

old you—from infancy to old age. The psychologist-produced fantasy presents a variety of experiences to the player, from the first temptation to shoplift to the question of whether you want to taste a friend's strawberry lipstick "the fun way." Your decisions—go ahead, or chicken out?—affect everything from the kind of people you can date to the kind of job you get, just as choices pattern real life.

Entertainment software is not just games; a rash of recent programs turns computers into the life of the party, allowing them to play music, produce animated cartoons and even converse. Racter (*Mindscape, Inc.* \$44.95) blends its own random responses with snatches of keyboard entries in its verbal Cuisinart; the resulting stream-of-consciousness non sequiturs can be hilarious. When asked, "Who wrote the

book of love?" Racter's answer (author Jessica Mitford) was followed by this screed: "Anyhow my reflection is loving. Yet when disgusting eagles soar and fly, their own love is always quizzical and loony. Ha! ha! ha! ha! Enraged hater! I'm afraid of enraged tapeworms. What are you afraid of?" Racter even "talks" on voice-synthesizing machines like the Macintosh and Amiga—but do you really want to listen to something that sounds like a well-educated schizophrenic with sinusitis?

You know the computer age is maturing when someone starts releasing Golden Oldies (*Software Country*, \$29.95-\$34.95). Holy K-Tell! Les Crane, a former deejay and talk-show host, has repackaged four games that were created in the dinosaur days of microchips—including good old Pong.

JOHN SCHWARTZ

TELEVISION

TV's New Alien

In a new ABC sitcom, Balki Bartokomous has unexpectedly arrived in America from a mythical Mediterranean island and moved in with his distant American cousin, Larry Appleton. ABC calls the show "Perfect Strangers." You might be tempted to call it "Balki & Mindy" or "My Favorite Balki." Television has long considered the new alien in town—whether from the planets Ork or Mars, or even a Mediterranean island—a situation ripe for comedy. While this particular variation might not make you forget Mork or Uncle Martin the Martian, it does have its bright mo-

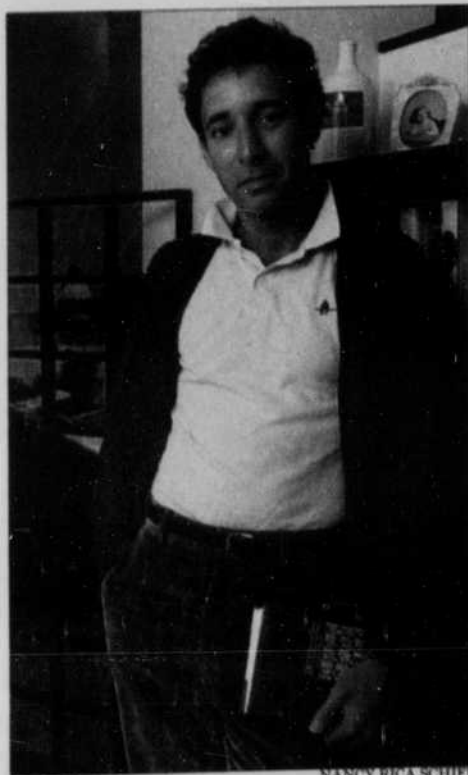
BOOKS

The Fastest Track of All

The '49ers struck gold

The class the dollars fell on." That's what Fortune magazine called the 1949 graduates of Harvard Business School on the occasion of their 25th reunion. At that point, one out of every five men from the class (women weren't admitted to Harvard Business School in 1947) were millionaires. From this group came chairmen and/or chief executive officers of Xerox, Johnson & Johnson, Bloomingdale's and Capital Cities, as well as a chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. As Laurence Shames explains in his excellent book "The Big Time" (226 pages, Harper & Row, \$17.95), '49ers were blessed in several ways. They were the first postwar class at the B-School, they earned M.B.A.'s when the degree was truly a golden passport and they exited into an economy that was beginning a prolonged boom.

Shames details the business ups and downs of the '49ers. Peter McColough, for example, has known both—he took a chance on a nascent photocopier company called Haloid, and rose with its success (under the new name of Xerox) to chairman and CEO, only to steer the company through some disastrous excursions into computers and electronic typewriters. These personal stories make for vivid reading, but Shames goes beyond the business of business. He goes into the broader impact of the class of '49—how, for example,



NANCY RICA SCHIFF

Beyond the business of business: Shames

they defined success for many Americans during the go-go years. Shames doesn't let the class of '49 off lightly: he criticizes them for being unable to adapt to the changing business world, particularly the growing emphasis on investment banking and corporate raids. Yet he finds them to be, in many respects, superior to the narcissistic, Yuppified M.B.A.'s of today.

"The Big Time" may be such an uncommon book about business and businessmen because Shames is such an uncommon person to write on the subject. When a Harper & Row editor asked him to take it on, says Shames, "I said, 'I'm not a business writer. I

don't have a business education, and I've never had anything to do with the Harvard Business School.' She said, 'That's exactly why you should do the book.'" She was right—and maybe "The Big Time" should be a case-method lesson for publishers everywhere.

RON GIVENS

Ancient Demigod Comes to Visit

Classics majors, rejoice! Now comes the newly translated saga of "Hercules Amongst the North Americans" (80 pages, Penguin, \$5.95). Mark Marek has quirkily illustrated these little-known exploits of the demigod—from Hercules' attempt to find an apartment in Manhattan to the 349th labor of the mighty Greek, keeping the boiler going in the basement of the Omega-Hilton Hotel in West Beach, Fla. As a man of his time, Hercules often has trouble with the American way: when he sees the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, he slays Bullwinkle, suspecting the giant balloon is a Trojan moose. But Hercules also likes the convenience of his Mr. Coffee machine. At times, propounds Marek, Hercules is "a legendary figure from ancient times and yet a man in touch with today."



OUR FAVORITE GREEK TAKES DELIGHT IN CRUISING FOR AMERICAN MAIDENS

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK MAREK