easily located and electronically retrieved at the press of a button, or are mainstream enough to be picked up by anyone who takes a daily broadsheet newspaper. □

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