

## Book Reviews/Comptes Rendus

*Academic Futures: Prospects for Post-Secondary Education*. Edited by Waris Shire and Ronald Duhamel. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1987, pp. xvi, 172. Reviewed by Nancy M. Sheehan, Dean, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia.

Although subtitled *Prospects for Post-Secondary Education* most of this volume addresses issues in the university sector. Several books have been published over the last few years on the crises and the future in the university sector in this country. Michael Skolnik and Norman S. Rowen's *"Please, sir, I want some more" – Canadian Universities and Financial Restraint*, Toronto: OISE Press, 1984; David J. Bercuson, et al, *The Great Brain Robbery: Canadian Universities on the Road to Ruin*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1984; and William A. Neilson and Chad Gaffield, *Universities in Crisis: A Medieval Institution in the Twenty-first Century*, all discuss the demise of the traditional institution and suggest some ideas, changes that are being, or should be made.

To this collection we can now add *Academic Futures*. Duhamel in the "Introduction", argues that the volume has a unity in that each topic has "been approached with the assumption that the current social revolution must lead to corresponding evolution in post-secondary education." (p. xii). Perhaps, a stronger unity can be found in the authors who are "professionals involved in post-secondary education ... and who have the responsibility for overseeing and managing change." (p. xi). Despite such agreement the volume is a collection of articles and, like most collections, is uneven in quality and presentation. Some of the articles are reprinted; others had originally been given as after-dinner addresses or as panel presentations at various conferences; many have no references included; and a few are extremely short. Some have conclusions, others summaries, a few neither. There appears to be no ordering of the articles by topic or approach or philosophy and there is no index. This characteristic is endemic to collections of readings and *Academic Futures* is no exception. Having gotten this observation out of the way, let us turn to the articles themselves.

Robin Farquhar's "Traditional Values in the Contemporary University" argues that the three traditional elements of university life, teaching, research and scholarship, and service vary by institution, by location, over time and with type of faculty. He believes that to survive universities must exercise academic freedom with responsibility, institutional autonomy with accountability, and excellence with selectivity. Many would agree with Farquhar when he declares that continuing financial restraint affects accessibility, that "excellence for most is preferable to mediocrity for all, and accessibility to a pseudo-university is an unfair sham." (p. 5).

In "Universities and Society" Alvin A. Lee notes that the search for reason is what distinguishes universities from other kinds of educational institutions. Like Farquhar he mentions academic freedom and the role of teaching and research as critical to the "cultural benefits of wide-spread education, of political and individual freedom and of technology ..." to society.

On the other hand, Alan Thomas' article "Through the Learning Glass; The Universities" questions the role of teaching and research and suggests they are not compatible. He asks if undergraduate teaching needs to be based on some presumed unity of teaching and research. Thomas suggests that we need to look at what is being learned versus what is being taught, to what extent goals are being achieved and what the relationship is between the university and learning. The demands of learning associated with teaching undergraduates and the demands of learning associated with research are not the same, according to Thomas, and make the role of the university professor very difficult. He does suggest that there are colleges and universities (in the United States) "that make little or no pretensions to research but which provide first class instruction, and indeed, supply considerable numbers of candidates for the graduate departments of large universities and research institutions." (p. 139) He is concerned that the emphasis on research and publishing in many of our institutions is at the expense of undergraduate learning. To those who believe that research is essential to good teaching Thomas would suggest that maybe teaching-oriented research, evaluated on the basis of its contribution to the quality of teaching rather than its contribution to original knowledge would be sufficient to excite the instructor and provide stimulating teaching.

Although its philosophy is quite different Paul Gallagher's "A Future for Post-Secondary Education in Canada" in some ways supports Thomas' thesis that research is not a necessary condition in all post-secondary institutions, including all universities. He argues that research should be concentrated in a few, highly technological, research institutions. He foresees a university sector which is a cooperative network of quite distinct institutions. Although Gallagher doesn't mention it, the University of California system comes to mind. Institutions of higher education (colleges and institutes) would be differentiated by mandate and the needs of life-long learning would see most task-specific training taking place in the workplace or community setting rather than in educational institutions. Whereas Thomas believes that differentiation is necessary because of the learning requirements of undergraduates, Gallagher thinks that just as the Canadian economy is in a process of restructuring, so should post-secondary education restructure.

John Woods also looks at the economy in his article, the final one in the volume, "The Universities' Role in the Economy". To adjust to the move from an industrial-cum-resource economy to a more knowledge-based economy society needs the universities to play an effective role. Three suggestions are put forth: an enlarged commitment to interdisciplinary studies and joint research activities; an adjustment of the curricula to the requirements of a global perspective and new

programs in global studies; and a replacement of the concept of learning as leisure in Faculties of Continuing Education to learning as accredited, certified intellectual achievement.

These five chapters (there are 15 in all) address the unity that Duhamel mentions in the "Introduction". They all make the point that post-secondary education must change. Here the unity ends and a definite division is apparent as the 15 authors struggle with the kinds of change and what change will mean. There is a division between those who believe that the revolution in information technology will colour the post-secondary future and produce institutions and ways of learning that are radically different from today's, and those who foresee the university carrying on the traditional research, teaching and service functions. These latter would have the universities evolve more slowly and within the framework that has been established in Canada. The volume is one of hope, not of doom. It speaks to the development and growth of Canada's post-secondary institutions, particularly its universities. A spirit of healthy criticism underscores the commitment of the authors to change. Although not the kind of volume to be read from cover to cover there is probably a chapter or chapters that will appeal to anyone interested in the future of post-secondary education in Canada.

V.R.Cardozier, *American Higher Education*. Aldershot, England: Gower Publishing Company, 1987, 209 pages. \$34.50 Reviewed by Jacqueline Stalker, Senior Consultant, Post-Secondary, Adult & Continuing Education Division, Manitoba Department of Education.

This book is "written primarily for non-American readers" and is "an attempt to explain American higher education to those whose understanding of it is limited." The attempt is a success. The product is a virtual almanac of higher education in the United States, written by a professor of higher education at the University of Texas at Austin. It is neither challenging nor thought provoking, but it is informative, thorough, easy to read, succinct, and descriptive.

The first chapter begins with the founding of Harvard in 1636 and, in rapid succession, reviews the history and development of land grant colleges, the university movement, normal schools and teachers' colleges, the role of the church, community/junior colleges, the role of philanthropy, post world war expansion, and constitutional issues. Three and a half centuries of growth in American higher education are dealt with in fourteen pages.

Chapter 2 addresses organization and governance in the multiplicity of institutions. Included are descriptions of the inconsistencies in terms and titles, the state systems, internal structures, and the common pattern of governance. Numbers dominate chapter 3: numbers of students, staff, employees, schools, colleges, departments, programs, buildings, fees, appropriations, budgets,