

Book Reviews / Comptes Rendus

Yamane, David. (2001). *Student Movements for Multiculturalism: Challenging the Curricular Color Line in Higher Education*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press. Pages: 193. Price: \$36.50 USD (cloth).

Reviewed by Romulo Magsino, The University of Manitoba.

Nathan Glazer (1970) has pointed out in his study of student movements in the 1960s that, in the end, it could turn out that it is rather easier to change the world than the university (p. 193). Mindful of this overstated observation, Yamane sets out to demonstrate that while the university is more flexible than society and is somewhat responsive to social change, nonetheless there is no progress toward multiculturalism in higher education without struggle, particularly on the part of students. He seeks to prove this thesis by using student protests at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of California-Berkeley as his case studies. He also briefly attempts to show that multiculturalism represents an opening, rather than a closing, of the American mind.

Yamane structures his discussion of student struggles for curricular reform in the two universities by employing the steps involved in the process of organizational innovation outlined by Levine (1980). These steps consist of: (1) recognizing the need for change; (2) planning and formulating a means of satisfying the need; (3) initiating and implementing the plan; and (4) institutionalizing or terminating the new operating plan. In Chapter 1, Yamane elaborates on these steps after quickly noting

the profusion of definitions of multiculturalism, the increased population diversity in American society and higher education, the cultural and curricular wars waged in response to this diversity, the student movement in the sixties with its legacy of student participation in educational policy-making and governance, and the paucity of scholarly research on the role of students in curricular change.

The next two chapters illustrate how the activism of students at UW-Madison and UC-Berkeley brought recognition of the need for change. Focused on UW-Madison, Chapter 2 shows that the small number of minority students in the university served to stress the nagging problem of minority under-representation on the Madison campus. It noted how, together with this long-standing problem, racial incidents on the campus justified Black Student Union-led student demonstrations, forums, and continued pressure, through an umbrella organization known as the Minority Coalition, to protest the plight of minorities at UW-Madison. It also goes on to chronicle the interaction between the University and student groups, which includes the formation of the vice chancellor's working group and subsequently the student-led Steering Committee on Minority Affairs.

Chapter 3 charts the chain of events which generated recognition of the need for curricular change at UC-Berkeley. Not having racial incidents on campus, yet experiencing a robust "coloring" of the student population due to immigration from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, UC-Berkeley saw the emergence of student activism when former U.S. President Reagan supported apartheid in South Africa. When UC-Berkeley positively responded to student demands for university divestment in that country, the aroused students found another goal, namely, the inclusion of an ethnic studies graduation requirement. They formed the Ethnic Studies Coalition which submitted a proposal on the requirement, addressed the Representative Assembly, and held a "teach-in" on ethnic studies. To deal with constant student pressure, the University responded through official and bureaucratic academic channels.

In Chapter 4, Yamane telescopes steps two (planning and formulating the means of meeting the problem) and three (initiating and implementing the plan) of the innovation process. These steps, he claims, are marked at both universities by the need to compromise due to institutional

constraints. The result is the implementation of mainstreamed or “white-washed” measures which depart from original proposals. Thus, at UW-Madison, the student demand, formulated by the Steering Committee on Minority Affairs, called for a two-course (six credit) requirement, focused on the histories and cultures of different minority groups and viewed from the minority perspective. Instead, the University’s Madison Plan stipulated that there would be only one course, that it would not be taught from the minority perspective, and that it would not necessarily focus on minorities. At UC-Berkeley, students called for a one-course requirement focusing exclusively on racial minorities; instead the University widened the content to include European American studies.

In Chapter 5, Yamane asks: “What, then, is the status of multicultural general education requirements at the two universities...?” The University of Wisconsin-Madison has adopted Madison Plan 2008, which has made recommendations in several areas, including undergraduate and graduate recruitment, financial aid, retention, climate, freshman experience, and curriculum, as well as faculty and staff recruitment and retention. The ethnic study requirement is in place and is not in danger of being cut from the undergraduate curriculum because it is satisfied by many courses which had long been in existence and had been offered regularly. Yet the intended focus on the study of minorities is frequently missing. At UC-Berkeley, especially-vetted courses for the requirement have been offered; yet, the need for more and regular offerings is compromised by the revised funding arrangement that has been put in place. Thus, there is no guarantee on the requirement’s continued existence.

In his concluding chapter, Yamane addresses the charge that multiculturalism’s active struggle to challenge the curricular color line has politicized and corrupted higher education. Taking on the advocates of studies in Shakespeare and English literature, western civilization, and the “Great Books,” he claims that these studies have also politicized roots hidden under the predominant and unquestioned assumptions of mainstream society and education. Moreover, seeing a common front with Allan Bloom and Martha Nussbaum in their espousal of liberal education, he argues that curricular multiculturalism in higher education does not corrupt; instead, it aspires to and succeeds in opening the American mind.

Yamane's *Student Movements for Multiculturalism* is an interesting book. Accounts of students confronting the system and authorities have a way of attracting the attention, not only for educators and educational administrators, but also of laypeople interested in higher education. Rich in detail, *Student Movements* provides an eye-opening narrative of the ways by which institutions of higher learning react to external challenges, particularly from students. Those who are not familiar with the university context and thus become impatient with the slow pace of change in institutions of higher learning are likely to see that academic governance is a complicated matter. While readers may see that Yamane's sentiments are clearly with students working for change, his elaboration on university mechanisms and on opposing perspectives at UW-Madison and UC-Berkeley will nevertheless show that tertiary institutions are, like society, political arenas where decision-making responds to a variety of competing perspectives and interests. Thus, reform may not always be expected of universities despite different change forces impacting on them.

Yamane's view that student movements have been the driving force behind many university changes, including curricular ones, is strongly borne out in his two in-depth case studies. In fact, his account would have been much more convincing had he conceptualized Levine's steps toward organizational innovation more precisely. For example, his interpretation of the first step (recognizing need for change) was so inclusive that many instances of student participation in the planning and formulation of the means to satisfy the need (that is, step 2) were included in his discussion of step 1. As a result, his discussion of step 2 focused largely on plans, proposals, and decisions (all products) rather than the processes of planning and formulating. This has the effect of diminishing the meaningful and substantial involvement of students in the planning and formulation of the measures that the universities would eventually adopt.

Needless to say, Yamane's generalized view about students' crucial role in institutional change needs a much wider, intensive examination of other tertiary institutions where at least significant changes have occurred. Clearly two case studies are not enough to provide empirical verification of his claim. Yamane himself recognizes this problem and thus offers a cursory survey of student involvement in change processes in other

universities. However, because his claim occupies a central position in his book, that survey might have usefully been so expanded as to make up at least another chapter in the volume. He does not do this vital task; instead, he unexpectedly and, one might say, inadvisedly, takes a digression by defending the advocacy of multiculturalism in higher education.

Yamane's digression into a defence of multiculturalism leaves the reader thirsting for two things: one, for more solid evidence for his main claim; and two, for an extended treatment of the justification for multiculturalism in higher education. Indeed, his spirited and insightful but all-too-brief defense of multiculturalism advocacy elicits a desire for more of his scholarly argumentation. One would hope that this defense will be available to us from Yamane in the future. ❖

References

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Levine, A. (1980). *Why innovations fail*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.



Fenwick, T., & Parsons, J. (2000). *The Art of Evaluation: A Handbook for Educators and Trainers*. Toronto, ON: Thompson Educational Publishing Inc. Pages: 244. Price \$34.95 CAD.

Reviewed by Cinde L. Lock, Queen's University

Divided into fifteen short, stand-alone chapters and twelve toolboxes that highlight various types of assessment activities, Tara Fenwick and Jim Parsons' book, *The Art of Evaluation: A Handbook for Educators and Trainers*, provides educators with options and ideas about how to keep the learner at the center of the teaching, learning, and assessment process. Indeed, these authors focus on the learner and the instructor, rather than the program or topic of learning, as they highlight concrete