

Book Reviews

The Undergraduate Woman: Issues in Educational Equity. Pamela J. Perun [editor] *Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1982.*

The Ph.D. Experience: A Woman's Point of View. Sue Vartuli [editor] *New York: Praeger, 1982.*

The Undergraduate Woman is a first-rate, probing analysis of the recent changes and trends in post-secondary college and university education for women in the United States. Chapters cover virtually every commonly identified area of concern within four major foci: attendance trends, access and selection, the college experience and issues of outcomes (career plans and achievement). The book is the product of a conference held at Wellesley College in 1979 which drew researchers in sociology, psychology, women's studies, social relations and directors of institutional research. The seventeen chapters are of consistently high quality. The overarching focus is the systematic assessment of how both young women and institutions of higher learning have responded to pressures for sexual equality. While the historic gaps between men and women in attendance rates have narrowed and in some cases disappeared, sex differences in rates of full-time enrollment, enrollments in private institutions, in four year programs and in chosen majors are pronounced and persistent. These forms of gender stratification and inequality are particularly well explored in relation to sex differences in economic resources in two papers and in a paper analyzing student evaluations of male and female instructors and the double bind of women academics.

Throughout the volume, the extent and lack of institutionalized supports for female students are related to the variables of attitudes, selection

processes, economic resources and post-graduation plans of college women.

This volume will serve as a landmark and a handbook in the field of post-secondary education for women for some years to come. One hopes that its publication will also serve to stimulate the production of a comparable analysis of women and universities in Canada.

The Ph.D. Experience is neither a scholarly study nor is it a valuable manual for women on how to survive and succeed in a doctoral program. Discussion of the professional literature and any analytical aspects is embarrassingly scant and superficial. The bibliographies are sparse or, as in the case of four of the papers, non-existent.

This volume is comprised of a series of personal accounts of eleven women who have taken Ph.D's in the Faculty of Education at Ohio State. The aim was to give the reader "a better subjective understanding of the ritualistic process called the graduate experience", and to this end each author makes some contribution. Many of the major aspects of this experience of women are included, from the ambivalence surrounding the decision to undertake the degree to the various formal stages of the process, the issues of role conflict and role innovation and the job hunt at the end. Much is made of the dependency of the student and sense of vulnerability, the difficulties women have in obtaining sponsors and mentors, the impact of emotional and physical stress and the importance of developing friendships with other female doctoral students for socio-emotional support and non-threatening sharing of knowledge. While the issues and concerns can be generalized across disciplines and to the Canadian university experience, the insights and sound advice which are strengths of this book could have been communicated as effectively in a single paper.

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