

29 [12].—CHARLES M. THATCHER & ANTHONY J. CAPUTO, *Digital Computer Programming: Logic and Language*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Reading, Mass., 1967, xi + 159 pp., 28 cm. Price \$3.95 paperbound.

This soft-cover book is one of the many to appear on the computer programming scene in recent months. It is significantly different from several of its competitors for various reasons.

In the first place, much time is devoted to a discussion of a hypothetical computer (a good idea in itself) called HICOP, an acronym for a Highly Imaginary Computer for Orientation Purposes. Unfortunately, the beginner is just as ignorant of the need for a HICOP as he is about the workings of any nonhypothetical computer. His task is not made easier by being thrown directly into a host of definitions and a technical discussion of flow-charts followed by an explanation of iterative looping.

Furthermore, the manner in which the material is presented is couched in the jargon of the sophisticate—hardly the language of the average person to whom the authors rightfully address themselves in the preface. Taking, almost at random, a paragraph out of the otherwise excellent preface, will serve to illustrate the reviewer's objections since this kind of technical mumbo-jumbo can only confuse and confound a beginner.

"Significantly, the hypothetical computer accepts the problem-oriented language directly as its own machine language; but subsequent modifications to the computer's capability make it more realistic in this respect. These modifications ultimately lead to a typical machine language, in terms of which the internal operation of real computers is summarized." The object of such a book as this surely should be the enlightenment of the reader.

In the introduction to indexing, the unwary reader is presented with the following gem:

"Any repetitive operation lends itself to iterative looping. It might therefore be anticipated that the iterative technique can be used to good advantage when many separate items of data are to be subjected to the same manipulation, even though no recurrence formula can be written, since the items are distinctly separate."

I know a good number of experienced programmers who would CALL EXIT at this kind of description.

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30 [12].—GERALD M. WEINBERG, *PL/I Programming Primer*, McGraw-Hill, Inc., New York, 1966, ix + 278 pp., 24 cm. Price \$5.95.

As stated in the Preface, this book is intended to be "an introduction to PL/I, to fill promptly the need for an introductory text on a new language. . . ." As such, it provides a fairly complete and readable introduction to the features of the language that it covers, but its value, even to the beginner, is severely diminished by omissions. Since this is one of the first books on the subject, and was written at a time (1966) when the PL/I language specifications were hazy and in a state of