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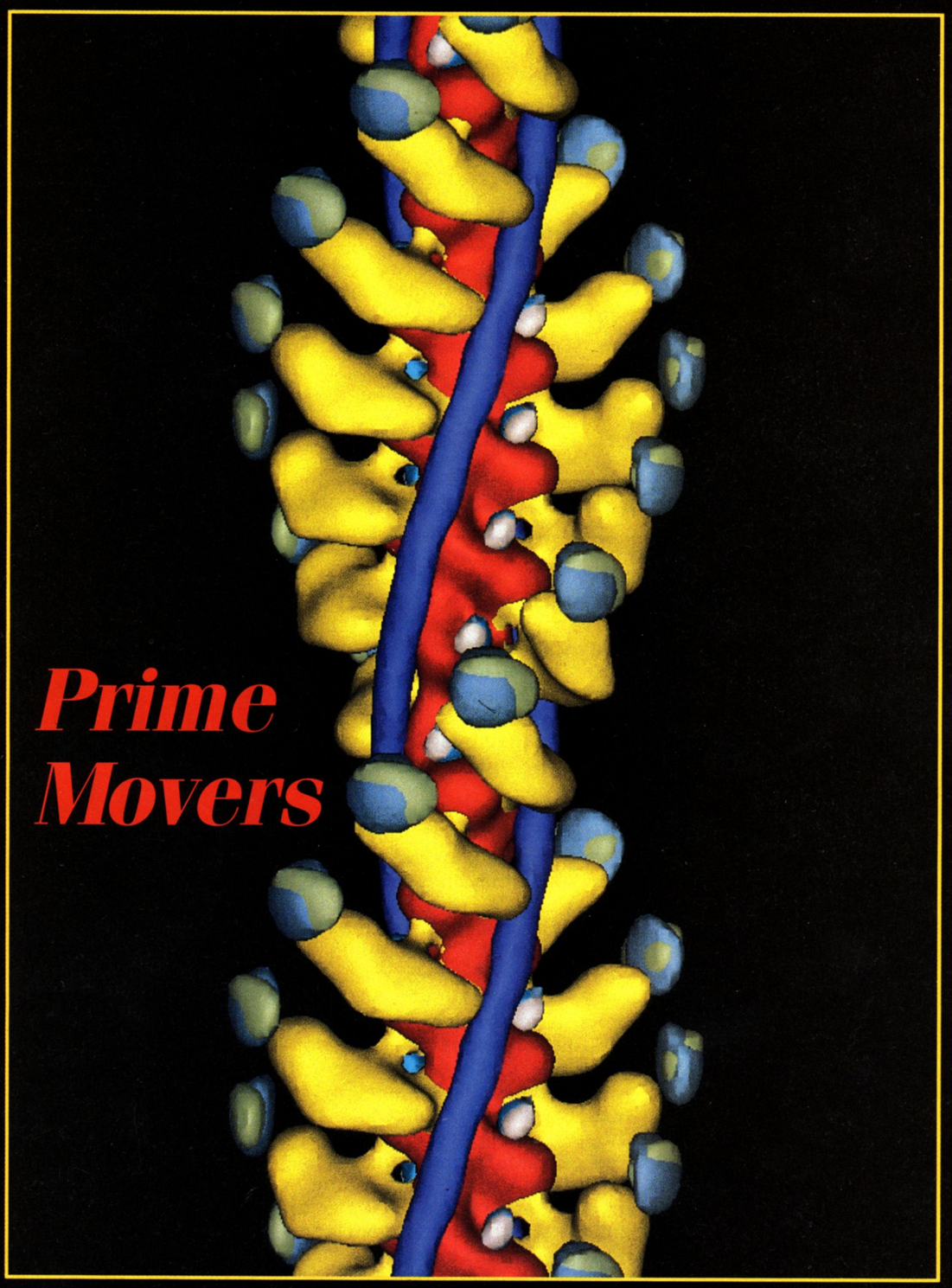

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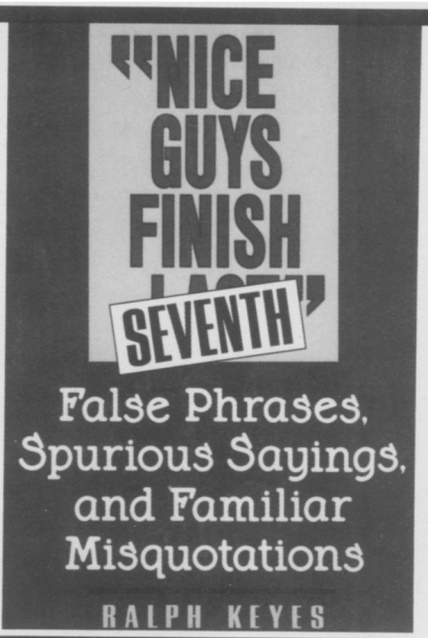
Did Leo Durocher say, "Nice guys finish last?" Not according to Ralph Keyes. It's one of the hundreds of famous remarks that Keyes discovered are spurious. Others include: "War is hell," "Say it ain't so, Joe," and "Give me liberty or give me death." So how did these misquotes become part of our national conversation? In *"Nice Guys Finish Seventh"* Ralph Keyes tells the inside story of how so many familiar quotations got garbled, put in the wrong mouth, or both.

Separate chapters examine everything from the false phrases that pepper history books through the "literary lifting" engaged in by sticky-fingered authors to apocryphal movie lines such as "Play it again, Sam," and "Me Tarzan, you Jane." Keyes shows how routinely politicians engage in Three-Step Quote Acquisition to claim one another's words as their own, the frequency with which catchy comments are attributed to the famous person they most sound like, and how often "numbernesia" causes us to get the words right but the numbers wrong in famous remarks (such as the amount of time Andy Warhol said we'd all be famous).

"Nice Guys Finish Seventh" is a fascinating, eye-opening book. It's both fun to read and a dependable reference work. It's also a first-rate argument-settler.

— from HarperPerennial



HarperPerennial, 1993, 273 pages, 5¼" x 8", paperback, $10.00

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Our everyday lives are inevitably touched — and immeasurably enriched — by an extraordinary variety of phrases based on numbers and numerical expressions. For instance, if you ace your finals, you might get dressed to the nines and go to a five-star restaurant with a couple of buddies, hoping they won't eighty-six the party if old one-eye gets three sheets to the wind and does a number on the hostess.

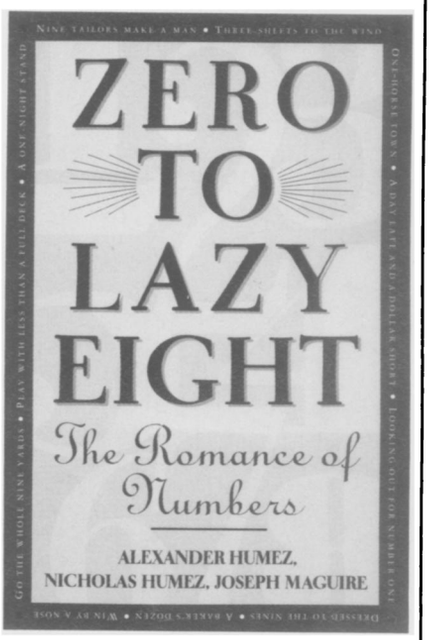
In the Humez brothers' trademark eclectic style, *Zero to Lazy Eight* examines hundreds of number words and expressions, the ideas that underlie them, and the enormously varied roles that those ideas have played — and continue to play — in the evolution of our increasingly "numerate" culture.

Each of the book's first fourteen chapters covers one of the integers from zero to thirteen. The final chapter focuses on infinity itself (conventionally represented as an eight lying on its side, which in cowhands' branding terminology is known as a "lazy eight").

Mathematical topics such as number theory, set theory, and probability are explored throughout *Zero to Lazy Eight*, but the authors' treatment of everything from why Alice shouldn't drink looking-glass milk, to how to calculate "for whom the bell tolls" is so clever, readers will hardly notice that they're learning as they browse. This delightful smorgasbord of linguistic and social history, mathematics, and humor is calculated to enlighten and entertain word buffs and number fans alike.

— from Simon & Schuster

Simon & Schuster, 1993, 228 pages, 6¼" x 9½" hardcover, $21.00



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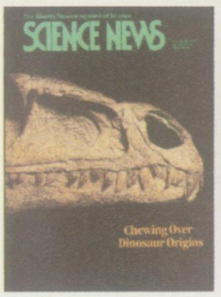

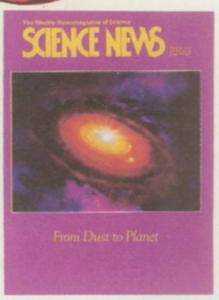

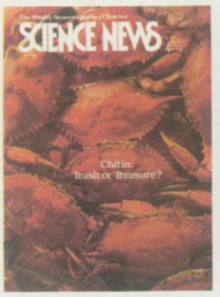

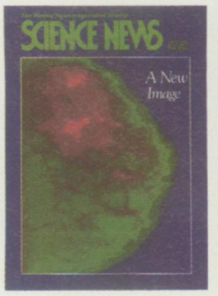

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