

Rural America In the Information Age: Telecommunications Policy for Rural Development; and The Writer's Friend

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Abstract

Review of "Rural America In the Information Age: Telecommunications Policy for Rural Development" by Edwin B. Parker, Heather E. Hudson, Don A. Dillman, and Andrew D. Roscoe; and "The Writer's Friend," by Martin L. Gibson.

Kodachrome labs. For diehard Kodachrome shooters, the ability to push this film opens greater possibilities for using faster shutter speeds or obtaining greater depth of field. And for photographers who use zoom lenses with small maximum apertures, push processing may make using this unique film possible for the first time.

Kodachrome can be pushed up to two stops, but Kemper obtained the best results by limiting Kodachrome 64 to a one-half- or one-stop push (i.e., shooting at a film speed rating of 90 or 125). Kodachrome 200 responded well to as much as a 2-stop push. So Kemper recommends rating it at :400,500,600 or even 800 ISO.

"Pull processing" is seldom considered in connection with slide films, but Kemper makes a convincing case for it in certain situations. (You "push" film by rating it at a higher film speed than its nominal ISO. Conversely, you "pull" a film by rating it at a lower film speed.) Shooting Kodachrome 64 at ISO 50 lowers the contrast. "On bright sunny days where the contrast is too great, you'll get better looking photographs," says Kemper. In addition, for people who make Cibachrome or Type R prints from slides, reducing the contrast makes it easier to make a color print from the slide.

Kemper does not discuss Kodachrome 25 in his article.

The New Lab is just one of a number of professional labs around the country that process Kodachrome. However, it is the only one that has a prepaid mail order program, according to Kemper. To check the details, contact The New Lab toll free at 1-800-526-3165 (excluding California).

Tom Gentle
Oregon State University

Rural America in the Information Age: Telecommunications Policy for Rural Development. Edwin B. Parker, Heather E. Hudson, Don A. Dillman, and Andrew D. Roscoe. 1989. Lanham, Md.: The Aspen Institute and University Press of America.

This slim (170 pages) book is a report prepared for the Rural Economic Policy Program of The Aspen Institute under a grant from the Ford Foundation to the University of San Francisco. The project originated at a 1988 conference on the importance of communications and information systems to rural development in the United States, held in Aspen, Colorado.

Basic to this project was a belief that telecommunications is important to rural development because of its "potential for promoting long-term growth, diversification and stability." Most new rural jobs are in services, the writers note, and most of these service jobs involve the creation, processing, or management of information. They believe modern telecommunications has the potential to overcome the historic barriers of rural geography and distance.

This book begins with a comprehensive look at rural America in the information age and ends on clearly-stated policy goals and recommendations. It calls, appropriately, for government leadership to help set and implement needed telecommunications policy changes. These are spelled

out in some detail.

The book also contains chapters on the rural economy, the role of telecommunications in that economy, telecommunications policy issues affecting rural America, and the rural telecommunications infrastructure. An important appendix outlines "the players" (e.g., long distance carriers and REA).

Also of interest is a report on the original Aspen conference. It is useful not only for the information it contains, but also because of the insights it reveals into the thinking behind the larger study.

One important strength of this work is the amount of data presented. We may know something of the current plight of rural America, but we need more factual information of just this type. The book also has a very useful list of references. There is no index, but the topical organization and descriptive headings limit the need for one.

Those with a specific interest in rural telecommunications obviously have good use for this book. Those with an interest in rural development or rural communications in general also will find it to be a valuable reference to have on hand.

Robert G. Hays
University of Illinois

The Writer's Friend. Martin L. Gibson. 1989. Ames: Iowa State University Press.

The premise of this book is simple: "I intend to help you learn to write better." It probably could be of some help to each of us, but it's not likely to help any of us very much.

Gibson is a columnist whose work appears regularly in *Publisher's Auxiliary*. He also is a popular speaker at newspaper gatherings.

This is an informal—often tongue-in-cheek—collection of explanation, recommendation, and advice intended especially for news writers and copy editors. It fails largely in that it offers precious little that a professional writer or editor doesn't already know and do.

I might consider using The Writer's Friend as a supplemental reference for advanced undergraduate journalism students. I would not recommend it for experienced professionals.

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