

Reviews

cial England. At other points, we are treated to tables of "social status," as Morgan tries to suggest the complex interplay at Cambridge of provincial politics, national religious requirements, familial social status and ambitions and, finally, Cambridge's academic and political life. But Morgan is mesmerized by this interplay; he does not provide an explanatory framework within which to make sense of it. In his study of the debt which Cambridge and its graduates owed to "the country," is he arguing that Cambridge was held tightly in the grip of social forces, forced into curricular and statutory conservatism? It is hard to say. Surely an argument and a subsequent explanation, however tentative, are much to be preferred over legislative and numerical depictions.

While Guy Lytle's essay on patronage patterns at Oxford is better than the work of Morgan, there is little doubt that the papers of Professors Stone and McConica come closest to providing satisfying interpretations of the 16th and 17th century evidence. Stone is concerned to explain variations in the size and composition of the Oxford student body between about 1580 and 1910. Because he is attempting to make sense of wildly disparate data from three and one-half centuries (centuries qualitatively different from one another), his exposition is understandably shallow at times. But in demonstrating the relevance of war, pestilence, political intrigue, and the changing social function of a university education — all of this in relation to the numbers and social origins of students in Oxford — Stone points to new ways of understanding some very important developments in the University's history. New light is shed on the unhappy condition of Oxford in the eighteenth century, for instance, and it is a little easier to see how graduation from Oxford and Cambridge came, in the last half of the 19th century, to guarantee speedy progress through the highest ranks of the English civil service.

The remaining essays of these volumes are written at a consistently high level of interpretation and style. I have never seen essays so suggestive

of the advantages of doing comparative history as those in Volume II on universities of 18th and 19th century America and Germany. If these papers are a fair index of intellectual activity at the Shelby Cullom Davis Centre for Historical Studies (Princeton) where they were all conceived, one can only hope that their publication will stimulate activity of the same sort in this country. Whether or not that happens, *The University in Society* draws attention to a virtually fresh field, the history of universities. Certainly in economically developed nations, at least, the relevance of this new historical study to policy decisions in educational and other domains can hardly be denied. This work should find its way onto the shelves of policy makers and of teachers, not just the arid reliquaries of university librarians. As history books go, this one is surely a bargain.

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Cyril S. Belshaw.
TOWERS BESIEGED:
THE DILEMMA OF
THE CREATIVE UNIVERSITY.
Toronto:
McClelland and Stewart,
1974.
224 pp. \$5.95.

There are professors who will give high evaluations of papers consisting of little more than symbolic assertions, expressed illiterately, provided those assertions fit the professor's own way of life. And . . . there are professors who will do that, even though it is against their intellectual beliefs, not because they are afraid, but because they have coned themselves into thinking that this is "the new way." (p. 56)

A fatal flaw in the headship system is that, although heads are technically removable at the will of higher authority or on the request of department members, the situation can slide very far

before it is discovered, and university administrators seem very reluctant to replace poor academic leaders. (p. 141)

The best indices of a man's teaching effect can be seen in a man's style of conversation and in his professional writing and influence. Questionnaires . . . are in this context for the wastepaper basket. All they do is flatter the student ego and provide more material for argumentative academics to debate. (p. 166)

This small sampling of opinion from a book by Cyril Belshaw, Professor of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, should serve notice to the perspective reader that he is in store for some intense soul searching on questions related to all aspects of university life, however remote. These include: the objectives of a university, the role of professional schools, the proper subject matter for instruction, size and structure, research, and sources of funding.

The author literally charges into his self-appointed task with all the vigor (and rigor) of an individual who, as the title indicates, feels deeply that the so-called liberalizing forces, both within and without the university, have made dangerous headway in undermining the very existence of the university as a unique institution. Consequently, the book is more than an analysis of contemporary problems facing the university; it is also "a call for major national action, an appeal for clearcut university reform and policy, an argument for outright rejection of certain values and viewpoints in the university context." (p. 8)

There is so much of value in this book that this reviewer is reluctant to single out specific issues for comment. Readers of this *Journal*, however, might find a particular note of relevance in Belshaw's comments on professional schools. Predictably, faculties of education do not come in for special consideration, except for two brief references, neither particularly flattering: one in which they are linked with schools of librarian-

ship in providing an "appallingly banal level of education" (p. 80) and the other in which he notes their depressed "intellectual plight." (p. 163)

The critique of professional schools is organized around the central theme of the book, namely creativity. Although Belshaw concedes that the level of creativity is highly variable among the professionally oriented faculties, he claims there is greater danger that the whole thrust towards creativity can be thwarted in an "applied" atmosphere. He identifies professional associations (for education, please include Provincial Departments of Education) as being partly responsible for this state of affairs because the pressure to link programs and curricula to certification and other "professional" interests influences academic decisions. These decisions are often based on mechanical criteria, enquiry and creativity receive low-priority, curriculum development becomes frozen, and divided loyalties and intellectual corruption are almost inevitable. Moreover, since these decisions are usually accompanied by a short-circuiting of senate academic authority, the university would increase substantially the quality of professional education if it had the courage to say:

Our purpose is to develop enquiring minds in these fields; the professional associations may conduct their own certifying examinations, but we as an institution do not accept certification. Our curriculum shall be the best we can provide according to *university* criteria. (p. 39)

The problem is a familiar one. We know too well the inhibiting nature of external regulations. Recently at my own university the provincial teachers' association made strong representation to Faculty Council for restricted entrance to the M. Ed. program. The association argued that the degree must remain a career symbol, granted only to those having at least two years' teaching experience following their first degree. Council, to its credit, rejected the outside position, but the association has decided to bring its case to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. This

example illustrates the assumption that professional associations make with respect to the easy alliance that should exist between their objectives and those of the university. It is not a mere question of administrative goals but one that directly influences the quality of academic programs.

Since Belshaw argues that the university, as presently structured, has the potential to achieve its goals, it is not surprising to find in this book a slashing attack on the most outspoken critics of educational institutions like Farber, Illich, Marcuse, and Goodman whom he considers the "ancestors" of "a wave of respectable irrationality coupled with criticism that is essentially destructive." (p. 56) In the light of the major thrust of this book, it is a difficult position to maintain. After all, it was these "ancestors" of the irrationalist movement and their followers who pressured the university, at no small price, to reconsider, revise, and adjust its structure. In a positive way they have demanded accountability from an institution that was in grave danger of drowning in a sea of irrelevance. The besieged (ivory) towers have been forced into the dilemma so ably analysed by Belshaw largely by those whom he describes as anti-rationalists. Change and reform are not a matter of choice for educational institutions; they are a *must*. Undoubtedly, the so-called anti-rationalists have not endeared themselves to academics like Belshaw since their concept of change demands a fresh start: thus the destructive element he perceives in their philosophies. Perhaps the answer to the dilemma lies more in modification than with either of these polarized positions. At least it would assure consideration of problems and solutions rather than immediate acceptance or rejection on the simple grounds of ideology.

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Gaëtan Daoust et
Paul Bélanger.
**L'UNIVERSITÉ DANS
UNE SOCIÉTÉ ÉDUCATIVE
DE L'ÉDUCATION
DES ADULTES À
L'ÉDUCATION PERMANENTE.**
Montréal:
Les Presses de l'Université
de Montréal, 1974.
244 pp. \$7.25.

Pour répondre adéquatement aux attentes multiples du milieu, les universités québécoises doivent dépasser et transformer leurs pratiques actuelles de l'éducation des adultes: elles doivent entreprendre activement la planification judicieuse d'un long processus d'éducation permanente et en amorcer l'implantation selon les méthodes les plus conformes aux innovations de l'andragogie. Voilà les conclusions que Gaëtan Daoust, directeur du Service d'éducation permanente de l'Université de Montréal, et Paul Bélanger, directeur général de l'Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes, s'appliquent à démontrer dans le rapport qu'ils ont remis en avril 1973 au *Conseil des universités du Québec* et à la *Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec*.

La compétence et l'expérience de ces deux spécialistes correspondent tout à fait à l'orientation de cette étude axée à la fois sur l'éducation et sur la sociologie. La suite d'analyses et de synthèses que les auteurs enchaînent avec logique et concision démontre une observation minutieuse des faits, une perception profonde des problèmes et une réflexion féconde sur des solutions réalistes et vivifiantes pour l'avenir de la communauté québécoise.

La première des trois parties que comporte ce rapport définit et explique d'abord les besoins d'éducation manifestés plus ou moins explicitement par la population du Québec. Puis elle décrit, quantitativement et qualitativement, statistiques et gra-