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JUNE 1981/95¢

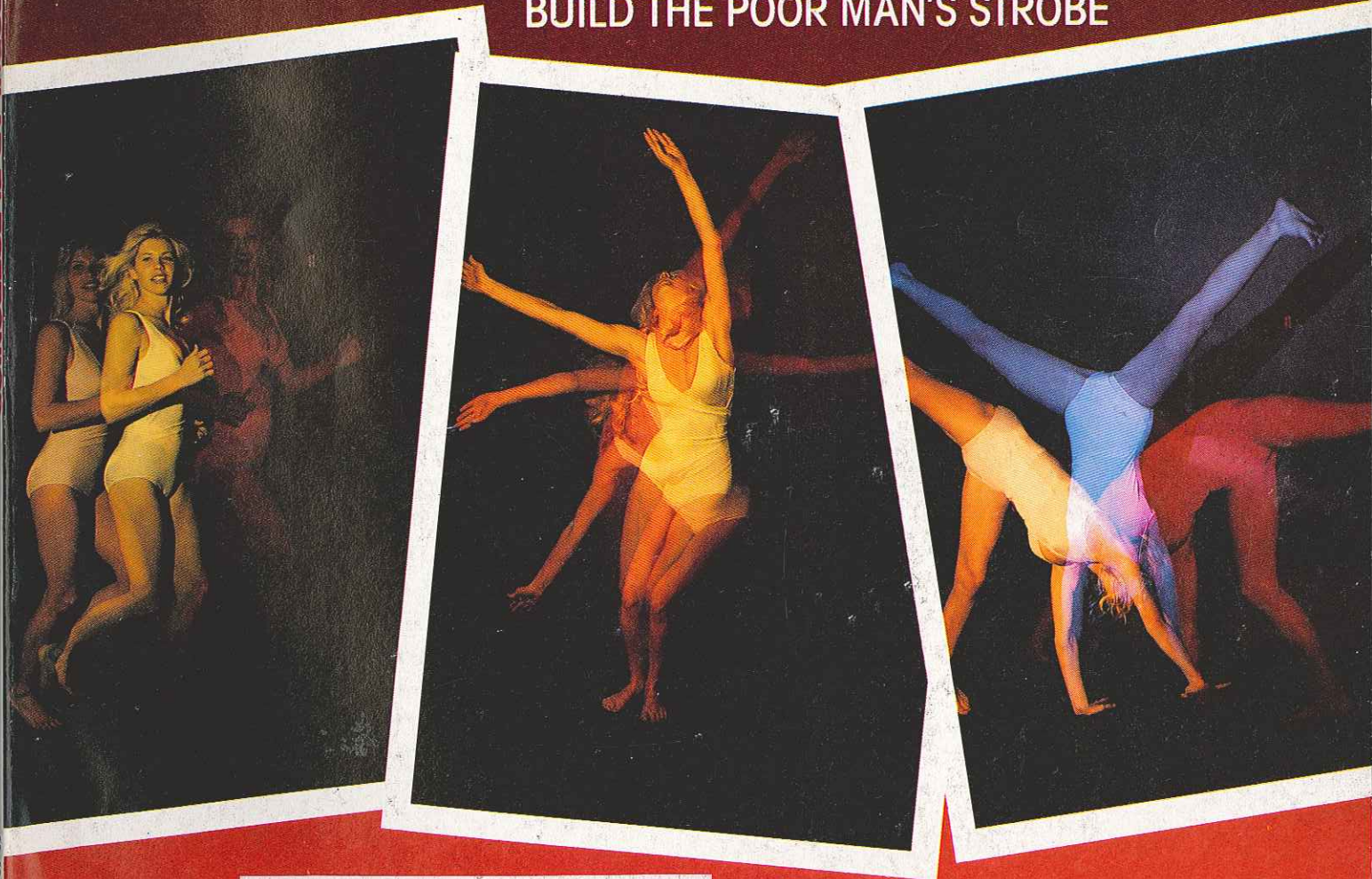
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COMPUTER BITS

By Leslie Solomon
Senior Technical Editor

Free Computer Networks

A VIRTUALLY limitless information resource lies almost at your fingertips in the form of some 250 computerized bulletin boards that can be accessed by any microcomputer having a 300-baud, Bell-103 compatible modem. Most use the carriage return as the speed-recognition character and become self-prompting thereafter.

Some systems offer specialized information (medicine, astronomy, photography, ham radio, etc.), while others are more generalized. Most are available evenings or weekends when phone rates are low, while others operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The listing of a telephone number offers no assurance that the system is in operation, as many shut down periodically for maintenance, and others may stop without notice.

Novation, Inc., Tarzana, CA, a modem manufacturer, offers a free dial-up directory with up-to-date listings. Operating 24 hours a day, it can be reached by calling 213-881-6880 and when the message LOGON PLEASE appears, type CAT, then carriage return (or ENTER). An 18-item menu consisting of Novation product information, a glossary of computer terms, and a modem/printer test will appear. Item 18 is the directory of dial-up systems that is updated each month.

As a service to our readers, we would like to be kept up to date on all free bulletin boards, times of operation, and what services are offered. Send all information to this column care of POPULAR ELECTRONICS, 1 Park Ave., New York, NY 10016.

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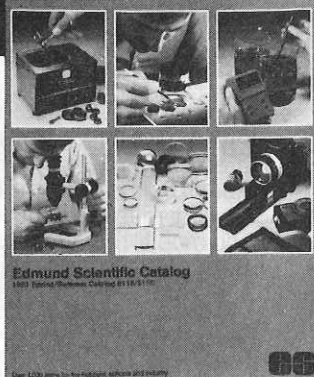


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PART I. Chapters 1 to 3 include a wealth of useful information on microcomputer theory including peripheral and software capability. Succeeding Chapters provide additional microcomputer information under the following headings: *BASIC Language Summary; Guidelines for the Selection of Microcomputers in Commercial Applications; Microcomputers and Word Processing, Big Future for Desktop/Personal Computers* (containing comments by IDC, a leading industry information resource); *Future Trends in Microprocessing and Microcomputing; Communications and Networking with Microcomputers; Microcomputers in Education; and Microcomputing For The Home Hobbyist.*

PART II. Covers a range of microcomputer software from independent vendors. Products discussed are broken down into the five major system types: CP/M-based; Apple Systems; Commodore Systems; Radio Shack TRS-80 Systems; and the 6800-based models. The different programs described include operating systems, high-level languages, utilities and a wide variety of application packages.

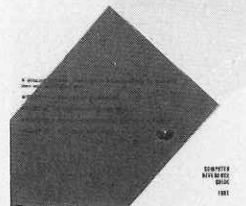
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