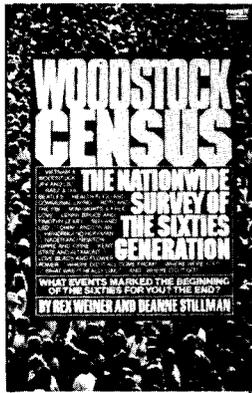


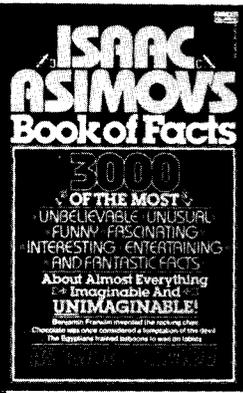
# BOOK BRIEFS



**WOODSTOCK CENSUS**  
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Deanne Stillman

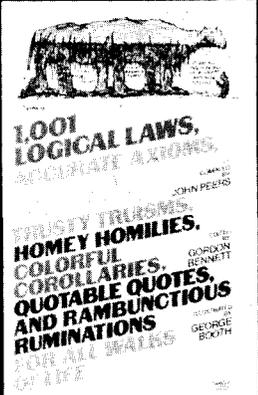
**WOODSTOCK CENSUS:** The nation survey of the Sixties Generation. For the first time, the largest population bloc in America today speaks for itself and the results are startling, funny and often moving. The 60s were many things to many different people, and what better way to find out what the decade stood for than to take a peoples poll. The author did just that by polling over 1,000 who thought they were part of the 60s and tell people attitudes then and now. 288 pgs.

## NEW FROM FAWCETT BOOKS



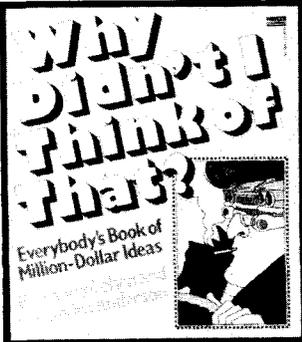
**ISAAC ASIMOV'S BOOK OF FACTS**  
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For all those who love Almanacs, the different sorts of books of lists and similar compendiums, here is a book bound to capture the mind and spirit. Here are 3,000 of the most interesting, entertaining, fascinating, unbelievable, unusual and fantastic facts... and all of them true. Here are hours of entertaining and informative reading presented in almost 100 different categories from astronomy to show business, from the ancients to the moderns, from history to animal life. 512 pgs.



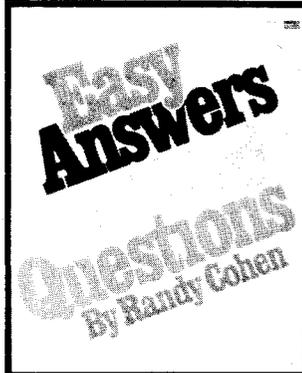
**1001 LOGICAL LAWS**  
by John Peers

Life is what happens to you while you're making other plans. Here's a witty, outrageous book of accurate axioms, profound principles, trusty truisms, homey homilies, colorful corollaries, quotable quotes, and rambunctious ruminations for all walks of life. 192 pgs.



**WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF THAT**  
by Randy Cohen and  
Alexandra Anderson

**WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF THAT** is a collection of million dollar ideas from the past, present, and future. Written in a clever style, the book presents fascinating details, description, and anecdotes of brilliant inventions and their creation. Ideas from the past, such as the bobby pin, the present, like the yoghurt maker, and of the future, such as: an automatic catbox cleaner, a singles bar called Leftovers, on-hold advertising, the motorized zipper, and many, many more. 160 pgs., Illus.



**EASY ANSWERS TO HARD QUESTIONS**  
by Randy Cohen

There's universal appeal in this wonderful collection of unusual facts, trivia, and lists. Author Cohen has, unbelievably, found answers to some of the most difficult questions of all time, questions such as:

- How much is that doggy in the window?
- Which came first, the chicken or the egg?
- How many ways are there to skin a cat?

128 pgs.

denunciation of Allen Ginsberg and the many others who romanticize a shabby disease. To Ginsberg's characterization of Kerouac as "the last of the great Christian drinkers," Newlove replies, "You don't say the last of the great Christian epileptics, do you?"

The only problem is that Newlove's attempts to render the "Drunkspearean" periods of his life are often rather excessive and Drunkspearean themselves. One could argue of course that the boozy prose here is exactly appropriate, and indeed the most hysterically hyperbolic passages do seem thoroughly authentic. In any case, Part II, which consists of empathetic takes on the alcoholism of other writers (such as Hemingway, Faulkner, and Lowry) is leaner, clearer, and full of sharp insights about the difficulty of giving up death. Despite its excesses, *Those Drinking Days* is an enormously valuable and touching book. —JACK SULLIVAN

**Notebooks**  
by B.F. Skinner  
Prentice-Hall, 360., \$15

**NOTEBOOKS** is not the scientific journal one might expect from B.F. Skinner. Nor is it solely a record of his ideas on behavioral psychology. Although many entries do elaborate upon *Walden Two* and his other publications, and one lists 11 ideas for future research, the majority are eloquent little essays on everything from lawn mowers, puns, and advertisements to friends, family, and art.

This is not to say that personal life and work are separate entities for Skinner. No matter what his subject, he displays a keen interest in the way people act. A vivid description of a snowball fight in a Vermont schoolyard turns into a search for behavioral determinants. Musings on the Boston Red Sox's batting slump lead to a novel suggestion for positive reinforcement. (The players could be shown videotapes of themselves hitting home runs.) Seeing operant conditioning in such familiar contexts is less threatening; it also tends to level Margaret Mead's charge that controlling behavior is like "playing God." But Skinner only

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occasionally addresses this issue directly, as in this defense of his most controversial book: *"Beyond Freedom and Dignity"* was a misleading title. It suggested that I was against freedom and personal worth. . . . [But] if acting for the good of the group is positively reinforced, people will feel as free and worthy as possible. I am in favor of that." For the most part, the notes are brilliantly amusing sketches that read very much like French *mélanges*, with challenging and sometimes disturbing reflections of the forces that shape our lives.

—ROBIN BROMLEY

**Exit House: Choosing Suicide as an Alternative**

by Jo Roman

Seaview Books, 204 pp., \$10.95

JO ROMAN'S is a voice from beyond the grave, but that does not mean we should listen to her. On June 10, 1979, Mrs. Roman committed suicide, after having written a letter to 300 friends explaining her choice of "rational suicide as a human right," after having produced enough tape for the television documentary *Choosing Suicide*, and after having thought for many years about taking her own life. She was by all accounts a woman very much loved by her family and friends and a woman, by her own account, very much in love with death itself.

In the autobiographical section of *Exit House* Mrs. Roman reflects on the numerous funerals her minister father took her to when she was a little girl and how much fun they were compared to the rest of her daily life. She tells of her early attempt at suicide and quotes from notes on her recovery made at the time by her then-lover. She details her fondest fantasy—the creation of an "Exit House," where people could go and take their own lives provided they are "bona-fide residents of New York City forty years or older."

No doubt this book will engender discussion, but it is a minority report. Most people do not want, as Mrs. Roman did, to go gentle into that good night, let alone discuss it in loving detail for 200 or more pages.

—ARTHUR SPIEGELMAN

**The Terrible Secret: Suppression of the Truth About Hitler's Final Solution**

by Walter Laqueur

Little, Brown, 276 pp., \$12.95

IN THE FALL of 1942, a young Pole named Jan Karski went at great risk to his own life to warn the leaders of the West—including British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, President Roosevelt, former President Herbert Hoover, and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter—that Hitler's final solution to the Jewish problem was outright mass murder. Karski might as well have stayed at home. According to this gripping, disturbing book by the scholar and political analyst Walter Laqueur, Karski was just one of several thousand Cassandras roaming Europe at that time, and his fate was much like the others—he was listened to and then either ignored or disbelieved.

Laqueur's thesis, proved with an admirable sparseness of language and lack of hysteria, is this: "Millions of people cannot be killed without participants in the murder and without witnesses." Like plumes of smoke rising from the Auschwitz chimney stacks, the truth was to be seen, if not to be noticed, if not to be accepted. "I can't believe you," said Felix Frankfurter when apprised of the situation by the brave young Karski. A high State Department official feared that talking about the death camps might lead "to increased pressure from all sides to do something more specific to help these people." The British worried that if they publicized what they knew it would lead to anti-Semitism at home and harm the war effort.

*The Terrible Secret* is a low-key, let-the-facts-speak-for-themselves indictment of Allied politicians, neutral countries, the Vatican and the Red Cross (who knew what was happening to the Jews and and kept silent out of fear). Laqueur's study covers 1941-42. By New Year's Day 1943, the Nazis claimed they had exterminated 2.5 million Jews. One only wishes that this brilliant book was fiction not fact.

—ARTHUR SPIEGELMAN

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