

construction of new buildings. While not neglected, student life at U of T is less visible than it warrants. Support staff remain largely in the shadows. The role of the colleges and their impact on the University is left rather vague. However, it must be acknowledged that the author faced difficult decisions about selection of content. Finally, a question: Friedland's participation in the recent life of the University gives him the insider's perspective. But did his intimacy with its affairs, and friendship with many of the participants who are still living affect his frankness and objectivity?

The admirable strengths of this University history should be underscored. The task for Friedland and his assistants was to produce "a scholarly yet accessible one-volume history" (p. ix). It was a monumental and complex task; the final result is a narrative of excellent quality that fills a large gap in the history of Canadian higher education and scholarship. The story is written in clear, well-organized and serviceable prose. The material—thoroughly researched, carefully documented, substantial and interesting—is presented in finely illustrated and easily digestible chapters. While the tone is celebratory, U of T has much to celebrate in architecture, innovation, research contributions, educational excellence, and overall service to Canadian higher education and scholarship. Friedland's "perfect post-retirement project" has made an important, enduring and praiseworthy contribution to his alma mater and to Canadian history



Axelrod, Paul. (2002). *Values in conflict: The university, the marketplace, and the trials of liberal education*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press. Pages: 203 (146 text). Price: \$65.00 CAD (cloth).

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Like most other analysts, Paul Axelrod assumes the university is in a period of transition perhaps crisis. He locates himself somewhere between the evolutionists and the revolutionists. For Axelrod, the causes of change are clear and for the most part without internal contradictions. The policy environment for higher education is dominated by an economic

imperative. The forces of commercialization, privatization and commodification are prevalent. Market ideology is the driving force for change. Governments assume and broadcast loudly to their citizens that higher education systems through teaching and research can do much to make Canada more competitive and more economically successful. The role of universities in Canadian society is changing during a time of fundamental shifts in the relation between capital and labour and between the public and private spheres. For the first time in its history, the university is now defined a site for capital accumulation. Against this background, the author argues the liberal arts are “at risk.” The functions of higher learning are being “reshaped” and “redefined” as the ground beneath the university shifts.

The author is an advocate for liberal education. In what might be called the ‘intrinsic value of knowledge’ tradition, the author argues that liberal education is its own justification.

Immersing oneself in the world of ideas and navigating through countervailing intellectual currents is challenging and intrinsically rewarding. The discoveries one makes on such a voyage are often as stirring and stimulating as the ultimate destination itself. (p. 64)

The view is traditional and one that has dominated the history of universities from their inception. Earlier generations of university scholars who defended the tradition, worried about professionalization, specialization and vocationalism. The difference today is that we are truly living in a world where knowledge and information accumulates more rapidly than ever before as a result of the computer, information technology revolution. As centers of knowledge production, universities have become central institutional components of the knowledge economy. In the latter half of the twentieth century, Education became the central legitimating institution in our society.

This essay is divided into a short introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. Chapter one, ‘Roots and Branches of Liberal Education,’ traces the history of liberal education from earliest times through to the present. At the beginning of Chapter two, ‘Intellect, Culture and Community,’ the author defines liberal education as follows:

...activities that are designed to cultivate intellectual creativity, autonomy, and resilience; critical thinking; a combination of intellectual breadth and specialized knowledge; the comprehension and tolerance of diverse ideas and experiences; informed participation in community life; and effective communication skills. (pp. 35–36)

This definition is used as a conceptual organizer for the rest of this chapter and implicitly the rest of the book. Chapter three, 'Occupations, Incomes, and the Economy', makes the argument that liberal education is as utilitarian as any other part of a university education. Chapter four, 'Ideology and Policy,' examines the relationship between the policy environment, the ideological prerogatives of governments and university education. Chapter five, 'Teaching and Learning,' takes us within the university and the classroom. The conclusion, 'Educational Futures,' invites the reader to become part of the dialogue promoting liberal education. The 'call the arms' invites the reader to resist 'performativity' in all its forms.

The most interesting parts of the text are the occasions when the author uses his skills as a historian. Chapter one contains memorable quotes by some of the most famous promoters and defenders of liberal education. The roots of this ideal are located in the desire to develop the humanity and moral character of privileged males to the fullest. The goal is the education of the whole person in a spirit of freedom. To achieve these ends students had to be taught, according to Matthew Arnold "the best that is known and thought in the world" (quoted on p. 21). Breadth and quality of knowledge as well as extemporary teaching were the key elements in this process. For the 'Ancients' the curriculum was composed of the most important 'truths' in our cultural heritage. Truth was by definition fixed and eternal. The foundational platform for the 'Moderns' was captured by the German universities where the classical approach became 'bildung' and the two cornerstones of academic culture became specialized research and academic freedom. By the beginning of the 20th century, a liberal education in North America was about preparing both male and female elites for appropriate social roles. The definition of knowledge became more relative and through 'electives' choice was

introduced into the system. Newman's "philosophical habits of mind" (1947) could be developed in what Charles Eliot called "an atmosphere of freedom" (quoted on p. 20). A key attempt to re-establish unity was the 'Great Books' initiative during the inter-war years. Hutchins and his colleagues at Chicago were concerned about fragmentation and the utilitarian trend. The task was to agree on a core curriculum, which could then be standardized for all. For Hutchins, "Education implies teaching. Teaching implies knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same. Hence education should be everywhere the same" (quoted on p. 25).

The author quite properly highlights the impact of secularization, specialization and professionalization on the development of Canadian universities. In an attempt to maintain a unity of purpose, most universities had one Faculty of Arts and Sciences through to the 1960s. Further, many English-speaking universities attempted to preserve the integrity of a broad liberal education by distinguishing between the general pass degree and the more specialized honours degree. This discussion is continued in chapter 2 where the author discusses the tension between 'breadth' and 'specialization.' In turn, general liberal education is linked to other cultural elements and educational outcomes that should characterize the modern university. Independent, creative and critical thinking and effective communication are paired with respect for diversity, tolerance and community.

The dramatic shifts that occurred during the 1965 to 1975 expansion of the higher education system irrevocably changed the definition of liberal education. The student movement and the emergence of new multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary fields brought social progress into the definition. No longer was it sufficient for liberal education to serve the 'public good' as defined by established elites, now a university education should serve egalitarian goals. Knowledge was political and practical. While the forces of utilitarianism have been resisted at every turn, I think the author is right to point to the present consensus between industry and educators that defines a general liberal education as the best way to prepare students to enter the workforce.

Chapters 3 through 5 are less satisfactory in part because of fragmentation. The reader needs a better map at the beginning so we can anticipate the shape and the direction of the argument. I found myself wanting to move sections of text from one chapter to another. The author highlights the positive correlation between a university education and the likelihood of employment, albeit that for many this is underemployment. Provincial surveys in Alberta and Ontario endorse the importance of general skills and abilities in obtaining employment. The accountability movement and the trend to what Slaughter and Leslie have called 'Academic Capitalism' (1999) are discussed against the background of the lessening commitment of governments to fund university education. University revenues from government sources have declined from 74.56% in 1978 to 55.6% in 1998. At the same time the proportion of university budgets covered by sponsored research has increased from 9 percent in 1972 to 17% in 1997-98 (pp. 93-94). Student fees will increasingly fill the gap as deregulation spreads and market-based fees become the norm. The author draws attention to the privatization of university education as provinces approve the creation of private universities and as the major research universities search for ways to make a profit on curriculum. Finally, we are presented with some evidence on the inappropriate influence of the private sector on research, for example, the Oliveri and Fabrikant cases, and the more general evidence about the influence of pharmaceutical companies on the content of journal articles. As yet most scientific journals do not have guidelines for authors with regard to declaring financial conflicts of interest.

In the end, liberal education is synonymous with a good education. Ideas and knowledge are never fixed but always approximations toward truth. For Hutchins, "Education is what remains after the information taught has been forgotten. Ideas, methods, habits of mind are the radioactive deposits left by education" (quoted on p. 120). Liberal education enhances social cohesion and thus is still the best hope for the future. Examples of what is possible include the problem-based learning approach developed at McMaster University Medical School, the degree course in "Western Society and Culture" at Concordia University, and the 'placement' program in the College of Humanities at Carleton

University. In the last example, four years of thematic courses designed to develop the 'whole person' are followed by an internship with a business or community organization.

Like an earlier book by this author on the history of education, this essay is written in an open, accessible style. The author wishes to stimulate more dialogue on the future of the university. While the text is easy to read the essay suffers from a lack of depth. I wanted more of an academic argument, more evidence to support the defense of liberal education. Instead, the reader is given samples of evidence that are scattered through the text. These samples do not coalesce into a full argument. I wanted to know more about the history of liberal education in Canada, from the work of the small liberal arts universities like Mount Allison, Acadia and Bishop's to the experiments of designing the 'new' universities in the 1960s like Trent and Simon Fraser. York University with the emphasis on multi-disciplinarity and inter-disciplinarity is the perfect example of the 'bold experiment'. It would also have been useful to learn about the progress made in Québec since the creation of the *cégeps* (*collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel*) in 1967. The intent was to make provide general pre-university education (two-year programs) for all.

I wanted the author to pay more attention to professionalization. The historical trends he describes were part of and were accompanied by the rise of "disciplinary professionalism" as academics struggled to establish their own disciplines and their own profession as professors (Weaver, 1991). The liberal concept of education was in one sense been surpassed by the advance of the culture of professionalism in the universities and by the professionalization of society. As in other industrialized societies the aristocratic ideal of civility has been overtaken by the professional ideal which according to Perkin (1989) is:

based on trained expertise and selection by merit...[emphasizing] human capital rather than passive or active property, highly skilled and differentiated labour rather than the simple labour theory of value, and selection by merit defined as trained and certified expertise. (p. 4)

Within this trend, universities occupy a special role. For Friedson (1994) university teaching is the archetype of professionalism. Professors are simultaneously part of two professional groups, the academic profession and their field or discipline. They enjoy a high degree of relative autonomy and are responsible for selecting and educating the next generation of professionals. This raises the question as to why academics themselves have not been more prepared to resist in significant ways the forces of utilitarianism and commodification. The answer clearly lies beyond the curriculum and beyond the tension between pure and impure conceptions of knowledge. Part of the answer might well be found in an examination of the current emphasis on the de-professionalization of society.

The literature on academic culture is I think instructive as we contemplate the future of liberal education. Bourdieu (1989) and Ringer (1992) draw our attention to lines of tension that separate scientists from non-scientists, pure scientists from applied scientists, humanists from social scientists, and administrators from researchers. We are pushed toward a position on the appropriate balance between social, economic and cultural capital in our universities.

The book is worth reading precisely because it does provide an excellent starting point for a dialogue on the future of our universities. Paul Axelrod like many of the generation who were students in the mid-to late 1960s, laments the unfulfilled promise of the 'sea change' that took place in universities at that time. The egalitarian promise of mass higher education was that the type of education that had thus far only been available to elites would be made available to all. Instead, the policy climate of the last decade has further undermined the 'bildung' part of our academic tradition, which emphasizes the cultivation of inward and external criticism and a "richness of mind and person" (Ringer, 1992). What might be called the 'civilizing mission' of universities is less central than in the past except for the most privileged elites. The current tendency of some university administrators to define liberal education as the vocational heart of the modern university might best be regarded as the modern version of 'vocationalism of dominant groups.' Yet the book has a tempered optimism not least because part of the egalitarian promise has been fulfilled. Canadian universities became more accessible and the gender gap at least

at the undergraduate level has been closed. It might be that we should be looking closely at the elements of the policy structures that led to these reforms as we search for the means to make a 'true' liberal education available to all regardless of gender, ethnicity, language and social class.

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