

restive slaves—and terrified not to. As one Texas wife, Lizzie Neblett, wrote to her husband, “I am so sick of trying to do a man’s business.”

Overcoming squeamish stomachs, these wives, sisters, and mothers also tended to the sick and wounded and buried the dead. Over time, their efforts to fill men’s shoes led them into the public sphere. Breaking with a tradition that had excluded them from public life, they joined together to lead prayer meetings, organize relief drives, teach school, and occasionally engage in espionage. But despite their commitment to slave society, Faust finds, the women’s enthusiasm for the Confederate cause waned as the war—and the casualty lists—lengthened. Some openly resisted the conscription of their remaining men. As one mother wrote to Jefferson Davis, “I need not tell you of my devotion to my country, of the sacrifices I have made, and of the many more I am willing to make. . . . But I want

my oldest boy at home.” Other women went further, expressing pacifist sentiments and encouraging their men to desert. Still others indulged in a “season of reckless frivolity,” throwing lavish parties that, according to the *Richmond Examiner*, turned the winter of 1864 into “a carnival of unhallowed pleasure” and made “a mockery of the misery and desolation that covers the land.”

Faust makes a convincing case that the Civil War forced a particular class of women to rethink the social and domestic order that had long undergirded their world. But, unlike their former slaves, who rejoiced at the changes wrought by war, these women derived a “new sense of self” from “desperation” and “the fundamental need simply to survive.” As Faust concludes, “‘Necessity’ . . . was in this sense truly ‘the mother of invention’; only ‘necessity,’ as Julia Davidson wrote her husband, John, ‘could make a different woman of me.’”

—Martha Bayles

## Science & Technology

### *THE ENCHANTED WORLD OF SLEEP.*

By Peretz Lavie. Translated by Anthony Berris. Yale Univ. Press. 288 pp. \$27.50

### *SLEEP THIEVES:*

*An Eye-Opening Exploration Into the Science & Mysteries of Sleep.*

By Stanley Coren. Free Press. 304 pp. \$24

“The only way to make money is to be awake all the time.” Sleep is a waste of time, according to this busy manager of a mutual fund quoted in *Sleep Thieves* by Stanley Coren, professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia. Both Coren and Peretz Lavie, the author of *The Enchanted World of Sleep*, dispute the proposition that we should sleep less. In their complementary books, they argue persuasively that we are a sleep-deprived society. Attempts to save time by not sleeping result in a continuum of disturbances ranging from daytime drowsiness to mental illness.

Both books provide excellent overviews of what we know and need to know about sleep. Lavie, dean of the Faculty of

Medicine and director of the Sleep Laboratory at Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, takes a more scholarly approach. He stresses the biological aspect of sleep and reports on a number of fascinating experiments. One of the most remarkable is his own 1991 sleep laboratory study of Holocaust survivors.

Lavie studied the sleep of three groups: survivors with good family and occupational adjustments; survivors with poor adjustments; and a control group of native-born Israelis. Not surprisingly, the well-adjusted survivors resembled the control group in falling asleep easily and displaying the rapid eye movement (REM) that indicates dreaming. But when awakened during REM sleep, the well-adjusted survivors could recall only 33 percent of their dreams—the lowest figure ever reported. (The control group recalled 78 percent, the poorly adjusted survivors 55 percent.) This suggests a striking—and unexpected—continuity between the mental processes of dreaming and the psychological defenses that protect the waking mind against traumatic thoughts and memories.

Coren’s chief concern is with sleep deprivation. The natural pattern of human behav-

ior, he argues, is work during the day, recreation during the evening, and sleep at night. So ingrained is this pattern that fully 20 percent of shift workers voluntarily give up their jobs rather than suffer the physical and mental consequences of having their “normal sleep-wakefulness cycle” disrupted.

Sleep deprivation leads to problems beyond loss of employment. Each spring, when we lose an hour of sleep changing to daylight-saving time, the death rate from automobile accidents in the United States jumps seven percent. In the fall, when we gain an hour, the pattern is reversed. Observes Coren: “As a society we must be running a fairly heavy sleep debt if the loss of one hour more of sleep can make it seven percent more likely that we will have a mishap on the road.”

On how much sleep we actually need, the authors differ. Lavie states that five or six hours is enough if the individual “is alert and energetic during the day, and does not feel either chronic fatigue or a strong desire to sleep.” Coren disagrees. He finds that “our normal efficiency, alertness, and creativity is not as good with eight hours of sleep as it is with 10.”

Thus we face a conundrum: like the mutual fund manager, we want to use our time most efficiently. Yet to function at an optimal level, we need to invest more time in a reputedly inefficient, self-indulgent activity. “It is truly an odd feature of our society that short sleepers are idolized,” writes Coren. “Today the person who runs on little sleep is seen as mentally tough, ambitious, and admirable.” It’s hard to imagine a successful person in any field advising a junior counterpart to get more sleep. Yet that may be just the right prescription. Both of these books underscore the point made by Aldous Huxley: “That we are not much sicker and much madder than we are is due exclusively to that most blessed and blessing of all natural graces, sleep.”

—Richard Restak

**THE INTERNET &  
WORLD WIDE WEB:  
The Rough Guide.**

By Angus J. Kennedy. Rough Guides.  
224 pp. \$8

According to the futurists, we are on the verge of living in an electronic, paperless Information Age. But the paradox of this age

is that most of us learn about the new on-line world by reading books—a medium the “digerati” would have us believe is all but obsolete.

Among the dozens of volumes available, there are books about etiquette (*Rules of the Net: Online Operating Instructions for Human Beings*, by Thomas Mandel and Gerard Van der Leun), books about where to go in cyberspace (*Netchick: A Smart-Girl Guide to the Wired World*, by Carla Sinclair), books offering the vicarious experience of cyberspace for people still making up their minds (*Networld!: What People Are Really Doing on the Internet and What It Means to You*, by David H. Rothman), and books about falling in love on-line (*Throbbing Modems: How to Find Romance and Adventure on Your Personal Computer*, by Joshua Bagby).

Now the Rough Guide series of travel books has come up with *The Internet & World Wide Web*. It’s hip-pocket- (or purse-) sized, which seems a conceit; this is armchair traveling, not real adventuring. That quibble aside, Kennedy’s guide is a useful introduction to the arcana of getting connected to the various components that make up the Internet.

For starters, the author discusses the difference between on-line services such as CompuServe and Internet Service Providers (ISPs). He outlines the basics of making an initial connection and lists the software that would-be Net surfers will need (though anyone who has ever tried to install Internet software will testify that it can be pointlessly frustrating). Helpfully, Kennedy lists 15 questions to ask a prospective ISP. For example, he advises inquiring when the ISP is busiest, whether it charges a flat fee, and (this is important) whether it will supply the connection software and walk the customer through the installation.

Elsewhere, Kennedy explains Internet services such as e-mail, newsgroups (electronic bulletin boards to which people post messages), list-serves (electronic mailing lists), file transfers, and the World Wide Web (what most people think of when they think of the Internet). He also lists selected newsgroups and World Wide Web sites, as well as a glossary of terms and an introduction to “Net Language.” And finally, a list of ISPs in the United States, Great Britain, Europe, Asia, and Australia is offered.

Just as it is paradoxical to learn about the