

The Cambridge Illustrated History of Germany, by Martin Kitchen (352 pages, October 1996), presents the highlights of German history from the beginning of the Middle Ages to the modern era. Kitchen puts into perspective the country's political history, from its origins as a collection of small, German-speaking states to its current status as a major European power. The complexity of Ger-

many's past provides insight into its vitality as a prosperous modern democracy. \$39.95. Cambridge University Press, 40 W. 20th St., New York, NY 10011-4211. ISBN 0-521-45341-0.

Collective Vision: Creating a Contemporary Art Museum (129 pages, November 1996) examines the process of starting and dramatically expanding Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA). The museum's highlights include Christo's first wrapping of a public building (1969), Frida Kahlo's first U.S. exhibition (1978), and Jeff Koons's first full-scale museum exhibition (1988), accompanied by historic photos. Color photos of 40 works from the MCA permanent collection are juxtaposed with informative text on more than 30 featured artists. \$24.95. University of Chicago Press, 5801 S. Ellis Ave., Chicago, IL 60637. ISBN 0-933856-43-1 (paper).

Finding Images Online, by Paula Bernstein (357 pages, October 1996), is a step-by-step guide to searching online services and the Internet for usable digital images. After a brief outline of image basics and a discussion of who offers images, Bernstein goes into the details of selecting a place to search and general search techniques. Besides CompuServe, AOL, Microsoft Network, and the Internet, specific image libraries are covered: Kodak Picture Exchange, the Eastman Exchange, Publishers Depot, and Muse. Numerous case studies and examples are included to aid searches. A 69-page subject index to online resources is offered as an appendix. \$29.95. Online, Inc., 462 Danbury Rd., Wilton, CT 06897-2126. ISBN 0-910965-21-8.



A Guide to Rock Art Sites: Southern California and Southern Nevada, by David S. Whitley (218 pages, November 1996), is much more than a trail guide to 38 petroglyph and pictograph sites for amateur archeologists. In addition, it details the current theory that most Native American rock art was painted or engraved by shamans who had undergone a vision quest at the site. Since the art was

intended to depict the visions experienced by the shaman while in an altered state of consciousness, the many enigmatic and distorted features of the images can be explained. The evidence for other interpretations—hunting magic, boundary markers, solstice observatories—is less compelling. Whitley also provides an interesting summary of how rock art sites can be dated using time-specific clues, relative condition, and rock varnish analysis. Color photographs accompany descriptions of each of the sites. \$20.00. Mountain Press Publishing, P.O. Box 2399, Missoula, MT 59806. ISBN 0-87842-332-X.

The Interpretation of Dreams and Portents in Antiquity, by Naphtali Lewis (167 pages, 2d ed., 1996), brings together translations of Egyptian, Greek, and Roman authors on the topics of prophecy and dreams. Of particular interest are *The Interpretation of Dreams* by Artemidoros, a remarkably Freudian Greek who lived in Asia Minor in the 2nd century, and *The Book of Prodigies* by Julius Obsequens, whose chronicle of odd events is difficult to find in English. \$15.00. Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1000 Brown St., Unit 101, Wauconda, IL 60084. ISBN 0-86516-256-5.

Also from the same publisher is **On Unbelievable Tales: Palaephatus Periapiston**, translated with introduction and commentary by Jacob Stern (167 pages, 1996), which adds a new English translation to the Greek 1902 Teubner edition of Nicolaus Festa. Palaephatus, who possibly lived in the 4th cen-

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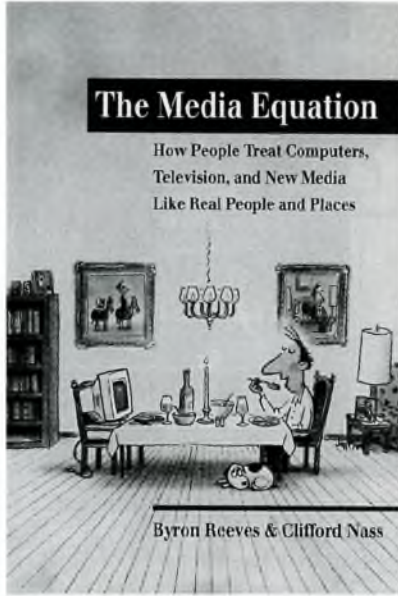
tury B.C.E., was probably the first to rationalize Olympic mythology as poetic license with the facts. \$20.00. ISBN 0-86516-310-3 (paper).

Mary Surratt: An American Tragedy, by Elizabeth Steger Trindal (304 pages, 1996), chronicles the life of the boardinghouse keeper who was implicated in the plot to assassinate Abraham Lincoln. She was executed on July 7, 1865, along with others implicated in the murder. Trindal brings together, in narrative form, all the evidence that Surratt was perhaps an innocent victim. It is curious that

pleas for clemency by John T. Ford and Mrs. Stephen A. Douglas were ignored by President Andrew Johnson. A well-documented examination of the facts. \$26.95. Pelican Publishing Co., 1101 Monroe St., Gretna, LA 70054. ISBN 1-56554-185-5.

The Media Equation: How People Treat Computers, Television, and New Media Like Real People and Places, by Byron Reeves and Clifford Nass (305 pages, September 1996), destroys many cherished myths about free will, the suspension of disbelief, and the ability of the American people to make objective and rational choices based on information obtained through audiovisual media—if the authors' research is valid. After repeating a large number of standard psychological tests in which one of the participants was replaced with a television set or computer, Reeves and Nass discovered that the reactions of the human participants were the same as if they were interacting with other humans. This was true for many different parameters—manners, personality, emotion, social and gender roles, and form. The apparent reason is that in the 20th century human brains are encountering (for the first time since they evolved) intelligent nonhuman entities. Even though these entities are composed entirely of pixels and sound bites, our brains react as if they are the same as us.

The authors go on to say that understanding this “media equation” is a boon for software designers and media packagers who can create better products by making them behave



and respond in more positive, human ways. But there is a dark side to all this that is not alluded to once in these pages—perhaps because in addition to being communication professors at Stanford, the authors are also “consultants to industry in computing and the new media.” The downside is that their findings also explain why, for example, that misinformation and disinformation perpetuated by media sources might be subconsciously viewed as more reliable than objective and thorough expositions

in books and journals. Or why violence in audiovisual media, though repeatedly causing negative reactions, is more memorable than a nonviolent scenario and that this arousal, where little if any pain is experienced or perceived, may explain how people might be influenced to commit violent acts with no regard for the consequences.

It's clear that more research must be done in this area, but for now read this book and find out just how human your monitor is. \$27.95. Cambridge University Press, 40 W. 20th St., New York, NY 10011-4211. ISBN 1-57586-052-X. ■

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