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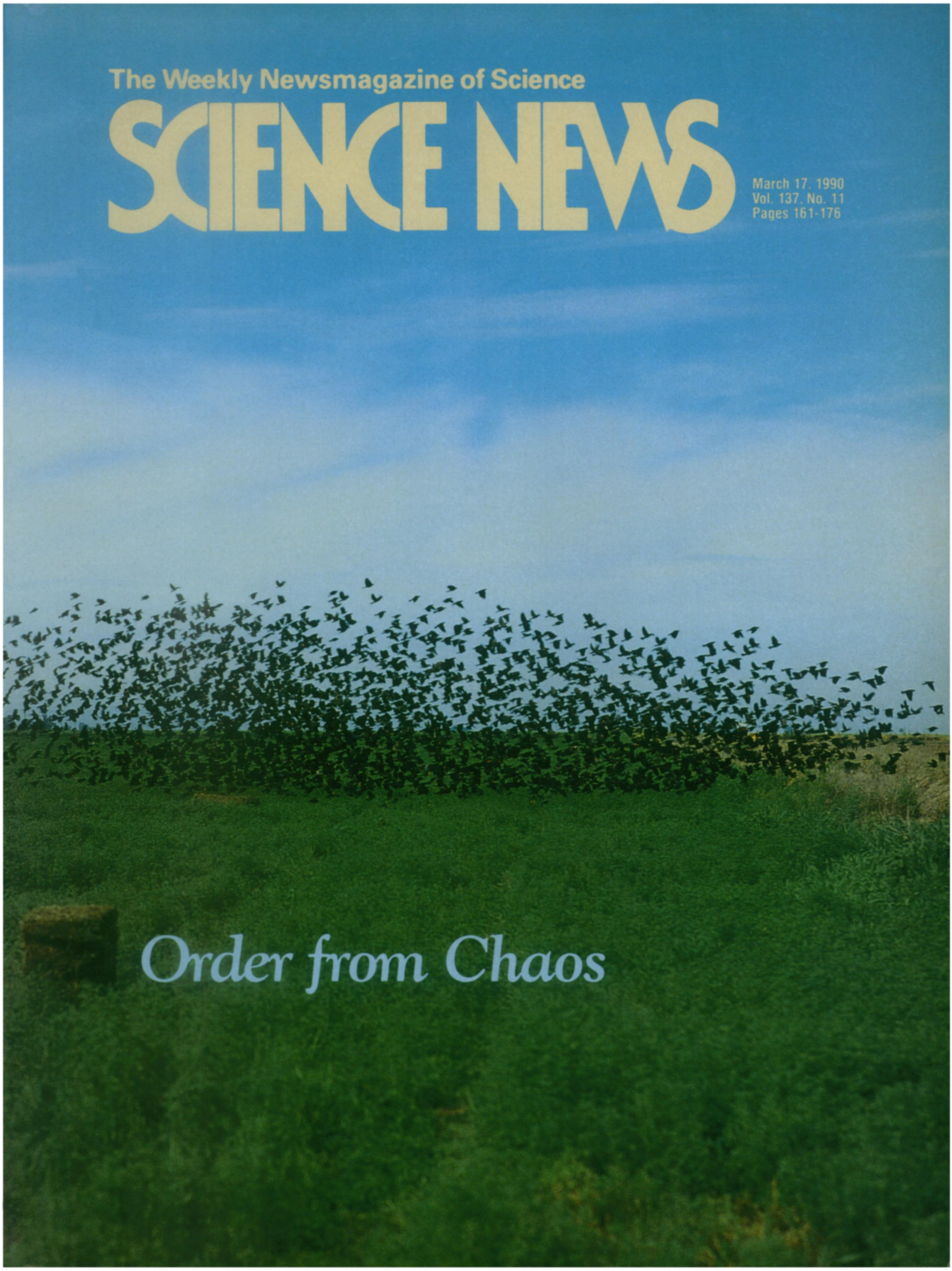
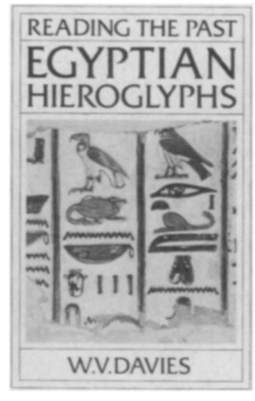


Order from Chaos

READING THE PAST . . .

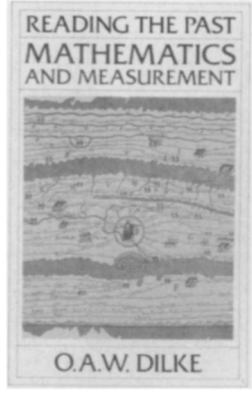
In Orkney, Shetland and the Scottish Islands, in Ireland, in the Isle of Man and above all in Scandinavia, travelers still come upon great memorial stones, inscribed with the curious angular alphabet called runes. Rune-masters also cut their letters on other objects, including swords, brooches, pendants and rings. This book tells the story of runes from the earliest Continental inscriptions of the late second century AD through to the Viking Age and to the related script used for the English language in Anglo-Saxon times. The author shows what a wealth of material about our early civilization has been recorded in runes and suggests to the readers where they themselves may discover them.

The cuneiform writing system flourished in the Near East from before 3000 BC to AD 75. This book surveys the development of the script from the earliest pictographic signs to the latest astronomical tablets and the process by which it came to be used for writing many different Near Eastern languages. Sample texts show how the script is analyzed into words and syllables and how to read the names of the most famous kings as they appear on monuments. The decipherment of cuneiform is explained, and — for the collector — some guidelines for identifying fake inscriptions are given.



The hieroglyphic script of ancient Egypt is one of the oldest and most beautiful of the world's known writing systems. It was invented at the dawn of Egypt's dynastic history, towards the end of the fourth millennium BC, and was employed for over three thousand years, finally falling into disuse during Egypt's Coptic or Christian Period. This book explains the underlying principles of the script and describes its origin, development and uses, with due attention paid to its cursive derivatives called **hieratic** and **demotic**.

Maya glyphic writing is one of the most complex scripts ever devised. From before AD 250 until well after the Spanish conquest Maya Indians of Mexico and Central America used elaborate pictorial signs to record ideas, words and syllables. This book surveys the discovery and partial decipherment of glyphic writing and introduces the reader to the media on which glyphs are recorded. It explains the underlying principles of Maya writing, including its grammar, before reviewing how decipherments have dramatically enhanced our understanding of ancient Maya civilization.



Most of us are familiar with Roman numerals, as they are still in occasional use today, but how did the ancient Egyptians, Sumerians, Babylonians and Greeks write numbers? How did they measure distance, capacity and weight, and how did the early architects and engineers make the necessary calculations for building their great pyramids, temples, aqueducts and roads? This book outlines the ancient systems of mathematics and measurement and describes how they were used in mapping, surveying, telling the time, trade and commerce, as well as in leisure pursuits such as games and puzzles, and in the occult. A final chapter sketches subsequent developments in the West, including the introduction of arabic numerals, and shows how the mathematical legacy of the Graeco-Roman world influenced science and technology in the Renaissance and beyond.

The University of California Press, 9½" x 6¾", 64 pages, black and white illustrated, paperback, $8.95

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COLD FUSION: *The Making of a Scientific Controversy*

By F. David Peat

On March 23, 1989, two noted chemists called a press conference at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. The announcement they made was staggering. The scientists, Martin Fleischmann and B. Stanley Pons, claimed to have produced controlled nuclear fusion at room temperature in a test tube. "It was," one scientist asserted, "as important as the discovery of fire." Front pages of newspapers immediately brought the public the news: the result of a relatively simple experiment could soon provide the world with the safe, clean and dependable energy that had been the dream of mankind for centuries. Ironically, only thirty-five miles away from Salt Lake City, Steven Jones of Brigham Young University had been experimenting with cold fusion but was finding that it could not produce energy in sufficiently large amounts for practical use. Jones had earlier learned of the Fleischmann and Pons claims and had, Jones thought, reached an agreement with the University of Utah scientists to release both results simultaneously. The March 23 announcement ignited controversy not only over whose experiments were correct, but also over whether nuclear fusion was actually occurring or if the results were due to other, possibly unknown, factors. *Cold Fusion* is the story of that (as yet unresolved) controversy. It is a tale of scientific discovery and intrigue, of experiments done around the world that continue to contradict each other, and of politics among scientists, universities, and the U.S. government. It is also the story of how cold fusion may yet prove to be the solution to many of the world's energy problems.

— from the publisher

"Peat, who remains an agnostic on whether cold fusion is real, does, however, limn what an energy-rich world might look like in this competent, readable account of a highly controversial issue in contemporary science."

— Publishers Weekly

Contemporary, 1989, 188 pages, 9" x 6", hardcover, $16.95

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