

"Has the Greenhouse Taken Effect?" is the title of a Richard Monastersky article in April 30 **Science News** (Vol. 133 p. 282). Based on average global temperatures for land and ocean areas, 1987 was warmer than any year on record in the last hundred-odd years.

In addition, 1981 and 1983 tied for second place; 1980 was fourth and 1986 fifth highest. "It's pretty clear," says climatologist Thomas M.L. Wigley from the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, "that the 1980s – in terms of the global mean record – are far and above the warmest collection of years ..."

According to Wigley's report in the April 28 issue of **Nature**, the warming trend is confirming several predictions of the greenhouse theory (such as the warming of the lower atmosphere and the cooling of the stratosphere), but the Southern Hemisphere's ocean is not exhibiting the inertial drag to temperature rise that theorists predicted.

"It means that there are other things going on ... It's just one of the factors that prevent the interpretation of this warming in the 1980s from being open-and-shut."

Natural variations in global climate records further complicate the picture. James Hansen of the NASA Goddard Institute of Space Studies in New York City, predicts global temperatures will accelerate their rise in the next decade. If the trend of the last 20 years continues for another 20, he said, "it will be warmer than it has been in the last 100,000 years."