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Brain Muscle Builders: Games to Increase Your Natural Intelligence — Marco Meirovitz and Paul I. Jacobs. Games designed by experts to increase your deduction, induction, strategy and creative thinking skills. Shows how to develop the habit of applying these skills in everyday life. Thinking skills, according to the preface, just like athletic skills, can be improved by proper exercise. Playing games is an enjoyable and effective way to exercise the "muscles of your mind." P-H, 1983, 244 p. plus game sheets, illus., paper, \$11.95.

The Creation — Ernst Haas. Breathtakingly beautiful nature photographs follow the creation stories from the Bible, the Hindu Rig Veda and the Taoist Tao-Te King. Viking Pr, 1983, rev. ed., 160 p., color illus., \$50.

Drugs for Mental Illness: A Revolution in Psychiatry — Marvin E. Lickey and Barbara Gordon. Explores drug therapies for mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and mania. Covers diagnosis, drug effectiveness, risk of treatment, side effects and drug actions upon the brain. W H Freeman, 1983, 349 p., illus., \$18.50, paper, \$12.

Encounters with the Future: A Forecast of Life into the 21st Century — Marvin Cetron and Thomas O'Toole. Illuminates the future by showing what the current trends in economic, international, domestic, cultural and technological developments will yield in the next 20 years — and beyond. Marriage, life expectancy, working conditions, energy and communications are some of the areas discussed. Originally published in hardback in 1982. McGraw, 1983, 308 p., paper, \$5.95.

High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America — Ernest L. Boyer. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching conducted this major study of the American high school. Presents an examination of where we are today and a comprehensive plan to improve our high schools. Har-Row, 1983, 363 p., \$15.

Japan's High Schools — Thomas P. Rohlen. An anthropologist spent 14 months observing five Japanese high schools to learn how the Japanese population is being educated and developed. His findings are assessed in comparison with education in the U.S. U of Cal Pr, 1983, 363 p., illus., \$35, paper, \$10.95.

108 Ways to Get a Bright Idea: And Increase your Creative Potential — Arthur B. VanGundy. The central thesis of this book is that everyone is capable of generating bright ideas. With the proper motivation, creative climate, use of idea prompter and a little practice, anyone can become "a fountainhead of creativity." P-H, 1983, 186 p., \$13.95, paper, \$6.95.

Late Night Thoughts on Listening to Mahler's Ninth Symphony — Lewis Thomas. Several of these very readable essays are eloquent, impassioned statements on the insanity of nuclear war. Other essays concern such topics as the sense of smell, seven wonders of the modern world and dementia. Viking Pr, 1983, 168 p., \$12.95.

Commentary

Nuclear War: This Can't Be Real

There was a disquieting sense of *déjà vu* to last week's meeting, ominously titled, "The World After Nuclear War," reported by Janet Raloff on page 314 of this issue. In the eerie, sunken ballroom of the Sheraton Washington Hotel, I felt for all the world as though I was back in the familiar B movie of the 1950s — where handsome scientist John Agar was warning a naive populace that the world was about to end, unless we did something. At the same time, across town, reports from the administration continuously assured us—as in Orwell's *1984*—that our military forces were making strides in far-flung places that most of us had never seen and some never heard of.

In a setting like this, it is hard to imagine one is not stretched out in the den watching Saturday afternoon reruns, or nestled against a pillow just before bedtime, reading a science fiction novel. It becomes even harder to maintain a footing in reality when Carl Sagan, Paul Ehrlich and others display dark visions of a world enveloped by a cold blanket of radioactive soot. "Megadeaths," they say matter-of-factly, are only the tip of the iceberg of horrors that will emerge following even a "small" nuclear war.

Among the audience, a member of the Indonesian Parliament rises to say that he "pray[s] to God" his country will never have to worry about such a catastrophe. Sagan replies: "You'd better do more than pray." (I swear John Agar said that to a United Nations delegate.) Another questioner, from Canada, voices similar sentiments; attached to the duffel bag slung over his shoulder is the Planet Earth—the size of a basketball—still blue and green and healthy looking.

This is not the naive audience of the sci fi movie genre. But I still sense that its members feel every bit as helpless. Consumer advocate Ralph Nader, in attendance, voices a feeling of hope because now that legitimate scientists have spelled out the suicidal global consequences of nuclear war, he says, there is no military advantage whatsoever for any country to launch a major nuclear strike.

But how does one know that? Even with the polish and pizzazz of Carl Sagan helping to orchestrate the media saturation of this conference, one senses that the scientists, too, feel helpless to an extent (even though they made a point of not discussing the political ramifications of their presentations). Cornell Biologist Thomas Eisner, a speaker at the conference, was discussing with a reporter his recently published work with toads (SN: 11/5/83, p. 293). The fly-eats-toad phenomenon he discovered in Arizona is bound to be discovered elsewhere in the world, he said, "if the world continues to exist."

Maybe such statements continue to sound unreal (unbelievable?) because we've been hearing them for so long from so many people. But now they're coming from a body of respected scientists that has actually applied stringent modeling procedures to the nuclear war scenario and come up with projections worse than even the ignorant have predicted in the past.

When will reality set in? For me, it didn't take long. Late one night, shortly after the conference, I heard what sounded like bursts of rolling thunder. I stepped outside my house and observed a clear sky. The bursts continued. I thought for a minute and concluded that Ralph Nader had been wrong. I said to myself, matter-of-factly, "Megadeaths."
—Joel Greenberg

The Search for our Beginning: An Enquiry, Based on Meteorite Research, into the Origin of our Planet and of Life — Robert Hutchison. Many meteorites come from the break-up of small planetary bodies that were never as hot as the interior of the earth and so preserve evidence of the conditions under which they formed. The study of meteorites, says the introduction, is therefore relevant to the early history of the earth, its moon and neighboring planets. Oxford U Pr, 1983, 164 p., color/b&w illus., \$16.95.

'Subtle is the Lord ...': The Science and the Life of Albert Einstein — Abraham Pais. This is a scientific biography of Einstein. The author, an eminent physicist, sketches the concepts of the physical world as they were when Einstein became a physicist, tells how he changed them and what scientific inheritance he left. "Science, more than anything else, was Einstein's life," says the preface. "In order to understand the man it is necessary to follow his scientific ways of thinking and doing. But that is not sufficient." Einstein was, among other things, a lover of

music, a student of philosophy, a man deeply concerned about the human condition, a family man, a Jew and a legend. Originally published in hardback in 1982. Oxford U Pr, 1983, 552 p., illus., paper, \$12.95.

Sunsets, Twilights, and Evening Skies — Aden and Marjorie Meinel. The authors share for the general reader their experiences with many different types of sunset, twilight and night phenomena along with the scientific explanation of these phenomena. Among the areas covered are the earth's shadow, volcanic eruptions, zodiacal light and the aurora. Beautifully illustrated. Cambridge U Pr, 1983, 163 p., color/b&w illus., \$29.95.

Wheels, Life and Other Mathematical Amusements — Martin Gardner. A new collection of problems, paradoxes, games and puzzles selected from Gardner's columns in *Scientific American*, for those who enjoy recreational math and games. Three chapters deal with John Conway's fantastic game of Life. W H Freeman, 1983, 261 p., illus., 15.95.