

Adam, Frederi and Patrick Humphreys. Encyclopedia of Decision Making and Decision Support Technologies. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference, 2008.

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In an attempt to compile a source covering recent growth in the field of decision making and its support technologies, this accessible work serves as a repository for current information and research. Unlike much of the current literature, with entire works dedicated to a specific industry, model, or theory, this encyclopedia incorporates a variety of perspectives. General overviews are comprehensible to the novice, while in-depth processes and models are given for the advanced practitioner. Information on developments and areas for future consideration are discussed clearly enough for all those interested in the field.

Articles are organized alphabetically by their imprecise titles, but a "Contents by Keyword" section is provided to help guide the reader to the appropriate article. Definitions at the end of each entry are mostly useful, but vary in scholarly depth in direct relation to the scholarly treatment of the article as a whole. The terms would be more useful in a comprehensive glossary, which would help avoid multiple unique definitions for common terms or phrases. The index is usable and accurate, but is not a comprehensive finding aid for terms or their definitions. Images and mathematical equations are appropriately shared and easy to read.

Overall, Adam & Humphreys have successfully brought together a wide range of topics into a simple collection of well-written essays. Academic in nature, this encyclopedia will be useful to those who make decisions using decision support systems, as well as those who work in the development of decision support technologies.

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Kern, M. Kathleen. Virtual Reference Best Practices: Tailoring Services to Your Library. Chicago, IL: American Libraries Association, 2008.

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Virtual reference is not new, but many libraries are still unsure of whether they should begin a virtual reference service, and even less sure of how to begin one. Fortunately for those libraries, this book serves as a how-to manual for librarians. The book begins by defining all the varieties of virtual reference and offering criteria to help you decide which, if any, virtual reference services are right for your library. It also offers help in formulating policies, training, marketing, and staffing the service. The book includes a number of worksheets to help you make decisions, and the stories of success and failure in virtual reference provide valuable lessons from experienced reference librarians. Of interest only to those in the library field, this book would be best for any library interested in introducing a virtual reference service to their library or supporting the study of library services.

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Parrillo, Vincent. Encyclopedia of Social Problems. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008.

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The Encyclopedia of Social Problems fulfills the growing need for an interdisciplinary approach to a wide array of issues facing our society. Each entry is presented in its context as a social problem, written by an expert in the field. These experts were carefully selected by editor and renowned sociologist Vincent N. Parrillo and a team of distinguished associate editors.

The outstanding efforts of the editorial team are evident in this work. The articles offer a general overview and are remarkably consistent in style, depth, and scholarly treatment. Each article ends with a short list of further readings pointing to seminal works on the topic and references to related entries in the encyclopedia. Although the encyclopedia itself is arranged alphabetically, a "Reader's Guide" organizes the entries under main

headings, allowing the user to easily locate all the entries falling under broader concepts, such as "Social Theory" and "Education". Tables, graphs, and images are used only when appropriate, are easy to comprehend, and adequately enhance the presented material.

This thoughtful approach results in a work that is both broadly comprehensive and thoroughly interconnected. Topics are not covered with as much depth as in James Ciment's *Social Issues in America: an Encyclopedia* (M.E. Sharpe, 2006), but each topic's context as a social problem is unique to this work and is an especially valuable resource for students needing background reading for controversial social issues. Recommended for all undergraduate academic libraries, the wealth of information packed into only two volumes makes this work highly recommended for smaller institutions looking for the best value.

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Tomei, Lawrence. *Encyclopedia of Information Technology Curriculum Integration*. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference, 2008.

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With over 150 entries, the *Encyclopedia of Information Technology Curriculum Integration* aims to be the first comprehensive treatment of classroom technologies in education. Arranged alphabetically by title, articles generally contain an introductory overview, background, and future trends. While this encyclopedia is the most thorough treatment of the subject to date, many vital topics are barely touched upon (ex. interactive whiteboards, virtual worlds, course management software) while other subjects receive dual treatment (ex., separate articles for "Blogs" and "Web Logs").

Supplementary materials leave much to be desired. Graphics throughout are illegible, unnecessary, or distorted. Lacking a comprehensive glossary, key terms and definitions are supplied at the end of each entry by individual authors, and vary in accuracy. The index is inconsistent, does not cross-reference, and is littered with typos affecting the organization. For example, No Child Left Behind is indexed as "NCLB Act", "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)", and under the letter 'O' as "ÓNo Child Left BehindÓ" [sic]. The deplorable index could be forgiven if the entry titles were more precise, but with titles like "Understanding Computer Security" the user must rely on the index to find the article on computer security. Additional articles have misleading titles, such as the entry titled "Learning with Laptops". Focusing mainly on the author's pet project, One Encyclopedia per Child (OEPC), the entry contains a large section identical to the OEPC Wikipedia article.

As a comprehensive encyclopedia, the resource is poorly executed and begs for more entries, a better organizational structure, and greater attention to detail. As it is, the resource is a spotty collection of essays that contribute little to the current literature.