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Darwin's Dreampond: Drama in Lake Victoria—Tijs Goldschmidt. Lake Victoria is home to a stunning array of African cichlids—small perchlike fishes—that, like the finches of the Galapagos Islands, have been geographically isolated long enough to undergo unusually broad speciation. In perhaps the most fantastic display of this phenomenon, these cichlids form species flocks, which have descended from a common ancestor and radiated into different specializations. Goldschmidt, a field researcher familiar with the Lake Victoria cichlids, relays at first hand the history of this find and the principles of Neo-Darwinist evolution. He also details their impending demise. MIT Pr, 1996, 274 p., b&w photos, hardcover, \$25.00.

The Illustrated A Brief History of Time—Stephen Hawking. The original version of this text is arguably the best popularization of astrophysics ever produced; it is certainly the most widely known. Now, Hawking incorporates into the text more than 200 illustrations, including three- and four-dimensional images and satellite images. The book also reflects the latest developments in the field, including the revelations provided by the Cosmic Background Explorer about the origins of the universe. Hawking includes a new chapter on worm holes and time travel that expands upon the work of Einstein. Bantam, 1996, 248 p., color photos/illus., hardcover, \$37.50.

Metapatterns: Across Space, Time, and Mind—Tyler Volk. A metapattern, as defined by Volk, is a universal pattern that recurs in nature, organisms, ecosystems, art, politics, and society. Here Volk identifies 10 such metapatterns that occur in space and time: spheres, borders, sheets and tubes, binaries, centers, layers, calendars, arrows, breaks, and cycles. He demonstrates how these archetypal patterns build forms and define relationships across a remarkable range of disciplines, from art to biology to geometry. Originally published in hardcover in 1995. Col U Pr, 1995, 296 p., b&w photos/illus., paperback, \$18.00.

Would-Be Worlds: How Simulation Is Changing the Frontiers of Science—John L. Casti. A theory of complex systems continues to elude researchers, leaving us mired in traffic jams and unable to predict the stock market accurately. Digital computers, however, may hold the key to studying the informational structure of complex systems. Casti explains some computer simulations being developed primarily at the Santa Fe Institute, where he is on staff. These simulations create different kinds of "artificial worlds" and make possible research that might otherwise be too costly or unwieldy. Wiley, 1996, 242 p., color plates/b&w illus., hardcover, \$24.95.

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SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

Cosmic Collisions

BY DANA DESONIE

Cosmic collisions have always shaped the planets in our solar system, sculpting Earth and its Moon. They are still happening right in our neighborhood, as we saw in July 1994, when comet fragments bombarded the surface of Jupiter. What if Earth were to have a collision of that magnitude? Would the effect be anywhere near that of the collision that wiped out the dinosaurs 65 million years ago?

Cosmic Collisions traces the history and proposes various solutions to what many view as our impending doom, answering these questions and more:

- How often does Earth experience a cosmic collision?
- Did a massive collision kill off the dinosaurs?
- How do scientists track and predict collisions? —from *Henry Holt & Co.*

Focus

The Language of Animals

BY STEPHEN HAPT

The Language of Animals examines the sometimes subtle differences between animal communication and what we call "language" or "intelligence." This book explores how scientists study animal communication and what they have learned about various species and their ways of "talking."

- Why do male nightingales sing so passionately? What are they saying?
- How do animals use sound, color, movement, and even electricity to communicate?
- Are chimps who use keyboards and sign language really acquiring language skills?

From dancing bees and chirping crickets; birdsong to whale song to the language of our closest relatives—the chimpanzees—these overviews of thoroughly detailed case studies are a window to understanding the constant chatter and movement of the animal kingdom. —from *Henry Holt & Co.*

Medication of the Mind

BY SCOTT K. VEGGEBERG

Psychoanalysis as pioneered by Freud and Jung, along with subsequent forms of talk therapy, is at risk of becoming obsolete. Modern medical scientists believe they can now pinpoint the natural biological and chemical causes of most mental illnesses.

The result is a new class of mind medications that includes drugs such as Prozac and Zoloft. These drugs alter the functions of the neurons and synapses of the human brain and can dramatically change people's personalities. What does the future hold?

- Can drugs really cure depression and anxiety?
- Who should be medicated and who shouldn't? Who decides?
- What is the future of talk therapy?

Medication of the Mind offers a concise, comprehensive overview of the debate. In addition, it fully explains basic brain science and the nature of mental illness.

—from *Henry Holt & Co.*

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