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Afterglow of Creation: From the Fireball to the Discovery of Cosmic Ripples—Marcus Chown. Geared toward a general audience, Chown recounts the search for the origins of the universe. At the heart of this pursuit is the "afterglow of creation"—cosmic background radiation, a relic of the Big Bang. Although the technology to detect microwaves was developed during World War II, it wasn't until 30 years later that this microwave region was discovered—accidentally. By intertwining cosmic history with advances in telescope technology, which led to the launch of the COBE satellite, Chown weaves an intriguing tale about modern cosmology at work. Univ Sci Bks, 1996, 222 p., b&w photos and illus., hardcover, \$28.50.

Discovering Fossil Fishes—John G. Maisey. Older than dinosaurs and ancestors of all limbed vertebrates living on land, fish hold the key to many of evolution's fundamental questions. In this beautifully illustrated book, Maisey traces the 500-million-year saga of fish on Earth, shedding light on the nature, evolution, and implications of monster sharks, armored fish, and other unusual early vertebrates. Drawing on current scientific information and historical and contemporary fieldwork, Maisey relates the fascinating history of fishes and what their fossils reveal about our own watery origins. H Holt & Co, 1996, 223 p., color photos and illus., hardcover, \$40.00.

A Field Guide to Germs—Wayne Biddle. From adenovirus to Zika fever, a variety of bacteria and viruses inhabit our planet. Biddle profiles the history and prevalence of more than 70 of these troublesome organisms. He writes with verve, imparting useful knowledge about such headline-making epidemics as HIV, Epstein-Barr, and hantaviruses, as well as such forgotten, but still lingering, ailments as mumps, measles, and polio. Originally published in hardcover in 1995. Anchor NY, 1996, 196 p., b&w illus., paperback, \$12.95.

The Forgotten Pollinators—Stephen L. Buchmann and Gary Paul Nabhan. Imagine Thanksgiving without cranberries or Halloween without pumpkins. While these scenarios may seem unlikely, Buchmann and Nabhan point to the survival crisis now facing pollinators of these fruits and vegetables, such as bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, moths, and bats. The authors use vignettes from scientific fieldwork around the world to detail the intricacies of the plant-pollinator partnership and outline ways to improve pollination of crops and protect pollinators. Island Pr, 1996, 292 p., b&w illus., hardcover, \$25.00.


The Night Is Large: Collected Essays, 1938-1995—Martin Gardner. Spanning the gamut of Gardner's expertise in the areas of philosophy, literature, science, and mathematics, this collection is representative of his venerable career and most significant work. Gardner taps a wealth of knowledge in discussing the role of quantum mechanics in understanding consciousness, the existence of God, and even the subject of "nothing" among 50 or so other topics of interest. St Martin, 1996, 586 p., hardcover, \$29.95.

Quest for Perfection: The Drive to Breed Better Human Beings—Gina Maranto. Early in this century, geneticists were interchangeable with eugenicists. It seemed that with the advent of technologies such as artificial insemination would come the opportunity to create "the perfect human." While technology offers children to childless couples and can eliminate genetic disorders, many people are already trying to alter the sex and physical characteristics of embryos. In this look at the moral implications of reproductive advances, Maranto warns of possible attempts to alter our evolutionary path and argues for the sanctity of life. Scribner, 1996, 335 p., hardcover, \$25.00.

Where Wizards Stay Up Late: The Origins of the Internet—Katie Hafner and Matthew Lyon. Remarkably, 25 years have passed since the inception of ARPANET—the mini-Internet system concocted by computer scientists affiliated with the Pentagon. The original intention was to make national defense computers talk to each other. But one computer scientist—J.C.R. Licklider—saw the potential for a massive communications network. On the way to development, this network accidentally spawned such modern necessities as E-mail. Hafner and Lyon track these events, as well as the technological hurdles involved in mobilizing such an endeavor and such logistical difficulties as finding a telephone carrier for the hookup and establishing protocols. S&S, 1996, 304 p., b&w plates, hardcover, \$24.00.

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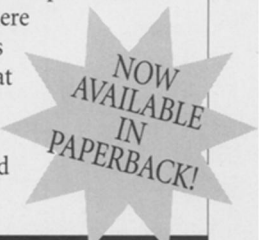
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