

this new literature on what makes up the symbolic fabric that binds minds into culture, Scheffler's book reminds one of those good old days when symbolic worlds could still be closed by "strict methodological canons."

Jens Brockmeier
OISE/University of Toronto
and Freie Universität Berlin

Hurster, M. (1997). *Communicable and non-communicable disease basics: A primer*. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 168 pp. (Softcover).

In a discussion regarding the prevalence, severity, and impact of childhood chronic illnesses, Newacheck and Taylor (1992) stated that approximately 31% of children are affected by some kind of chronic health condition. Examples would include asthma and allergies. However, of the 31%, Newacheck and Taylor suggested that 5% would have an illness severe enough (i.e., cancer or diabetes) to interfere substantially with daily activities. These more serious illnesses can have a very serious impact on the physical and psychosocial development of children and adolescents (Falvo, 1991). Therefore, given the prevalence and severity of childhood illnesses, it becomes clear that educators and other youth professionals need to understand the basics of disease.

In her book *Communicable and Non-Communicable Disease Basics*, Madeline Hurster provides a simple yet comprehensive overview of human and community responses to diseases. Designed primarily for the undergraduate fields related to health and/or education, Hurster states that the purpose of the book is to:

Provide a framework for understanding the disease process in humans ... [so that] the reader will become aware of the basic differences between communicable and non-communicable diseases with respect to their genesis and the body's response to them, as well as how the individual, community, and government can assist in the

prevention, control, and management of each group of diseases. (Preface)

Hurster accomplishes her objectives with an accurate and easy to follow text which explains the basics of disease. Designed as a study tool, this text offers the reader learning objectives, health-related problems for discussion, and a medical glossary. The author outlines fundamental principles in the study and understanding of illness, including (for example) a description of biological laws of disease and an explanation of the differences between communicable and non-communicable illnesses. Moreover, she discusses the roles which the individual, the community, and the government have in the prevention of disease. Throughout the text, Hurster offers definitions of health-related terminology and illustrations of relevant biological processes.

Although the author provides breadth, she does not provide much depth. A great deal of information is covered, but only in a cursory manner. While Hurster does not purport to offer a definitive disease-related resource book for educators, I believe that with some minor revisions this text could become just that. While reading, I yearned for additional information regarding specific diseases and I wanted to know more about how these diseases might affect the behavior and learning capabilities of children and adolescents. If such information would not be feasible to include in the next edition of this book, perhaps the author could provide an annotated bibliography and/or supplementary reading list.

This clearly written text provides students with fundamental knowledge so that they may be better able to place complex and perhaps more disease-specific health information in context, and make meaning of it. Hurster may well consider writing a companion text which offers this kind of depth for students and educators who need greater awareness of health sciences.

Jillian Roberts
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Calgary