tion. Both chapters outline the role of the manager and problems that may be encountered in the development of training and appraisal programs.
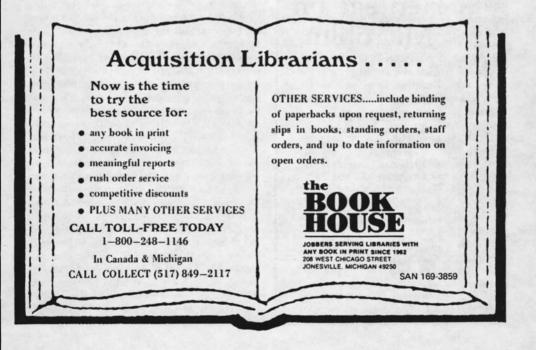
The selected sources in the appendix provide information on materials and resource organizations that can be of assistance to those who work with the administration of personnel. Each chapter includes footnotes and/or additional resources that can further aid the reader in acquiring more information on the topics covered. Myriad information is treated in each of this work's chapters, providing an excellent overview of the role of personnel administrators and managers, the laws that govern them, and practical suggestions for implementation. — *Carolyn J. Henderson, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California.*

King, Donald W. et al. *Telecommunications and Libraries: A Primer for Librarians and Information Managers.* White Plains, N.Y.: Knowledge Industry Publications, 1981. 184p. LC 81-6040. ISBN 0-91423-688-1 hardcover; 0-91423-651-2 paper.

This is not another of those texts that claim the ability to convert the layperson into a telecommunications (TC) expert in one quick and easy reading. Besides being a readable introduction to general technical concepts and policy issues of TC, this primer can serve as a good, though not exhaustive, list of recent TC experiments and operations of immediate interest to libraries. The traditional role of the library as an intermediary between information suppliers and information consumers is brought into question by this book.

Readers are encouraged to take a broad view of the many available technologies, because no single approach can be expected to satisfy all TC requirements.

Since the library market is relatively small from the perspective of an AT&T, IBM, or COMSAT, a commercially developed, custom-tailored library network is unlikely. Library TC needs may best be met by creative combinations of products and services designed for richer markets. Ten thoughtful, well-edited chapters written by knowledgeable people for a nontechnical audience make worthwhile reading for the current or aspiring librarian or information manager

who seeks an overall understanding of this
field.

In chapter one, F. W. Lancaster and
Donald W. King describe information transfer and argue that ownership of resources becomes less important as resource directories
and TC advances continue improving remote access to diversified collections. Brigitte
L. Kenney presents an easily read, James
Martin type of TC basics text as chapter two.
Chapter three, by Lynne E. Bradley, tells
what libraries are doing with cable TV.

Next, Rita G. Lerner's chapter four describes the capabilities of satellites and
packet radio. Adding a comment about the
recent, library-related work of the Public
Service Satellite Consortium might have improved Dr. Lerner's already excellent discussion. Videotext, both two-way viewdata and
one-way teletext, are well covered by
Kathleen Criner's chapter five. She asks if
content regulations applicable to broadcast
services should apply to teletext and ponders
the impact of home videotext upon libraries.
The "Facsimile and Libraries" chapter, by
Dr. Joan Maier McKean, describes her
TALINET project and summarizes the
document-delivery capabilities of this relatively expensive technology.

Charles M. Goldstein's chapter seven distinguishes between optical digital discs and
optical videodiscs, compares them with microforms, and speculates about their library
applications in services for the blind, distributed online catalogs, shared cataloging, document delivery, and preservation. "Future of
the Library" (chapter eight) by F. W. Lancaster, of course, envisions a nearly paperless
society with new, de-institutionalized roles
for librarians. He expects their status to rise
as they participate as members of research
teams or as group-practice professionals. In
chapter nine Donald King lists some roadblocks to Lancaster's scenarios, including the
lack of standardization and economic weakness. For example, the publishers of paper
journals are paid in advance, while online
publishers receive revenue on an as-used
basis — very different cash flows. The last
chapter by David Dorman is an annotated
bibliographic guide to nontechnical TC materials. This bibliography, like the entire
primer, is broad in scope and introductory in
nature.

Librarians now making decisions that must consider the relative merits of SNA, X.25, SDLC, Ethernet, multiplexing, and other specific technical issues cannot expect much help from this book. — *William L. Basinski, Data Resources, Inc., Lexington, Massachusetts.*

Horder, Alan. *Video Discs — Their Application to Information Storage and Retrieval.* 2d ed. NRCD Publication no.17. Hereford, Herts, Great Britain: National Reprographic Centre for Documentation, 1981. 50p. ISBN 0-85267-199-7 hardcover; 0-85267-200-4 microfiche.

Barrett, R. *Developments in Optical Disc Technology and the Implications for Information Storage and Retrieval.* British Library Research and Development Reports, no.5623. Wetherby, West Yorkshire: The British Library, 1981. 80p. ISBN 0-905984-71-4. ISSN 0308-2385.

One candidate for the topic most discussed and debated during 1982 by those involved in the application of technology to libraries is bound to be that of videodiscs — and how they are likely to be used in the next decade. It is being discussed by all manner of people: those who give advice at the national policy level, those who design and implement library computer applications, foundation program officers, and many others in between.

The wide-ranging interest is easy to understand when one analyzes the functional characteristics of a videodisc: the ability to store text in the billions and trillions of characters at low cost; a high storage density resulting in modest use of physical space; and, most important, the potential for high accessibility and deliverability through the use of computers and high-speed telecommunications. A videodisc is nothing less than an alternative publishing medium, yet it gives rise to descriptions of libraries without walls. The appearance of these two reports is timely, given the degree of interest in this technology both here and abroad, and especially given the scarcity of material on this topic that is understandable to a nontechnical person.

The Horder report traces the history of video playback systems and focuses quickly