

brary School, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Kenney, Brigitte L., and Esteves, Roberto. *Video and Cable Communications: Guidelines for Librarians*. Based on a Report of the ALA Video/Cable Study Committee. Chicago: Information Science and Automation Division, Video and Cable Communications Section, American Library Assn., 1975. 84p. \$3.50.

This publication, a revision of a formal report submitted to ALA, provides a useful compendium of general information on the present status and future prospects of video and cable technology in libraries. The first two of the six chapters deal with the involvement of some 400 libraries. Chapter 3 covers video hardware and software in fairly general terms. Chapter 4 touches on cable regulations and franchising, and Chapter 5 deals with community education, organization, and resources. The last chapter is a checklist for librarians. The most useful section is Appendix A, providing perhaps the most complete annotated bibliography yet assembled in one publication.

For the untutored, this publication will provide an excellent generalized overview of what is involved when libraries make use of the new technology. Unfortunately, it is so generalized that it might be misleading to some. For instance, the statement is made that the new low cost of video equipment (a portable black-and-white camera-recorder combination available for about \$2,000) makes this equipment attractive to many libraries. One looks in vain, however, for any real data on staff time and training that must be expended to make the camera-recorder operational and effective. The items listed in the bibliography probably bring out the needed data; without such data in this publication, the impression is left that the use of video and cable technology in libraries is easy, inexpensive, and effective. We do not believe the editors intended such an impression.

The more than a year delay in publication of the guidelines has had a serious impact on its usefulness. It is considerably out of date in a very rapidly developing area. Librarians will do well to check the fine

bibliography for those items that will provide updated information in crucial areas, such as equipment specifications and costs, changes in FCC regulations, and technological developments.

This is an admirable first effort in a very new area. We can only hope that the guidelines will be updated regularly. Such effort would be most helpful to the profession.—*Gordon P. Martin, University Librarian, California State University, Sacramento.*

Chen, Ching-chih. *Applications of Operations Research Models to Libraries: A Case Study of the Use of Monographs in the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Harvard University*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976. 212p. \$17.50. (LC 75-28210) (ISBN 0-262-03056-X)

This work seems to confirm a widespread belief that excellent doctoral dissertations seldom translate into readable professional literature for the practitioner. Chen's work is admirable, the methodology and conclusions are sound, but the narrow scope of the subject and the unavoidable reliance upon jargon to discuss it will severely limit her audience.

The first of the book's three sections is basically a restatement and extension of the probabilistic models of circulation proposed by Morse. The theory is that while it is impossible to predict whether individual titles will or will not circulate, it is possible to predict the circulation behavior of subject classes of books on the basis of historical data. The average librarian will probably have to accept this proposition as an article of faith. One who has not read and understood Morse's *Library Effectiveness*, or who lacks a solid background in quantitative methods, will never make it through p.35. The models rest upon the assumption that book circulation is a random process, but this by no means commands universal agreement among the profession.

Section two reports in detail the author's successful attempt to apply the models, originally developed from a small data base at the MIT Science Library, to the Countway Library of Medicine. Sampling techniques were used to obtain historical circulation data for selected subject classes in