

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Bowen, Howard R. *The State of the Nation and the Agenda for Higher Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982. 212p. \$13.95. LC 81-20746. ISBN 0-87589-515-8.

Howard R. Bowen is R. Stanton Avery Professor of Economics and Education at the Claremont Graduate School. A former chief academic officer of Grinnell College, the University of Iowa, and Claremont University Center, he is a distinguished senior economist who, of late, has turned his attention increasingly to the economics of higher education. Bowen offers a thoughtful appraisal of both the nation and of American higher education in his book, accompanied by an ambitious long-term agenda for an expanding societal role for universities and colleges.

It is a relatively short book—eight chapters, comprising 155 pages, with extensive statistical appendixes providing summary data in support of the author's assessment of the economic, social, and educational condition of the nation. Among his major conclusions are that the period since 1950 has been one of extraordinary economic and social progress that can be related directly to the postwar expansion of American higher education. Although access to the university has increased greatly over the last three decades, a substantial portion of the population remains inadequately educated.

America, Bowen writes, must begin to address a set of major unresolved domestic and international problems in the economic, social, and political spheres. Our collective failure to date to deal effectively with issues ranging from disarmament to drug abuse can be attributed at least in

part to the decline of an underlying set of common values "that actuate the economic and political system." Given the diminishing influence of family, church, and workplace, Bowen looks to higher education as potentially "the premier place in our society that is capable of effective leadership and sustained independent effort in the realm of values." He calls for a restoration of the balance between liberal and vocational education. "The need," he urges, "is to restore and extend the ancient ideal of the well-educated man or woman who is both broadly learned and imbued with social responsibility." The university should reassert its historic primary mission, "to transmit worthy values to the people who in turn will guide the government and the economy toward the conditions of a good society."

Bowen's book, however, is neither a naive analysis nor a simplistic prescription for educational reform, and any effort to summarize this eloquent and persuasive philosophical essay inevitably does a serious injustice to both the book and its author. The tone is consistently candid ("most institutions . . . live or die according to their ability to attract students"), realistic ("to achieve widespread international understanding would call for more than tinkering with the curriculum"), and temperate ("stating the ideals is, of course, not the same as achieving them, but it is a beginning").

Stating the ideals is a potentially important new beginning for American higher education, or (more accurately perhaps) a timely revival of a central academic philosophical tradition of liberal learning and humanistic values that can be traced

through Adler, Hutchins, and Whitehead to Mill, Newman, Bacon, Aristotle, and Plato. While the times may appear unpropitious for new ventures, the obligation of educators, Professor Bowen correctly reminds us, is not to "supinely accept the present situation as permanent but . . . [to] continually present new long-range possibilities to the public and their leaders."

This book is about what higher education could potentially become and about what it could potentially contribute to American society. As such, it is a welcome contrast to much of the current literature of academic planning, and recommended reading for all who have a serious concern for the future of the university.—*Thomas J. Galvin, School of Library and Information Science, University of Pittsburgh.*

[Editor's note: This book recently received the Frederick W. Ness Book Award for the outstanding publication of the year on a subject dealing with the liberal arts, from the Association of American Colleges.]

Goodrum, Charles A. and Dalrymple, Helen W. *The Library of Congress*. 2d ed. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1982. 318p. \$25 cloth, \$10.95 paper. LC 82-8457. ISBN 0-86531-303-2 cloth; 0-86531-497-7 paper.

The first edition of this work was written solely by Goodrum and published as part of the Praeger Library of U.S. Government Departments and Agencies series. A number of changes at the Library of Congress, including the sizable reorganization effected in 1977 under the direction of Librarian of Congress Daniel J. Boorstin, obliged Goodrum and coauthor Helen W. Dalrymple to issue a revised and updated version of the 1974 work. The result is a pleasing and useful account of the Library of Congress, the world's "largest center for information storage" (Introduction).

In an unobtrusive and easy writing style, the authors structure their narrative in four parts. Part one traces the history of LC from its beginnings to the present, including a chapter on its current components. We are told of its major units ("six great empires") within which "eighty-five independent operations" function; an organizational chart provides guidance through the maze. Part two describes the internal processes: acquisitions, control, and research services. Here the authors wax eloquent about the treasures to be found in the manuscript, geography, and map collections, as well as other divisions and collections. There are informative discussions on the importance of gifts, the copyright deposit procedures, the awesome responsibilities of the Congressional Research Service, the famous "K classification" of the law library, services to the blind and physically handicapped, and the several "glamour" collections and activities, such as music, poetry, and the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts Library.

Part three addresses the problems and tensions that arise from LC's efforts to serve three demanding clients: the Congress, the library profession, and the scholarly research world. The authors wryly observe that these groups "barely tolerate each other at best, and at worst, they resent each other bitterly." Dis-

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