

Books

Books is an editorial service for readers' information. To order any book listed or any U.S. book in print, please remit retail price, plus \$2.00 postage and handling for each book, to **Science News Books**, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. To place Visa or MasterCard orders, call 1-800-544-4565. Domestic orders only.

African Exodus: The Origins of Modern Humanity—Christopher Stringer and Robin McKie. Rather than assume that humankind evolved separately as different races over the course of 2 million years, Stringer, an architect of the out of Africa theory, posits that we are quite modern—only 100,000 years old or so—and that we made a massive exodus from Africa. Armed with convincing paleontological, archaeological, and DNA evidence, the authors trace the paths of our ancestors. Alternative ideas about the rise and fall of Neandertals are detailed and dismissed: The authors contend we stamped them out. DNA evidence is presented to show how an Eskimo and a pygmy are more similar genetically closer genetically than two gorillas from the same forest. Published in Canada in 1996. H Holt & Co, 1997, 282 p., b&w illus., hardcover, \$25.00.

Edible and Medicinal Plants of the West—Gregory L. Tilford. More than 250 plants found predominantly in areas from Alaska to Southern California and east across the Rocky Mountains and the northern Plains to the Great Lakes are listed in this guidebook. Color photos accompany entries detailing where each plant can be found, its height, species, edibility, medicinal uses, bloom times, habitat and range, look-alikes, and toxicity. Mountain Pr, 1997, 239 p., color photos, paperback, \$21.00.

The Human Brain: A Guided Tour—Susan A. Greenfield. Generic yet informative and quite thorough, Greenfield's book presents both an anatomical look at the brain and illustrations of how its mechanisms give rise to the mind, motion, vision, and so on. From the level of consciousness of a fetus to discussion of just what consciousness is, the author spans the field of neuroscience. In addition, she discusses the chemical components of the brain and the effects of mood-altering drugs on it. Basic, 1997, 160 p., b&w illus., hardcover, \$20.00.

The Invention of Infinity: Mathematics and Art in the Renaissance—J.V. Field. From about 1300 to 1650, the masterpieces of Michelangelo and Giotto symbolized intellectualism. But how did these craftsmen, trained in the practical "abacus" schools, influence university-trained mathematicians, who focused on the more abstract aspects of arithmetic and geometry? Field's social history of mathematics illustrates the collision of the two. Using numerous examples of artistic works of the period, he examines the emergence of the idea of perspective and, to some degree, conics, which was instrumental in advancing geometry. Galileo, Descartes, and Desargues were particularly prone to enlisting the efforts of artists to formulate their mathematical achievements. OUP, 1997, 250 p., b&w photos/illus., hardcover, \$35.00.

Rain of Iron and Ice: The Very Real Threat of Comet and Asteroid Bombardment—John S. Lewis. In retrospect, it seems that people have written about comet collisions for hundreds of years although without wide acceptance. Lewis tracks the history of such events and takes readers to sites such as Siberia, Meteor Crater in Arizona, and the surfaces of Mars and Mercury to show the impacts and describes tracking methods. Originally published in hardcover in 1996. Addison-Wesley, 1997, 240 p., b&w plates, paperback, \$13.00.

The Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinctions—David Quammen. In an extraordinary blend of scientific exploration and anecdotes, Quammen tackles the arcane field of island biogeography. Building on Edward O. Wilson and Robert MacArthur's 30-year-old benchmark *The Theory of Island Biogeography*—which describes the geographical patterns in which animal and plant species occur—Quammen explores the question of why island species such as Balinese tigers, pigmy hippos, and the tuatara face such high rates of extinction and looks at the conditions favoring their disappearance. Originally published in hardcover in 1996. Touchstone, 1997, 702 p., paperback, \$17.00.

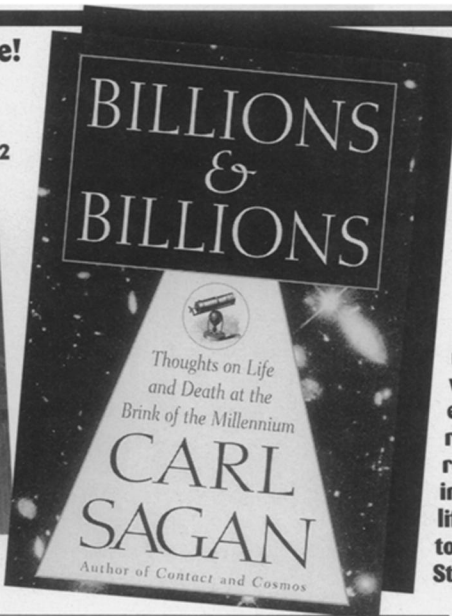
What Do I Take?: A Consumer's Guide to Non-prescription Drugs—Janice Fudyma. For anyone overwhelmed by all the over-the-counter drugs, this guide offers pharmacists' recommendations. Organized by malady and followed by a chart rating products on effectiveness, duration of relief, and the percentage of endorsing pharmacists, this book also lists all brands along with their manufacturer, active ingredients, dosage forms, and pertinent warnings. HarpPL, 1997, 176 p., b&w illus., paperback, \$13.00.

To order by Visa or MasterCard, call
1-800-544-4565
 In DC: 202-331-9653
 Or, E-mail: snbooks@sciserv.org

Order by phone for faster service!
1-800-544-4565
 (Visa or MasterCard Only)
 In DC area: 202-331-9653 Fax: 202-785-1242
 E-mail: snbooks@sciserv.org



Random House, 1997, 241 pages, 6 1/4" x 9 1/2" hardcover, \$24.00



In this book, his last, Carl Sagan shows once again his extraordinary ability to interpret the mysteries of life and the majesty of the universe for the general reader. Brilliant, eloquent, and imbued with Sagan's unique, child-like sense of awe, this wonderfully entertaining collection of essays captures the author's spirit at its best.

In *BILLIONS AND BILLIONS*, Sagan applies what we know about science, mathematics, and space to everyday life as well as to the exploration of many essential questions concerning the environment and our future. He takes his readers on a soaring journey from the invention of chess to the possibility of life on Mars, from Monday Night Football to the relationship between the United States and Russia, from global warming to the abortion debate. On a more intimate note, he gives us a rare glimpse of himself as he movingly describes his valiant fight for his life, his love for his family, and his personal beliefs about death and God.

Throughout these essays, Sagan provides clarity and understanding for an audience eager to make sense of the world around it as it prepares for the challenges of the coming millennium.

—from Random House

SCIENCE NEWS BOOKS, 1719 N Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036

BillionsH

Please send me _____ copy(ies) of *BILLIONS AND BILLIONS*. I include a check payable to Science News Books for \$24.00 plus \$2.00 postage and handling for each book (total \$26.00). Domestic orders only.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____
 (used only for problems with order)

RB2766

