

**Colamery, S.N. (2000). *Literacy: A Bibliography with Indexes*.
Huntington, NY: Nova Science Publishers.**

This bibliography is listed as Volume I in the Education Bibliography Series, so I was anxious to look it over to assess how important the series might be. Unfortunately there's not a lot of information. The Preface is just a brief paragraph and it offers no information about the editor, the selection criteria, or the scope of the bibliography. There are two indexes, an Author Index, and a Subject and Title Index. I tried to assess the bibliography by comparing it to other lists using the Title Index. That didn't work because not every title listed in the bibliography is in the title index. Of the titles I checked from the main part of the bibliography, slightly over half were listed in the index.

So what is in the book? There are seven chapters with titles like "Basic Literacy," "Childhood Literacy," or "Poverty and Literacy." Each chapter starts with some newsy items, anywhere from one or two to a couple pages. These are often incomplete citations giving name and date but no pages for the source. None of them are scholarly journals, most are newspapers. Then the list turns to books, there seem to have been more than one source for these listings, some of them are arranged by author others by title. There are multiple alphabets within each chapter but no subheadings or apparent reasons for this arrangement. The information provided seems to have come from a library related source since it gives library classification numbers and subject headings in addition to the familiar library catalog descriptions of size and pagination. I found a few web sites in the listings, no journal articles.

I can't imagine why anyone would want to own this book; with no sense that the entries had been selected for any reason, no annotations, no subject grouping beyond the broadest level. A colleague of mine recently brought me a copy of another Nova Science bibliography, entitled *Grants: A Selective Bibliography with Indexes*. He thought it won the prize for the worst bibliography he'd ever seen. Now I've got a candidate for the competition. *Books in Print* lists four current books by this author, all Nova titles. They are on Affirmative Action, African Leaders, Medicare, and now Literacy.

Pages: **227** Price: **\$49.00** ISBN: **1560728337**

Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University

DiGiulio, Robert (2001). *Educate, Medicate, or Litigate? What Teachers, Parents, and Administrators Must Do About Student Behavior*. New York: Corwin Press.

Robert DiGiulio has written a useful and comprehensive review of how schools are responding to recent threats of violence. In this book he summarizes traditional and innovative approaches to school violence. He presents in a straightforward manner statistics that show that levels of violence in schools have been going down. In spite of the fact that schools are the safest place young children can be (compared to home, in the streets, etc.), school administrators have been imposing draconian measures in schools that may cause more harm than good.

DiGiulio does not want to see schools blamed for the escalation of violent behavior but rather sees that schools can become an important part of the solution to youth violence if they emphasize prosocial behaviors. He does a good job of pointing out how get tough procedures like suspensions, expulsions, strip searches, and the use of dogs in schools create emotional harm and worsen antisocial behaviors in youth, further alienating them. He answers the question, "Why are kids acting out in antisocial ways?" with the response that they have not been taught prosocial ways of behaving.

DiGiulio decries the fact that so much of the effort addressing incidences of youth violence attempts to fix antisocial behaviors after the fact, either through medication, punishment, or even in some places the criminalization of youth. Strong and highly visible security measures in school reinforce the idea among students that schools are unfriendly and adversarial, as well as unsafe places. Schools are adopting models that correct children rather than educate them about the complexities of violence in the modern world:

"Neither through the administration of medicine nor through the imposition of criminal sanctions will a child or adolescent become oriented toward the wellbeing of others, or toward herself or himself." (p.37)

Teachers should be caring in helping children who are acting out their frustrations in schools. High levels of safety are felt by students when they feel teachers care about them. DiGiulio presents alternatives to get tough policies that change behavior rather than pushing young people away from schooling institutions.

A strength of this book is its international focus. DiGiulio is familiar with educational efforts in South Africa as well as school systems in other countries and often refers to international examples in his text. Another strength is his emphasis upon strong neighboring communities providing a basis for prosocial youth behavior. He understands that schools are promising institutions but that they can't handle this problem alone.

This readable book is full of positive alternatives that school officials can embrace in their attempts to deal with this perceived threat. Young people, after all, are not our enemy. We must welcome them with outstretched arms into our civilization. DiGiulio provides a useful manual full of valuable tips about how to do that.

Pages: 136 Price: \$49.95 ISBN: 0761978232

Reviewed by Ian M. Harris, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Felleisen, Matthias, Findler, Robert Bruce; Flatt, Matthew; and Krishnamurthi, Shriram (2001). *How to Design Programs: An Introduction to Programming and Computing*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

The authors of this book believe that "everyone should learn to design programs." However the student, or teacher, will have to read this book very carefully in order to simply begin. The text is built around a variation of the Scheme programming language, called DrScheme. It is not included with the book and only a careful reading of the preface will indicate that there is an "official Web site" for the book, www.hftp.org. After some further digging the correct URL for downloading the necessary software is discovered: <http://www.cs.rice.edu/CS/PLT/> On a more positive note, an electronic version of this text can be found at the www.hftp.org Web site. Once acquired, the install process for DrScheme is fairly easy. DrScheme (the current version is 1.03) works well and can be extended with additions that are downloadable from the Web site.

The authors believe that a concept they call a "design recipe" is central to good program design. After a few warmup exercises to familiarize the student with DrScheme, this concept is introduced for one of the warm-ups. A design recipe, like a cooking recipe, provides the student with a basic pattern to building program functions and by combining functions into complete programs. This pattern is thoroughly followed and reinforced throughout the book. The authors frequently return to a previous example and extend it with new concepts; building new on top of the old. It would have been nice if, by the end of the book, the student was able to combine larger numbers of these examples into one or more useful programs.

This is not a book for the lone individual who wants to learn how to program. Despite the authors' declaration that everyone needs to know how, this book is best suited as a classroom text for beginning computer science students. The choice of Scheme as the underlying programming language, with its unusual pre-fix notation ($1 + 1$ is written as $+ 1 1$) and multitudes of parentheses can easily baffle the beginning programmer, or even the intermediate one with experience in

other languages, who does not have ready access to a skilled, knowledgeable instructor. To make things even more difficult, the book's index is almost useless and the search function within DrScheme's Help doesn't appear to work, though the online help is extensive and contains links to many related Web sites. The Web sites also offer additional help and continuing support from the authors.

Pages: **693** Price: **\$65.00** ISBN: **0-262-06218-6**

Reviewed by Arie C. Koelewyn

Seeberg, Vilma. (2000). *The Rhetoric and Reality of Mass Education in Mao's China*. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press.

The title of this work establishes its basic scheme of investigation and analysis, and foreshadows the author's conclusion. We know that education, particularly basic education for the masses, was the subject of a great deal of policy and propagandist effort in the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) from 1950 to 1980. The results, especially in terms of literacy, were regularly touted as remarkable success stories. It is inevitable that these statements and claims would be met with some skepticism at some point, although for many years UNESCO, foreign scholars, and others concerned accepted them as valid. One must then ask, as in many other programs in China and elsewhere, whether the rhetoric was matched by real accomplishment. Not surprisingly given her hypothesis that there was a considerable shortfall here, Seeberg's argument validates that view. The question is, how credible is her analysis?

There has always been the temptation among foreign scholars and other professional China-watchers to analyze the effectiveness of PRC policies in a simplistically ideological way, making in the case of education, the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist content of the curricula the key factor in determining the value of the education. Fortunately, Seeberg does not fall into this pitfall. Her approach is more comprehensive; more focused on both objective and subjective results. She uses both numerical data as to attendance and accomplishment and the expressed opinions of interviewees. She provides a clear statement of relevant educational theory, models, methods, and sources. Particularly in dealing with China, the historical factor must always be heavily weighted, and Seeberg's summary chapter of the continuing impact of China's Confucian educational (and political) culture is appropriately a key element of her assessment.

If there is a general tension (what Chairman Mao would have called a contradiction) between rhetoric and reality, the chief specific tension Seeberg identifies in educational practice was between popular demand and state-sponsored offerings. China is influenced by a strong

Confucian heritage descending deep into the lives of even the poorest peasant; demanding rote learning of "ABCs," respect for authority, and education for career advancement (i.e., off the farm). Within this context, the PRC insisted on denying advancement to the most educated, either on class grounds or because of a perceived need to prevent a flood of semi-educated peasants to the cities. These factors as well as the introduction of non-traditional teaching methods and content produced a serious disincentive to popular acceptance of basic education programs. From the late 1950s on, the fact is most people were simply trying to survive the political and economic dislocations of the Great Leap Forward and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and saw little opportunity or purpose in education. Furthermore, as was routine in every aspect of central bureaucratic control, reporting agencies constantly inflated figures needed for assessment. Seeberg is thus able to conclude that the gap between rhetoric and reality or between what people wanted and what they were offered was large. As she puts it, "In Mao's China, then, because the great majority of school-age children did not acquire minimal literacy in urban or rural schools, and because substantial minorities of the age group never got to school at all, gains in the overall basic educational attainment among the Chinese population can only be characterized as meager." [p. 437].

This thick volume thus provides the material needed for a useful and credible study: a plausible hypothesis, theory, methods, sources, data, comparative and historical context, and logical conclusions.

Pages: **562** Price: **\$119.95** ISBN: **0773476385**

Reviewed by Talbott Huey, Michigan State University



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