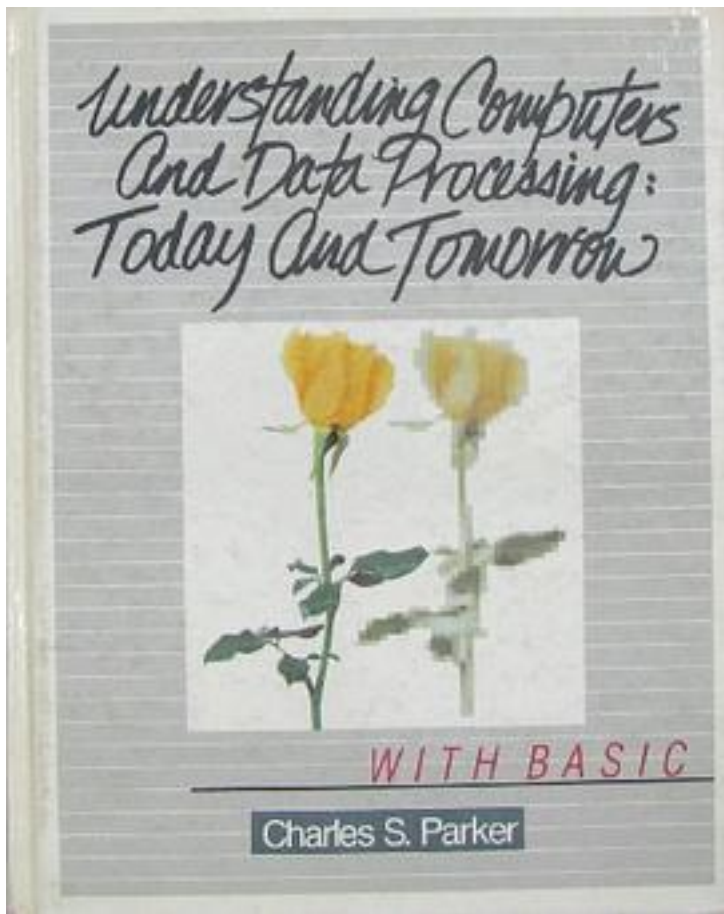# Introduction to Computers and Data Processing

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Modern society has become an information society, and the key to information is computers. You know it and your students know it. In fact, it s hard to think of

any profession unaffected by computers. The explosive demand for personal computers, desk-top work stations, and computer-driven gadgets of all sorts has placed "computer power" virtually everywhere--the home, office, laboratory, factory floor, check-out counter, artist s studio, local fitness center--and so on. Just to get along these days requires some knowledge of computer systems--how they can help people do their work better, what information resources they can unlock, what effects they have on our world and on our lives, and what to expect from them tomorrow.

I have been teaching an introductory computer data processing course in one form or another for 14 years. In that time the number of students taking the course has risen dramatically. College administrators, knowing they have a responsibility to prepare students for a rapidly changing workplace, have made this course a requirement for a variety of curricula. But many students today don t need administrative prodding. No matter what their major field of study, they see familiarity with computers as a basic marketable skill.

That leaves you and me as instructors standing before students with diverse backgrounds and a variety of expectations. We need tools that can help us communicate the excitement we feel about computers and give our students the preparation they need for today s world and tomorrow s. Understanding Computers and Data Processing: Today and Tomorrow ~lls that need with a complete teaching package. This package includes the textbook itself, available in two versions--one with an appendix on BASIC programming and one without--and a comprehensive set of student and teacher support materials.

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