

The structure of the COBOL language is carefully explained in the course of the 60 lessons each of which is accompanied by clear, appropriate sketches and program segments followed by review questions to which full answers are found in the rear of the book.

This text might not be a literary masterpiece but it most certainly accomplishes its stated goal, i.e. to teach those who need to learn the language quickly. I think this would make an excellent choice for any student of business. It is probably suitable for a semester's course in college although it may be used to great advantage as a self-instructional text.

HENRY MULLISH

Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences  
New York University  
New York, New York 10012

**37[12].**—BRYAN HIGMAN, *A Comparative Study of Programming Languages*, American Elsevier Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1967, iii + 164 pp., 22 cm. Price \$8.50.

There is an essential need for comparative studies of programming languages. Unfortunately, this book does not contribute much to filling the void. It is a little book which gives an unbalanced and much too superficial view of programming languages. It is not suitable as a textbook but might be useful to someone with a knowledge of, say, Fortran who wants a feel for other programming languages with a decided "European" view. About a third of the book attempts to lay the formal groundwork for the comparative study of languages; this is however later ignored and instead a philosophical view is presented. The introduction to the basics of programming linguistics is good.

MAX GOLDSTEIN

Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences  
New York University  
New York, New York 10012

**38[12].**—WILLIAM F. SHARP, *Basic*, The Free Press, New York, 1967, xi + 137 pp., 26 cm. Price \$6.75 Hardbound, \$3.95 Paperbound.

As an introduction to Computer Programming, using the BASIC language should prove to be most successful with students of both scientific or business orientation. It is clear, precise, amply illustrated and written in a style which is both interesting and engaging.

The first seventy-two pages are devoted to the various instructions and procedures, questions being asked along the way and their answers supplied in full. Once the fundamentals have been learned the student is told (page 71)—"you now know something about computers. You know they are *not* giant electronic brains, but they can be programmed to do rather clever things; and you have a fair notion of the manner in which this is done."