

# Reviews

Belshaw, C. S., *Towers Besieged. The Dilemma of the Creative University*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974, pp. 224.

If individual Canadian universities set aside their regular activities for serious collective discussion, over two or three days, of the issues examined and ideas presented in this volume they could become much healthier and more capable as intellectual and social communities.

The author, Professor Cyril Belshaw, of the University of British Columbia, is convinced that if the university is to survive and adapt as a unique centre for higher education it must deal decisively with the problems which confront it. The university must be much clearer than it now is as to where it is going and how it is to get there. Belshaw has a clear idea of what constitutes a university and how it can be realized. The proposals he puts forward are thoughtful though many are controversial.

To some, his views of “the three criteria specific to universities” may seem too idealistic, unduly abstract, and removed from the great issues of the modern world. But the need is urgent to engender in both student and faculty members the ability to ask and formulate questions linked with generalized knowledge; to use evidence, logic and intuitive judgment to provide answers. So too are the needs to create new cultural capital through additions to knowledge, insight and material innovation and to develop the powers of scientific, aesthetic, and moral judgment. The controversy arises in Belshaw’s prescription of how such ideals may be realized.

Belshaw believes that if students are the life-blood of the university the faculty are the heart. If the university is to overcome its problems it must make sure its collective heart is in good order and functioning properly through attention to the proper subject matter and through development and use of revitalized structures for learning, research and the conduct of its affairs. There is no need, in his view, for lay representation on governing bodies of the university. What is needed is to place responsibility squarely on the faculty even though Belshaw realizes that academics are not the perfect saviours even of their own world. Given the aversion of the university to essential internal reform this is an optimistic book.

*D. McC. Smyth*

Hacker, Carlotta, *The Indomitable Lady Doctors*, Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1974, pp. 259.

This volume contains in Chapters 2 (“The Suffragist Stowes” – one wonders whether “insufferable” would not have been a more appropriate adjective particularly in contrast to Jennie Trout), 3 (“Jenny Trout Moves Ahead”) and 4 (“Freshwomen at Queen’s”) the