Review Of "Universities And The Capitalist State: Corporate Liberalism And The Reconstruction Of American Higher Education, 1894-1928" By C. W. Barrow

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Review
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profession. Ignoring these issues, he reduces the story to one of efficiency-view as generally privileged.

In stressing business influence, Barrow largely ignores the dynamics of professionalization and bureaucratization, and the role of professors themselves in shaping the emerging academic order. A case in point is his handling of the events of World War I. If the outcome finally served the agendas of private industry and of the federal government, the motivating forces lay as much within the professions and educational institutions as in the influence of outsiders.

What finally surprises in Universities and the Capitalist State is less the facts themselves than the author's own surprise that professors are something other than a class-above-class that pursues ideas purely "for their own sake"; that business and government generally do not promote educational policies opposed to their interests, broadly conceived; or that a force as powerful as the culture of capitalism affects the way people think and behave in all realms of social activity. Although professors, Veblen among them, have sometimes spoken as if the opposite were or should be the case, these statements are best understood in terms of professionalizing strategies or the personal psychology of the individuals involved, not as descriptions of an Eden from which we have fallen.

When all qualifications are tallied, business "ownership and control" in fact appears considerably less than absolute, and rather less sinister than Barrow's rhetoric suggests. Although the state (through its funding agencies) can encourage certain types of scholarly activity, it does not proscribe competing forms of investigation, teaching, or publication. Barrow concedes that the "negotiated range of theoretical free space between absolute autonomy and totalitarian control is real and substantial." Business has also found that the legitimacy of the university requires concessions to the democratic demands of the "wider public" (preeminently in providing broad and equal access to higher education) and to scholars themselves (hence their role, for example, in appointing and retaining colleagues). Although some will judge this ever-shifting balance to be a standing threat to the freedom, autonomy, and status of the professoriate, others may see it as the sign of the vitality of an educational system in a capitalist democracy.

Achieving Quality and Diversity: Universities in a Multi-Cultural Society


MICHAEL A. OLIVAS

I really don't know what to make of this book. It deals with an extremely important issue and suggests ways of improving conditions for students of color. It argues persuasively that much remains to be done to increase access and graduation for minority students, and unapologetically advocates that these problems be given high priority in colleges and universities. In addition, it incorporates ten detailed case studies, testing the authors' model of access and achievements.

Nonetheless, the book is an elliptic and incomplete work, in part because of the authors' approach to measuring equity and in part because they do not go far enough in acknowledging racism as the historical root cause of the problems they are dealing with. The work is curiously deracinated, given the topic. The book contains virtually no history of the longstanding problem of racial animus. For example, the authors date separate, dual systems of higher education to 1890 and the passage of the second Morrill Act, ignoring the white-only character of the 1862 Morrill Act and the institutions founded under it. Or there is the odd assertion that Texas has "responded to the presence of historically minority institutions by... incorporating [them] into systems that included both minority and majority institutions." This did not happen in Texas, whose two public, historically black institutions came into being under different circumstances: Prairie View A & M was created as a black public agricultural school to maintain Texas A & M's white (and male) character, and Texas Southern University was created by transforming a private black school in Houston into a public university to keep blacks from attending the University of Texas, in Austin, two hundred miles away. By neutrally describing or blithely ignoring the extraordinary resources states spent to keep blacks and Mexicans out of their institutions, the authors underestimate the extent to which this poisonous legacy persists, in different guises.

Richardson and Skinner's model of equity scales may be useful to institutional planners who have no clue how to begin addressing their problems, and they offer many concrete planning and administrative tools that should help. But I urge caution in using their equity scales approach, in which the percentage of the group within the state is the denominator, to measure institutional achievement. Many institutions should be doing better than they are in attracting and retaining minority students, because most of their recruiting pools are local, where minority populations are better represented than they are in a state as a whole. Moreover, the scales measure senior institutions, without taking into account the presence or absence of two-year college enrollments. Richardson and Skinner tout the University of New Mexico, with a 23 percent Hispanic student enrollment, as something of a model, but the state's Hispanics are 38 percent of the total population (the percentage is even greater for 18- to 22-year-olds, and greater still in northern New Mexico) and there is no community college system in Albuquerque.

In their case study on institutions in New Mexico, the authors state that the University of New Mexico "had visible Hispanic leadership, including the vice-president for academic affairs." By the time this book was published, neither the Latino administrator was in office, both having left and been replaced by Anglos. No Latino has ever been president of UNM, and qualified Latinos with executive experience have seemingly been passed over for Anglos without any such experience. One recent UNM president had never held an administrative position in higher education, but was hired for his Latin-American diplomatic credentials. One wonders when a Latino with academic credentials will ever be accorded such an opportunity at this institution with such "visible Hispanic leadership." It is little wonder UNM's few Hispanic and Indian faculty were "surprised" that their institution was considered successful. As a native of Albuquerque and Santa Fe, I was astounded to learn that UNM, a chronic underachiever, is considered worthy of emulation.

This book is well-intentioned, but a more critical, nuanced study remains to be written.