

Books

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And No Birds Sing: The Story of an Ecological Disaster in a Tropical Paradise — Mark Jaffe. In the early 1980s, biologist Julie Savidge was invited to Guam to try to determine why the birds there were rapidly becoming extinct. Eventually, she concluded that the culprit was a brown tree snake that had been inadvertently introduced onto the island, where it had no natural predators. Initially scoffed at, her theory began to garner credence when the snakes became so populous that they numbered 12,000 per square mile and caused power outages. Savidge's story, as well as that of Bob Beck, who bred birds in captivity to return to the island, are relayed here. S&S, 1994, 283 p., b&w plates, hardcover, \$23.00.

A Positron Named Priscilla: Scientific Discovery at the Frontier — Marcia Bartusiak *et al.* Ten essays reveal the progress being made at the cutting edge of scientific research in a variety of fields. The title essay discusses advances that enabled one scientist to hold a positron in suspension in a magnetic field for 3 months. Other contributors include Bartusiak, who reports on the new field of helioseismology, which uses acoustic vibrations within the sun to study its core, and Addison Greenwood, who describes new methods of earthquake prediction. Natl Acad Pr, 1994, 348 p., b&w photos and illus and color plates, hardcover, \$29.95.

The Quest for Comets: An Explosive Trail of Beauty and Danger — David H. Levy. Although only an amateur astronomer, Levy is credited with the discovery of 20 comets, including Shoemaker-Levy 9, which is due to crash into Jupiter this summer. Seven of Levy's comet discoveries occurred in his backyard. He elaborates on these, disclosing the secrets of comet hunting and detailing the composition and history of the comet. In addition, he discusses the results of comet collisions, offers many current examples, and predicts a few to come, maybe even to hit Earth. Plenum, 1994, 280 p., b&w photos, hardcover, \$23.95.

So Shall You Reap: Farming and Crops in Human Affairs — Otto T. Solbrig and Dorothy J. Solbrig. Considering the strains current farming methods put upon Earth, the Solbrigs review our transition from hunter-gatherers to mostly urban dwellers reliant on a small portion of the population for agricultural production. They systematically chronicle the evolution of agriculture in relation to changes in diet, clothing, fruits and grains, and harvesting techniques. Their goal is to show the positive and negative impacts of these changes on civilizations and the aspects that need to be repeated in order to accommodate a more demanding population without further destruction of the planet. Island Pr, 1994, 284 p., b&w illus., hardcover, \$27.50.

Stress Test: Cartoons on Medicine — Sidney Harris. Featured in numerous museums and publications such as *THE NEW YORKER*, Harris' cartoons manage to illustrate the zany side of science, education, the law, and now medicine. Rutgers UPr, 1994, 151 p., b&w illus., paperback, \$10.95.

You Don't Have to Suffer: A Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain for Patients and Their Families — Susan S. Lang and Richard B. Patt. Because of society's phobia about addiction to narcotic drugs and the idea many people have that they should stoically endure the pain accompanying cancer, many patients go under- or unmedicated during their bout with the disease. Patt, formerly director of the Pain Treatment Center at the University of Rochester, and Lang, a science writer, present this treatise arming patients and physicians with information about medications, medical procedures, psychological techniques, and home-nursing tips to help alleviate the pain that Patt feels hinders recovery. OUP, 1994, 366 p., hardcover, \$25.00.

Zap! How Your Computer Can Hurt You and What You Can Do About It — Don Sellers. For anyone who suffers from eyestrain, headaches, carpal tunnel syndrome, or any other computer-related ailment, this guide addresses the possible injuries that computer use can cause and offers prevention techniques and methods for safe computer use. Special emphasis is placed on proper ergonomics, as well as ways to prevent injury in special circumstances, such as during pregnancy. Peachpit Pr, 1994, 150 p., b&w photos and illus., paperback \$12.95.

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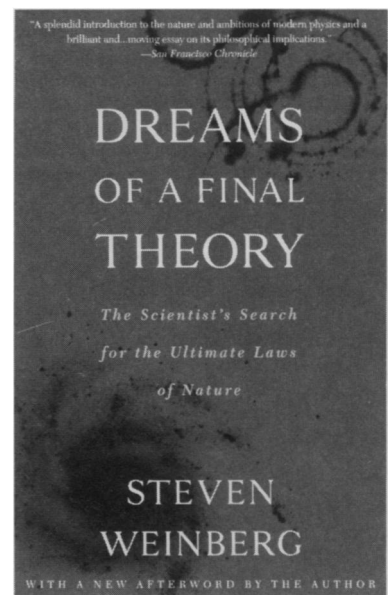
D R E A M S o f a F i n a l T h e o r y

In *Dreams of a Final Theory*, Steven Weinberg, the Nobel Prize-winning physicist and author of *The First Three Minutes*, describes the grand quest for a unifying theory of nature — one that can explain forces as different as the cohesion inside the atom and the gravitational tug between the sun and the earth. Writing with dazzling elegance and clarity, he retraces the steps that have led modern scientists from relativity and quantum mechanics to the notion of superstrings and the idea that our universe may coexist with others.

But Weinberg asks as many questions as he answers, among them: Why does each explanation of the way nature works point to other, deeper explanations? Why are the best theories not only logical but beautiful? And what implications will a final theory have for our philosophy and religious faith?

Intellectually daring, rich in anecdote and aphorism, *Dreams of a Final Theory* launches us into a new cosmos and helps us make sense of what we find there.

— from *Vintage Books*



*Vintage Books, 1993, 340 pages,
5 1/4" x 8", paperback, \$13.00*

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