

introductory material on surfaces, there are subsections on Bézier surfaces, B -spline surfaces and Beta-spline surfaces, and the final one on Hermite and implicit cubic spline surfaces. Each subsection ends with comments on the implementation of the presented methods in the enclosed set of programs called Spline Guide, designed for an IBM PC or compatible machines. The interpolation and smoothing programs for the first two chapters are written in Fortran, the programs for the curves and surfaces of Chapters 3 and 4 are coded in C.

There are no references at the end of each subsection or chapter, only one list at the end of the book, which is very short and leaves out quite a number of pertinent books on splines. Therefore, in my opinion, there is no help for an uninitiated reader to find out about other splines, for example quadratic ones, or about proofs, or even who introduced the concepts and algorithms, which would assist in further studies. The reader is supposed to be content with the material as it is presented in the book and implemented in the programs. Finally, there are instances where the usage of English in the text should have been more carefully monitored by the publisher.

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42[65-01, 65C05, 65C10]—*A primer for the Monte Carlo method*, by Ilya M. Sobol', CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 1994, xx+107 pp., 21½ cm, softcover, \$41.95

This is the English translation of a book which first appeared in Russian in 1968 and for which earlier translations into English have been brought out, e.g. by Mir Publishers, Moscow, under the title "The Monte Carlo Method". The book is still useful as a brief introduction to the subject for students. However, the bibliography is rather poor since it contains only 10 items.

H.N.

43[65-01, 68-01, 68U05]—*An introduction to scientific, symbolic, and graphical computation*, by Eugene Fiume, A K Peters, Wellesley, MA, 1995, xvi+306 pp., 23½ cm, \$49.95

This undergraduate textbook is positioned at the interface between computer science and mathematics. It can be seen as an applied mathematics course with the field of application being computer graphics. Computer science students will get a useful introduction to the nontrivial mathematical prerequisites of computer graphics, and mathematics students will be exposed to an interesting field of application that is not taken from science or engineering. The topics are widely applicable in many fields, and this justifies the general title of the book.

A theme of the book is that symbolic and graphical uses of computers have become more or less equal partners with strictly numerical processing in developing solutions of scientific and other kinds of problems. These seminumerical uses have been present alongside numerical computation since the beginning of digital electronic computing but their impact has been diminished until recently by the