

- Ezorsky, G. (1991). *Racism and justice: The case for affirmative action*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Fekete, J. (1994). *Moral panic: Biopolitics rising*. Montreal, PQ: Robert Davies.
- Glazer, N. (1975). *Affirmative discrimination*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Glazer, N. (1997). *We are all multiculturalists now*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Loney, M. (1998). *The pursuit of division: Race, gender, and preferential hiring in Canada*. Montreal, PQ & Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press.



Jenniskens, Ineke. (1997). *Government Steering and Curriculum Innovations: A Comparative Study of the Relation Between Governmental Steering Instruments and Innovations in Higher Education Curricula*. Maarssen, The Netherlands: Elsevier/De Tijdstroom. Pp. 483. Price: NG109.00.

Reviewed by Paula A. Brook, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

This book is invaluable to anyone interested in relationships between higher education curricula and government steering policies. The caveat to my overly positive review is that this book reads like a research thesis, which it is for the author, Ineke Jenniskens. The central research question was: Is there a relation between ways of government steering and curriculum innovations within higher education, and if so, how can this relation be explained? The book explores how different policy interventions are related to innovations of four higher education systems in The Netherlands; France; England; and Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

The eleven chapters are organized in three main parts: Theory, Empirical Results, and Summary and Reflection. The theoretical section covers Curriculum innovations in higher education, government steering, theoretical framework and research design, with the usual developmental narrative, literature review, and relevant assumptions and definitions. The results section presents the case studies of The Netherlands, France, England and Pennsylvania. Each case covers a brief historical review of the higher education system, actors in higher education policy, government steering in the 1970s and 1980s, and curricula innovations with a short synopsis of the innovation cases. The summary and reflection section is very brief — ten pages per chapter

compared to the thirty to fifty pages of the other chapters. Appropriately, the last chapter is written in Dutch which is the language of the author and the funding agency.

The study makes a distinction between a steering strategy and steering instruments—which are the tools developed and applied by governments. Governmental steering is defined as the influence by government on the behaviour of societal (i.e., higher education) actions, in accordance with goals formulated by government and through the use of instruments. An essential characteristic of steering is purposively influencing the behaviour of others, so that they reach the same decisions (conclusions) of government. Curriculum innovations are defined as an idea, practice, or object which academics perceive as new, and can be studied as either processes (experiences during changes) or products (the number of changes).

The chapters are rich in theoretical and conceptual explanations of higher education system complexities and differentiations, which provide an excellent foundation for understanding the case study comparisons. When the authority and latitude of academics at the levels of individual professional, department, faculty or school, and institution are combined with curricula as a diffuse concept almost without boundaries, one has a book which is compelling from cover to cover. Three broad ways in which governments influence higher education systems are 1) directly interfering with specific curriculum elements; 2) changing characteristics of the institutional structure; and 3) changing funding mechanisms.

Canadian higher education programs and institutions have experienced many changes over the past decades at the hands of government agencies—this book is like reading our professional experiences of innovation resistance or innovation adoption. Essential elements of higher education curricula are the goals, contents and instructional methods. Knowledge is discovered, conserved, transmitted and applied. Since academics are oriented to new knowledge, they are generally eager to try new ideas, to develop innovative methods, or to test theories. Other factors influencing higher education curricula include changes in the academic disciplines (their norms and standards), changes in the student population and changing labour market demands.

What matters most, however, according to this study, is that governments have certain goals to be achieved (regarding higher education curricula), and use steering mechanisms of networks, self-regulation, and

interactive steering models to reach these goals. The three categories used in this study were 1) instruments directed at curricula: approval or prohibition, exemptions, content requirements, monetary rewards or penalties; 2) instruments directed at institutional decision-makers: procedural requirements, transfer of information; and 3) instruments directed at the environment: selective entry requirements, selective rewards for study choices, job qualification requirements.

Familiar examples are performance indicators, privatization, deregulation (or conversely regulation), financial regulations aimed at students or programs. The extent of coerciveness varies among the various steering instruments used, and probably according to the institutions and their respective actors. I remember quite vividly such an example shortly after I joined my current university when the then president used a public speech to display an emotional response to government funding cutbacks by clutching a teddy bear (our mascot) and claiming that this little bear (our university) was not going to lie down and roll over any more in response to government cutbacks! We were going to fight them head on, which resulted in what many of us perceived as further cuts to our budget in the next fiscal year.

The research design for this book/study is both quantitative and qualitative. It does seem a bit reductionist to count the number of innovations and innovation processes in a higher education system, but it allowed for an easy comparison across the cases, presented well in tables within the chapters. More meaningful to readers will be the rich descriptions of the nature of the curricula changes and the steering interventions based on interviews.

Like any good book review, one does not wish to provide the audience with the ending. Suffice it to pique higher educators' interest with a few findings, some of which may be familiar, others may be unexpected. Empirical results indicate that when government uses no steering instruments, the higher education system introduces fewer curricula innovations than when the government plays a more active role (whether restrictive or enlarging interventions). When government is actively involved in higher education, it acts as a buffer between the institutions and the market of students and employers. This buffer allows for higher education to experiment without being immediately punished for any failures or shortcomings. In the absence of a buffer, the market orientation of higher education tends to act as a conservative impact on innovativeness. Institutions stay on the safe side and avoid any risks.

Empirical findings of the case studies also reveal that some universities appear to be more innovative than other universities within the same system. The author explains this as due to the organizational life cycle where newer institutions are less bound by tradition and extensive bureaucratic procedures. Also in the category of innovators are those institutions which are disadvantaged by either geographical position or small size.

This study provides educators with both a comprehensive understanding of curriculum innovations and also of government influence toward changes. Governments can learn ideas and suggestions of how to influence curricula innovativeness within higher education systems. It seems like a win-win situation for all readers.

I suspect this book will not be as easy to access as others in the higher education market because of its European publisher, but for any serious students of higher education curriculum and/or government influence within higher education, this study is a must read. You will not be disappointed in efforts to locate it!



Leaming, Deryl R. (1998) *Academic Leadership: A Practical Guide to Chairing the Department*. Jaffrey, NH: Anker Publishing Co. Pp. 332. Price: \$35.95 US.

Reviewed by Edward S. Hickcox, Faculty of Education, The University of Manitoba.

This book is a practical “how to do it” compendium of advice about managing a university academic department. Deryl Leaming, currently Dean of the College of Mass Communication at Middle Tennessee State University, was a Department Chair at four universities over a twenty year span. So he speaks from experience.

The book is divided into 26 relatively short chapters on topics ranging from the Habits of Successful Chairs to Managing Change. There are four broad categories as follows (my categorization): mechanics of the chair’s job, strategies for improvement, tough issues faced by chairs, and getting a grip on what’s ahead. Just about every conceivable aspect of the Chair’s job is at least mentioned.