

Preface

Dear Reader,

The goal of *Scholarly Resources for Children and Childhood Studies* is to offer you, the student, a guided approach to literature searching in the interdisciplinary field of children and childhood studies (CCS). The contributors to this book are both faculty currently teaching in the area of CCS and academic librarians. The charge given to each contributor was to write a chapter that explained the process of scholarly research in his or her own particular area of expertise to a student unfamiliar with that discipline. Each contributor was to serve as a mentor and to suggest a search strategy, discuss significant concepts and vocabulary, and list the major resources that scholars in that area would be expected to use. Since CCS is an interdisciplinary field, during your course of study you will be doing projects for faculty who are specialists in a variety of disciplines. It was our thought that a resource guide that gave an overview of how scholarly papers are researched and written for those disciplines would be helpful. Thus, this book, which is based on our experiences in producing our own works of scholarly literature as well as our work with undergraduates and graduate students, came to be.

Scholarly Resources for Children and Childhood Studies is not intended as an exhaustive or definitive list of in-print research resources. The creation of such a list would be a Sisyphean task for two reasons: first, any bibliography of resources is essentially outdated once the final manuscript is complete; and second, all sources of scholarly information are potentially relevant to CCS researchers. My collaborators and I, therefore, have chosen to put the emphasis on useful resources and effective research methodologies. Each chapter is written from a different perspective and uses a different style. The intent of serving as a mentor to you, the interdisciplinary scholar, is the thread that runs through this work to unify it as a whole.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1, “Defining the Field,” provides background information about interdisciplinary study in general and CCS in particular, as well as an outline of basic research practices. A list of recommended websites is also included along with suggested strategies for locating CCS materials. The chapters in part 2, “Research and Resources,” include suggested resources from the main disciplines that contribute to CCS and research strategies illustrated with sample searches. Please note, we have made a conscious decision not to include the areas of medicine and law. While these are important areas of inquiry for CCS, the resources and research methodologies are so specialized they could not be compressed into workable chapters for this endeavor. Each area deserves a book of its own and would be worthy research projects for CCS scholars.

If the world of scholarship and intellectual inquiry can be viewed as a large and lively dinner party, CCS scholars are the new guests to the table. They represent the voice of the world’s children and the paradigm of childhood—a voice that has not yet had a say at this dinner conversation. Over the next few years, as the field emerges and codifies, there will be lively debates, questions, problems, and wrangling over terms and definitions as scholars attempt to reach a consensus about the field. It is the modest hope of the contributors to this work to help set the table and to guide you to your seat so that you can engage in the conversation.

Cordially,
Vibiana Bowman