Reaction to Human Values, Science, and Mathematics by Lillian R. and Hugh Gray Lieber

Jeanette Nelson
They are RIGHT!
The more you KNOW, the more there IS to know.
And then you really know LESS than before because there is SO MUCH more to know about. (page 9)

I know VERY LITTLE about mathematics. After reading this book and almost finishing the "Activities in Mathematics" course, I find I know SO much LESS about math than I ever IMAGINED. And life is no longer blissful in that part of my brain that numbers have INVADED.

This book reiterated in greater depth QUITE a bit of what the instructor covered in the course. I found it interesting that his and Lieber's LOGIC CIRCLES and ELECTRIC SWITCHES were identical!

My math knowledge limited comprehension of most of the math in the BOOK. But that doesn’t bother me a lot.

My feeling after finishing reading the book reinforces a view of MINE that there is more than one way to SKIN A CAT!

There are many different ways to reach the same CONCLUSIONS as evidenced by the COORDINATE SYSTEM on page 103, Chapter IV.

Scientists and mathematicians are more PATIENT and TOLERANT with their PEERS than the general population is with one another.

Often, we the general PUBLIC, get stuck on one and only one way of thinking about a problem and CAN'T FIND an answer. By looking at a situation in as many DIFFERENT WAYS as possible, and through EYES not connected to the problem, NEW IDEAS for successful solutions often are reached.

No ONE of the solutions needs be BETTER than the others—it is just a DIFFERENT WAY to get from point A to point B without getting STYMIED in the middle, as in the case by the lake. (Page 102)

I thought maybe the AUTHOR was attempting to demonstrate through mathematical THEOREMS and POSTULATES and FORMULAS what it is like to live your life HAPPILY.

There are CERTAIN RULES which must be followed in life to live HAPPILY and to get from the beginning to the end.
It has been said that LIFE is like a TRIP. It is the journey that COUNTS because once you get to your DESTINATION, the trip is OVER. So I was thinking about this as I read LIEBER'S book.

I was thinking how little I UNDERSTAND of what she is explaining. And it is so DAMN FRUSTRATING when you have thought all of your life that 2 and 2 are 4, and all of a sudden here's a NEW WAY to look at that with BOOLEAN ALGEBRA. (Page 49) But I'll accept that and try something new to me.

By the way, I'm putting all these PAGE NUMBERS and parentheses in because that was the ONE ASPECT of the book I did not LIKE along with CAPITALIZED WORDS which tend to distract the EYE (and MIND) from reading along smoothly. But then I re-read so many pages to get the DRIFT it didn't matter all that much.

I'm not sure that I got much more feel for MATHEMATICS from the book, but maybe now I can understand better why my husband and daughter DEMAND such precision and LOGIC in their most casual conversations.

They are the SCIENTIST and MATHEMATICIAN. I am not and it doesn't bother me. I think it bothers them that it doesn't bother me. But that doesn't make ANY of us BETTER or WORSE than the OTHER.

We and everyone else in the WORLD have "EQUAL RIGHT AND EQUAL SUCCESS," even though they all use DIFFERENT COORDINATE SYSTEMS, that is, even though each one approaches the problem in his own way!" (page 105)

That is the beauty of our DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. We are FREE to THINK ANY WAY we choose as long as it is LAWFUL and does not HARM ANYONE.

I see this book written in 1961 as a PLEA FOR PEACE and CONTROL of NUCLEAR POWER as well as for personal freedom.

So there you have it! My IMPRESSIONS of what this book was ALL ABOUT...not so much mathematics as how to LIVE LIFE.