North America to pay greater attention to how we conceptualize our disciplines and present them to our students. I have recently talked about the middle road in which the continuing development of a conceptual framework guides both our research and teaching, and Elton's reference to scholarship or concern with interpretation of what is known strikes me as getting at that very important point.

In summary, this book reviews a number of critical issues in the field of teaching improvement. The format is odd. At times argument or example is repeated because the book is composed of articles previously written with brief introductions to them. The reader therefore may have a sense of going from one overview to another and remaining somewhat detached from the issues at hand. The language is unfortunately sexist, although a quote from an Australian article is in nonsexist language. In the last chapter it is noted that academic teacher training has a very short history of some twenty years, but that in that time, if it has not become a discipline, it has developed a body of knowledge and skills which can be taught and on which further knowledge can be built.

Smith, Peter and Kelly, Mavis (eds.), *Distance Education and the Mainstream.* Croom Helm, London, New York, Sydney. 1987. 207 pp. Reviewed by Mark W. Waldron, Ph.D., University of Guelph

This book resulted from a conversation among colleagues at the Distance Education conference of the I.C.D.E. in Melbourne in 1985. It is a collection of articles by writers from Australia, the United Kingdom, Kenya, the United States and Canada. The topics cover a range of concerns with several writers addressing the idea of convergence in distance education, the theory that distance education and on-campus education are converging due to the common use of various teaching and learning technologies. A sub-theme of the text focuses on staff development and its relationship to distance education. Other topics include student experiences, new technologies and the effect upon industry.

Because of the variety of writers and topics covered, there is a lack of sequence and continuity from one chapter to another. The idea of convergence, while very intriguing, is only dealt with superficially in the first part of the text and played little, if any, role in later chapters of the book. The book reads as though it was organized by a committee, and it probably was!

It does, however, focus on many of the issues with respect to access and quality associated with distance education courses. For someone who is not aware of the complexities of distance education, this text is an easy-reading introduction. For those who are selecting a career in managing distance education programs or those who are developing a distance education course for the first time, this text provides a basic review of definitional and conceptual ideas. For those actively involved in all aspects of distance education, this collection would confirm what they already

know. The short length of the book and the possibility of selecting specific theme chapters according to your interests, could make it a useful reference text.

While the idea of convergence is fascinating, it could have been much more fully discussed and debated. The chapter on staff development, while providing some thought provoking ideas, could have been the theme for its own text. If you are interested in some of the issues in distance education however, this text is worth an hour or two of your time.