

Debugging SAS Programs: A Handbook of Tools and Techniques

By Michele M. Burlew

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Michele Burlew has done an excellent job on a topic that is not well publicized – How to Debug A SAS Program. The book contains Eight Chapters which are well thought out and organized:

- Chapter 1-Understanding the Types of Errors in SAS Programs
- Chapter 2-Reading the SAS Log and Interpreting SAS Messages
- Chapter 3-Problem-Solving SAS Language Programs
- Chapter 4-Problem-Solving SAS DATA Steps with the DATA Step Debugger
- Chapter 5-Problem-Solving SAS Macro Language
- Chapter 6-Base SAS Messages
- Chapter 7-Macro Facility Messages
- Chapter 8-Review of SAS Processing Concepts

Chapter 4 does an excellent explanation of the use of the DATA Step Debugger with several examples. And Chapter 5 is also excellent in debugging SAS macro errors. A number of the examples provided are well documented with “callouts” providing reasons for common and not so common error messages including solutions to correcting these errors. In Chapter 6 and 7, the SAS messages are grouped NOTES first, followed by WARNINGS, and concluding with ERROR messages. And within each grouping, the messages are alphabetically arranged.

It is obvious Michele has spent considerable time writing this book by supplying examples of SAS programs with errors, their messages, and solutions to correcting these errors.

I highly recommend this book for beginners, intermediate and advance SAS professionals as an excellent source for learning more about the SAS system, especially debugging your own SAS programs as well as programs written by other SAS professionals. Having used the SAS Software for 20 plus years, there were some errors in this book I have never seen before; either I programmed very well (GRIN) or there are some places I have never ventured to within the SAS Software.

Caution should be used when reading this book – It is like an excellent glass of wine, it should be sipped, savored and slowly digested to appreciate the full body of its contents.

Sincerely,

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