

## HAYES' ELECTRONIC TRIO

**Electricity**, Dan Mackie, Dave Mackie, Dean Mackie. Illus. Charles El Bastien and Rick Rowden. Hayes Publishing, Hayes Technology Series, 1986. 32 pp. \$5.95 paper. ISBN 0-88625-1338; **Communications**, Dan Mackie, Paul Hayes. Illus. Scott Bennett, Eric Boulden, Rick Rowden, Val Sanna and Gary Wein. Hayes Publishing, Hayes Technology Series, 1987. 32 pp. \$5.95 paper. ISBN 0-88625-135-4. **Robotics**, Andrew Vowles and Dan Mackie. Illus. Charles E. Bastien. Hayes Publishing, Hayes Technology Series, 1986. 32 pp. \$5.95 paper. ISBN 0-88625113-3.

Hayes' three recent additions to their Technology Series are books which have electronics as the underlying theme. Many sections of any particular volume could have easily been placed in any of the other books. Cross-referencing the related information between the books might have been an extra bonus for the young reader keenly interested in things electronic.

In today's world, knowledge of electronics and its critical effects on society is essential, so the topics are timely. The information given is excellent but delivered in spatter-fashion. There is no clearcut division between history, science, results and effects; the reader is given a feeling of non-cohesiveness.

Considerable improvements have been made in layout with respect to correlating the reading material with the artwork. Colourful mechanical drawings are pleasingly eye-catching, but a major flaw remains from the earlier books: a difficulty in presenting people. The word "exciting" is used to describe the contents of the books, but the facial expressions depicted exhibit absolute boredom with what is going on. The youngster hanging on to an activated "Van der Graf" generator looks more "stoned" than astonished. In many cases the body language is all wrong. The younger generation knows how to "boogie" and enjoys looking at others (real or unreal) doing it.

In descriptions of the science of physics, the language veers away from the simplistic style of the rest of the prose. This may not be a disadvantage as it may encourage the reader to explore the subject in greater depth, but it does make awkward reading. Fewer words and more artwork could be used in this area.

*Electricity.* The major flaw in this book is the manner of the introducing a nuclear explosion. Although the scientific points made are valid, the casual presentation of a serious social subject is not right in this kind of book.

A minor fault is one of sloppiness, of neglect. "By convention, we say electricity flows from the positive to the negative terminal." It is not

mentioned that electrons flow from the negative to the positive terminal.

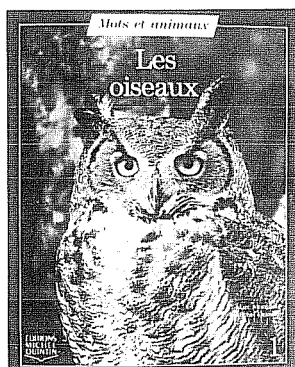
*Communications.* This is the best book of the trio for general information. More depth in the history of the subject would have been welcome.

*Robotics.* Better explanations about computers and how they have allowed the accelerated advancements in robotics in recent times should have been offered. Omitting the history of the massive mainframe and the miracle microchip is a serious hindrance to understanding the modern robot. The style is a little too coy and ignores the dark side of robotry. An ideal robotic society is presented without the intrusion of the numerous social problems (e.g., job replacement) that have arrived with the coming of the robots.

All in all, Hayes continues to demonstrate a dedication to the idea of presenting young readers with excellent, entertaining, educational reading. One hopes this publisher will stay on this pathway.

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## POUR APPRIVOISER LE DOCUMENTAIRE



**Les amphibiens**, Louise Martel et Michel Quintin. Waterloo, Michel Quintin, 1986, 23 pp. 5,95\$ broché. ISBN 2-920438-09-3; **Les animaux sauvages**, Louise Beaudin et Marc Mongeau. Waterloo, Michel Quintin, 1986, 23 pp. 5,95\$ broché. ISBN 2920438-11-5; **Les oiseaux**, Marc Mongeau et Michel Quintin. Waterloo, Michel Quintin, 1986, 23 pp. 5,95\$ broché. ISBN 2920438-10-7.

Ceux qui s'intéressent aux problèmes relatifs à la lisibilité savent que l'analyse du vocabulaire, de la syntaxe et du contenu ne suffit pas à rendre tout à fait compte de la difficulté d'un texte pour un lecteur ou un niveau d'âge donné. La linguistique du texte et les résultats des recherches en psycholinguistique sur le rôle de la structure textuelle permettent aujourd'hui de croire qu'un jeune lecteur lira avec une aisance très variable les mêmes mots et les mêmes phrases selon qu'elles font partie d'un conte ou d'un texte de type documentaire.

Les textes documentaires eux-mêmes se différencient nettement selon