

Joseph M. Moxley & Lagretta T. Lenker (Eds.). (1995). *The Politics and Processes of Scholarship*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. Pp. xi, 263. Price: \$55 US.

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According to the Foreword of this collection of essays, "it became increasingly clear [in the 1980s] that the scholarly role of the professoriate had become too narrowly constricted, focussing on the publication of highly specialized articles in proliferating journals read by too few. Many faculty were publishing for the wrong reasons, that is, in order to be promoted and receive tenure in a tight labor market, rather than because they had something significant to contribute. The scholarly work of faculty had also become largely disconnected from the basic purposes of the college and university – teaching undergraduates and serving the needs of society" (p. ix).

As a result, says R. Eugene Rice, the author of the Foreword, "a number of studies called for a 'broader conception of scholarship' " (p. ix). Cited throughout this collection is perhaps the most influential of those studies, Ernest Boyer's, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation, 1990).

Boyer, reports Rice, "called for an enlarged view of scholarship that goes beyond the discovery of knowledge that is new, to include the scholarships of integration, application, and teaching" (p. x). One of the results was a conference at the University of South Florida to discuss "needed changes to the faculty reward system. The result of these discussions among faculty leaders, provosts, faculty-development specialists, editors, publishers, and development officers is..." (p. x) the volume reviewed here.

Of the four sections of the book, the first two continue, expand, comment on, and occasionally disagree with Boyer's main points. In Part I, "Postmodern Conceptions of Scholarship," there is much discussion of the way in which academic "elites" act as "gatekeepers" to the disciplines, controlling the major journals, the doctoral programs, the tenure and promotion systems. They insist on traditional definitions of scholarship, in particular insisting on "print publication." They discount

non-print, non-refereed, publications, applied rather than “pure” research, and anything to do with pedagogy. Consequently these essays contain suggestions about the recognition of other forms of publication—videos, cd-roms, textbooks, demonstrations, electronic journals, net user-groups, all linked to teaching.

Part II is “Scholarship in the Late Age of Print.” It contains useful discussions of problems of copyright and the preservation of intellectual property, but the tone is often one of delight at the inevitable destruction of the elites and their methods of publication. While celebrating the “fact” that now a group on the net can be made up of eminent scholars, non-academics, and graduate students (why not undergraduates, high school students?) and allow a democratic pursuit of knowledge, it rarely considers the problems that may arise when hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of people around the world try to join such groups. The small number of eminent scholars compared with the possible number of graduate students, etc., may limit meaningful participation.

Similarly, in a book that is essentially opposed to the increasing fragmentation of knowledge, there is no discussion of the way in which small groups of specialists may develop even more fragmented interests because they can have their own groups on the net. A former colleague of mine claimed to be the only scholar interested in his speciality in Canada. There was one in the States, he said, and perhaps a dozen others around the world. A group on the net would be delightful, but would it lead to less specialization?

The tone of parts III and IV is remarkably different. Part III, “Initiatives for Promoting Grant Writing,” and Part IV, “Initiatives for Promoting Scholarly Publishing,” comprise essays full of practical advice on working within the current systems. Part III includes essays on “Developing and Supporting Faculty Grant Success . . .,” “Publishing, Proposing, and Progressing,” and “Characteristics of Successful Institutional Grants,” that is grants that “are supportive of the instructional mission . . . for curriculum improvement, training activities, service, and faculty development” (p. 179).

Part IV is aimed at junior faculty and graduate students who want to publish. Two essays, “Active Mentorship in Scholarly Publishing:

Why, What, Who, How,” and “Mentoring and the Art of Getting Dissertations Published,” are full of sensible advice for both the audience aimed at and those who will or should act as mentors. The first even gives the topics for two courses and one module for graduate students who want to publish. The last chapter in the book is a very useful “Annotated Bibliography of Academic Publishing Sources,” by Bruce W. Speck.

All in all, it is a useful book, but I am troubled by the fact that of the 27 contributors whose disciplines are specified, 12 are from English, one from French, one philosophy, one sociology, one psychology. Others are administrators and may indeed also be originally from such disciplines. Only two are clearly from science, one from chemistry and one from optical engineering. If we are to discuss scholarship, is there none in medicine, law, social work, etc.? Are there not special problems for clinicians in the health sciences? There are some references to consulting in business and engineering, but little serious discussion. And while there is a reference to ways of reporting in archeology that differ from the traditional, there is no discussion of the fact that in archeology *publication is mandatory* because the site has in effect been “destroyed.”

As a former head of an English department, I could not help feeling that much of the discussion was really about the value of what we publish in English and similar subjects. In English, I have always been sympathetic to those who devote themselves to teaching and *at the same time* keep up to date with scholarship. The difficulty comes in finding acceptable ways of determining scholarship other than publication, editing, public lectures, etc. This book does not solve the problem for me.

It is, of course, about the United States, but the Smith Report would suggest that similar problems are thought to exist in research universities in Canada. In the smaller universities, however, those in the Maritimes for example, a check of ranks against bibliographies shows that it is still possible to receive both tenure and promotion with minimal publication.

