

2-1-1995

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### Recommended Citation

Nelson, Jeanette (1995) "Reaction to Human Values, Science, and Mathematics by Lillian R. and Hugh Gray Lieber," *Humanistic Mathematics Network Journal*: Iss. 11, Article 17.

Available at: <http://scholarship.claremont.edu/hmnj/vol1/iss11/17>

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# 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.