

The stark challenges facing the Canadian community colleges after a period of dramatic growth are clearly illustrated. Those relating to governance direction and mission, accountability and evaluation, labour relations, accessibility, general education and educational quality are stressed. The book defines an important watershed in the history of the colleges: the line between unbridled growth and experimentation on one hand and reassessment and retrenchment on the other. Dennison and Gallagher provide a good deal of critical food for reflection as the colleges enter a period of evaluation and rationalization.

By virtue of the complexity of the issues, and the diversity of the institutions, the book cannot comprehensively deal with the challenges it raises. It does, however, assess the key themes of each issue. For example, the authors consider such topical questions about governance as the composition of governing boards, government control versus institutional autonomy, articulation and coordination, the community role in educational policy setting and participative decision-making.

The style of the book is one that freely mixes objective research with interview perceptions and the opinions of the writers. It also flows from fact to philosophy and history to aspiration. It might be argued that the style contributes to its readability but may detract from its continuity.

The community colleges have evolved to become a major arm of Canadian postsecondary education. They exist at the cross roads of provincial social policy, economic constraints and federal human resource strategies. They each reflect a different evolution and unique community expectations. The preparation of a history of these institutions is an enormous undertaking. To further outline the challenges confronting the college movement in Canada is only achievable by synthesizing the commonalities of evolution and the dominant issues. In this overview of the colleges in Canada, Dennison and Gallagher have provided students with an eclectic history of the Canadian community college movement, a summary of policy issues and a framework for further study.

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Barry J. Fraser, *Classroom Environment*. London: Crom Helm, 1986

This book is the eighth of the Croom Helm Curriculum Policy and Research Series edited by William Reid and Ian Westbury. In it, classroom and school climate has been investigated as it affects the relationship between curriculum [input] and learning [outcome]. The book reports on the research that has been done, the measures that have been developed, and the potential these have for studying the environment as a component of education.

While most of the research is directed at elementary and secondary schools, at least one instrument reported on as tested, the College and University Classroom

Environment Inventory [CUCEI] would be of interest to readers of this journal. The scales used in this Inventory include personalization, involvement, student cohesiveness, satisfaction, task orientation, innovation, and individualization. This form was designed to be used in four different forms (i.e. student actual, student preferred, teacher actual, and teacher preferred).

Environment could mean things like seating space, type of audio-visual aids available, lighting, colour, temperature, and room design. While I suspect these are very important in the classroom production function, environment, in the context of the measures reported on by Fraser, refers to things like friction, cohesiveness, satisfaction, and competitiveness which in themselves are also important. However, it seems to me that, for example, cohesiveness is under indirect control whereas temperature, for example, is under direct control, and until we have knowledge and have maximized our use of items we can control directly, there is a smaller benefit/cost ratio to dealing with those which we can control only indirectly.

A large portion of the book is devoted to a literature review of the empirical results and cross results of using different forms of classroom environment inventories, the others besides CUCEI being: Learning Environment Inventory [LEI], Classroom Environment Scale [CES], Individualized Classroom Environment Questionnaire [ICEQ], and My Class Inventory [MCI]. Chapters examine classroom environment as an independent variable and then as a dependent variable. One chapter explores the classroom environment-person fit for different people respond to different environments. And finally, one chapter explores studies in which the measure of classroom environment has been used as an agent of change in the classroom.

As a reference book and a summary of the literature, this book excels. It does not measure well as readable, nor does it measure well as a book which would be used by the classroom instructor to enhance the environment within his/her classroom. When I was Director of Instructional Development, I used to wish there were some refund I could give the instructor who had goals and wanted to create an environment that would achieve those goals. This book would not be the one to answer my wishes.

For me as an economist, I perhaps failed to appreciate some of the finer points which an educational psychologist might find important. Regardless, the real value of this book is as a reference to the many empirical studies, not as a textbook or an aid to environmental improvement. If viewed as a reference guide, it certainly appears exhaustive and up-to-date, and thus had I been the general editors, I would have published it too. Consequently, I would recommend that Instructional Development Offices and Educational Psychologists ensure that this volume finds space on the library shelf.

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