

Consumer Survival Kits, Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting, Owings Mills, Maryland 21117 (\$1.00)

"Buying or Renting a Home" *Money*. Time and Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, 10020 (\$1.25)

Consumer Survival Kits are based on the Public Broadcasting weekly television series of the same name. The *Kits* consist of an 8½ x 11", 15 plus page booklet filled with current articles from *Money*, *Changing Times*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Consumer Reports*, government (H.U.D., U.S.D.A.) and professional organizations (N.A.H.B.) as well as recently written materials and checklists of where to find help including an excellent and current bibliography.

The series accents solutions, not problems, and was conceived on the premise that Americans are more interested in dollar-saving information than in redundant bemoaning of the system. The show and the *Kits* help viewers learn to solve their own problems and where to go for agency assistance. After completing two successful years on television, the series returns in the Fall of 76.

Seven housing related *Kits* are now available at \$1.00 each: "Dreamhouse Nightmare", "Condominium: Pleasures and Pitfalls", "My House Has a Flat: Mobile Homes", "The Big Fix: Home Repairs", "Land Whoa!", "Tenant's Rights" and "The Last Resort" (Nursing Homes). In addition, *Kits* are available on moving, floor coverings, appliances, furniture selection and home security systems.

Literature has been well researched for current and complete articles. For example, *Dreamhouse Nightmare*, the second best selling *Kit* (after *Auto Repair*) out of fifty-three now available, consists of articles on Choosing a Broker, Tax Savings, Closing Costs, Inspecting a House, Insurance, and Warranties plus checklists on House Buying and Buying Power. Unfortunately, articles from current extension publication are missing from all of the *Kits* I have previewed.

The *Kits* would be useful individually to supplement a text or together to form the basis for a text in a course concerned with consumer aspects of housing alternatives.

In addition to the *Kits*, 29 minute videocassettes of the show are also available. For further information and bulk purchasing and discount information contact Fran Johansson at the above address.

I have used the *Kits* and the tapes with adult education classes on House Buying and with undergraduate students in Family Housing courses. The *Kits* are also useful in graduate workshops focusing on housing alternatives and methods of teaching housing since they are compact and can be read fairly quickly.

The editors of *Money* magazine also have a newly revised housing guide "Buying or Renting a Home". It is available from: Time and Life Building, Rockefeller Center, NY 10020 (\$1.25). All of the articles are from the magazine and include such topics as "Neighborhood Considerations", "Inspecting a House", "Prefabs", "Closing Costs", "Inflation and the One-Family House" and "Rent Deposit Insecurity." although more expensive than the *Kits*, information on both buying and renting housing is included. The lack of a bibliography is a disappointment and since all of the articles are from *Money*, although they are all excellent, the guide does lack diversity.

Housing educators should have copies of the *Survival Kits* and the *Money* guide on their shelves for a handy and quick, up-to-date reference of articles on consumer aspects and housing alternatives.

—Joseph L. Wysocki