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Book Reviews and Notes

Davis G. Johnson, *Physicians In The Making: Personal, Academic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Medical Students From 1950 to 2000*, xxvii, 297 pp., 1983, \$27.95.

The only way to approach this book — one of three in the Association of American Medical Colleges Series in Academic Medicine — is with respect for its achievement in bringing together so much information, and for its ambitious prognostications. The intended audience is primarily the medical school administrator, faculty member, student and undergraduate advisor, but anyone interested or involved in education will find value in its pages. Its intended mission is to prepare the reader (1) to understand and adapt to the changing future of medical education, and (2) to improve the selection and education of physicians.

History, of course, provides the particulars of medical education from 1950-1980, and Davis G. Johnson was at the center of much of that history, as the first secretary of the AAMC Group on Student Affairs and as a researcher for twenty years, studying the process of selecting and educating physicians. The future is seen with the assistance of a Delphi survey, incorporating the forecasts of 326 medical students, administrators, educators, advisors, and other opinion leaders. The Delphi technique presupposes that a reliable form of forecasting can be achieved through polling individual experts, summarizing the results in stages (permitting changes of mind) and eventually developing a consensus.

The transitions in the book, reflecting what has been and what will be, are well handled. Charts, graphs, and statistics of varying kind document the past; and words like *probably*, *likely*, and *perhaps* are used in reference to the future. The book is reliable in its careful documentation of the known past. Readers can hardly deny the trends that have been observed and recorded, and hence it would be difficult to criticize the view of the future.

It is not an unmixed future. The prediction is that medical students will take better care of themselves physically and emotionally, if they participate less in social activism. They will seek curricular changes in order to be prepared for a practice which demands ethical decision-making, medical care cost control, treatment of the aged, discussion of sexual issues, and provision of nutritional information. The ultimate career choices of students may be affected by the market-place but not by the sex of the doctor. The nature and number of applicants, however, will become critical issues. Although the quality of

applicants should not decline seriously, and the numbers of women will remain steady, the diversity of the pool will change, with decreasing numbers of low-income and minority applicants.

For the undergraduate advisor in general and the premedical advisor in particular, the most immediately important prediction, and the one that has already been confirmed in the two years since publication, is the general decline in applicant numbers. The numbers have been fluctuating for the last thirty years. Applicants dropped from 22,000+ in 1950 to only 14,400 in 1961, heading up again to a high of 42,600 in 1974. The most recent decline began in the mid-70s and appears to be continuing. Between 1981 and 1985 the pool shrank by almost 4,000 and sizeable decline occurred in the 1985-86 applicant class. The fluctuations, according to Davis, have matched the decline in the number of 22-year-olds more closely than they have matched any changes in the number of available positions.

Davis concentrates much of his attention on the potential change in the admissions process, should this decline become permanent. He predicts that the ratio of total applicants to places could decline to as low as 1.5 per place by 1990. Given the number of repeat applicants, this could mean as few as 1.1 new applicants for each position. His projections may be too modest, for, in fact, the 1985 class drew only 32,893 applicants for 16,268 positions; a 2.02 per spot ratio instead of the predicted 2.06.

What are the ramifications of these figures? Will the quality of the pool likewise decline? Will marginal students who previously took themselves out of the pool now rejoin it? Will non-science majors finally feel comfortable in, and swell the ranks of the premeds? Can class size remain the same? Should new methods of selection emerge?

Davis' projections touch on all of these issues, leading his readers (whom he always regards as knowledgeable) through various options for the future. One particularly interesting option concerns the selection process. Davis suggests that the quality of the admitted student, and consequently the graduation rate, would not seriously be affected if each school determined a "minimum threshold" of academic ability required for satisfactory completion of medical school and then selected students above that level solely on the basis of personal qualities.

After applying a modest premedical GPA threshold of B (3.0) admissions officers could have selected the 16,000 of the 1978 entering class from a pool of 29,000 solely on the basis of their personal qualities without significantly altering the 97 percent success rates of those selected. (p. 97)

And how will admissions officers determine personal qualities? The traditional letter of evaluation from premedical advising committees could become significant, especially if unfettered from the embarrassing apologetics for faltering grades. Can justice be done, however, to the students? How many serving on these committees actually know the students? Would appointment books become crowded with sycophantic apple polishers? Would the time that remained on the appointment books be filled with legal counsels planning for a defense in defamation suits? Furthermore, and of no little consequence, if the pool drops and if the competition for admission diminishes, will the administration of undergraduate institutions deem it necessary to fund premedical advising?

Davis does not dwell on the effects of a reduced pool on advisers, but he does indicate that should such an admissions model emerge, medical school staff would require training to be more skillful in assessing the motivation of applicants and evaluating their personal attributes. Will undergraduate teachers of biochemistry also receive training in assessing personal qualities of applicants?

The characteristics of the future medical student and physician are not determined solely by gross numbers. The difficulty of maintaining diversity in the pool is obvious, especially when coupled with the cost of education and shrinking financial aid resources. Davis devotes several chapters of the book to the nature of drop-outs and repeaters; on ways in which students will make career decisions; the expanding role of student services; student activism, and participation in medical school governance.

This is a major book (and its supplement is equally impressive) and should not be missed by anyone in undergraduate advising. The book has not, however, been as thorough as it might in the treatment of the premedical students' education and the role of the advisor in his or her intellectual and social development. The National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions merited only three items in the index, and advisors in general (38 participated) received scant attention in the Delphi survey.

Although advisors played a minor role, it is clear that an expanded role may be created in the future: active recruitment to increase the pool, drawing on a greater diversity of educational, ethnic and racial backgrounds; assistance in defining personal characteristics of the applicant through letters of recommendation; and improving communications between undergraduate institutions and medical schools. Given these possibilities, it seems appropriate for all advisors to debate the issues which spring from this impressive book.

Marliss Strange
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Norman C. Gysbers, Editor, and Associates, *Designing Careers*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1984, pp. 630, \$35.95.

The third in the National Vocational Guidance Association Volume Series, *Designing Careers* examines in thoroughly readable form and language the relationship that exists among work, leisure, and career development. It concentrates on today's events and projects the future from psychological, sociological and economic perspectives. Contributing scholars from a broad range of disciplines have presented a chronology of the changes that have taken place, and will take place in career development, and offer suggestions for understanding and living with these changes. Although the authors discuss new materials, assessment instruments, and career development systems, their focus is on the individual rather than the thing. They have divided their skillfully interwoven work into four major impact areas.

Part One: "The World of Work Today: Personal, Social, and Economic Perspectives," is concerned with changing the accepted use of the work ethic as being central to a study of an individual's origins, education, occupation, social status, and leisure activities. Rather, it suggests that the work ethic be considered as only one life role, and that the individual be defined in terms of the quality of life, embracing psychological, sociological and economic perspectives. This segment also challenges education, business,

and industry to effect a partnership, but cautions that, although such an alliance is in the best interest of each partner, care must be exercised to insure the continued integrity of each partner.

Part Two: "Knowledge Base of Career Development" offers a "state-of-the-art" update of the theory and research in career development. Discussion centers on the relationship between career development theory and practice and the barriers that prevent the application of theory into practice; that is, there exists an inadequate translation of theory into explicit terms from those who construct to those who practice. Additional analyses include the socialization of young people, adult career development, and insights into the interrelationships of gender and career. Also examined are some assessment instruments and their psychometric adequacy, job satisfaction, worker aspirations, work attitudes, and how these affect and are affected by worker behavior.

Part Three: "Facilitating Career Development Practices and Programs," has as its major purpose acquainting professionals with new developments in career guidance and counseling, particularly as they pertain to the needs of the economically disadvantaged and those with handicapping conditions. A secondary purpose is updating professionals on the type, diversity, and quality of career guidance and counseling programs, tools, and techniques that have emerged during the past ten years. Specific topics on career practices include establishing a framework, the use of the computer, and three programmatic approaches: 1) systematic planning processes; 2) state models and collaboration models; and, 3) programs in post secondary institutions, business, and industry.

Part Four: "Responding to Emerging Views," focuses specifically on future trends and issues and how these trends may cause a change in the ways society educates, trains, and counsels the work force. Other major issues examined are the aging population and their problems of work and retirement, societal concerns about this age group, leisure, and whether leisure satisfaction can replace job satisfaction. Finally, the authors emphasize that career development should be described in terms of what a person wants to be rather than what a person plans to do.

Designing Careers is as useful as it is interesting and scholarly. Its themes are so central apropos for individuals today, and it offers such insightful material for a society whose citizens are living longer, working in a mutable job market, and searching for significant leisure activities, that it is recommended for mass consumption, as well as target groups such as academic advisors within the educational environment.

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Ann E. Austin and Zelda F. Gamson, *Academic Workplace: New Demands, Heightened Tensions*, Association for the Study of Higher Education, 1983, 122 pp., \$7.50.

Institutions of higher education are facing extreme external pressures — declining funds from state and federal governments, demands from the public for accountability, lack of positions for qualified candidates, and decline in the number of students in the traditional college age population. These pressures are adversely affecting the way faculty and administrators view their positions in the academic workplace.

A review of the studies presented by Austin and Gamson suggest that intrinsic factors such as autonomy and freedom, intellectual interchange, and opportunity to interact with students are decreasing in importance to faculty. Faculty are becoming disillusioned with their positions, and this is responsible for low morale in the academic workplace. Although faculty satisfaction with position in the academic workplace varies across institutional types and disciplines, extrinsic factors which make a position attractive to faculty, such as promotions and increases in salary, are declining due to economic conditions, and intrinsic factors are no longer sufficient to sustain faculty satisfaction in the academic workplace.

According to Austin and Gamson, administrators on all levels in higher education felt that they were "stuck" in their positions with minute chances for advancement; overworked, and underpaid. But administrators have a tendency to experience more satisfaction in the academic workplace than faculty, and this may be due to involvement in decision-making and policy implementation.

Austin and Gamson suggest that the institution governs the academic workplace and is responsible for the culture that develops among its employees. If feelings of dissatisfaction among faculty and administrators exist, administrators in high level positions must seek out the source of the problem and do what is necessary to bring harmony to all in the academic workplace, regardless of position or title. An assessment of working conditions of employees in the academic workplace must be conducted, and staff development programs implemented for those who feel "stuck" in their positions or disillusioned.

Recommendations for future research were included by Austin and Gamson, to increase the present body of knowledge on employees within the academic workplace.

Belinda C. Anderson
Radford University

Books Received

Improving Conference Design and Outcomes, Paul J. Ilsley, Ed., Pp. 96, San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 1985. \$9.95.

Faculty Participation in Decision Making: Necessity or Luxury? Carol E. Floyd, Pp. 103, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 8, 1985. \$7.50.

Post-Tenure Faculty Evaluation: Threat or Opportunity? Christine M. Licata, Pp. 107, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1, 1986. \$10.00.

Educating Managers, Joseph S. Johnston, Jr. and Associates, Pp. xxvi, 242, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1986, \$24.95.

Personal Computers and the Adult Learner, Barry Heermann, Ed., Pp. 109, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1986, \$9.95.

Serving More Than Students, Peter H. Garland, Pp. xvii, 143, ASHE-ERIC Report No. 785, \$7.50.

Enhancing Relationships with the Student Press, John H. Schuh, Ed., Pp. 95, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1986, \$9.95.

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Blue Ribbon Commissions and Higher Education, Janet R. Johnson and Laurence R. Marcus, Pp. xiv, 99, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 2, 1986, \$10.00.

Making Sense of College Grades, Ohmer Milton, Howard R. Pollio and James A. Eison, Pp. xxii, 287, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1986, \$22.95.

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Writing Invention Form and Style, Leonard A. Podis and Joanne M. Podis, pp. XV, 558, Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1984. (No Price).

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Commuter Students: Enhancing Their Educational Experiences, Sylvia S. Stewart, Editor, pp. 85, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1983. \$8.95.

Part-Time Faculty: High Education at a Crossroads, Judith M. Gappa, pp. XV, 112, Wash. D.C.: ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Research Report No. 3., 1984. \$7.50.

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American University Programs in Computer Science: Their Facilities, Resources and Course Offerings, William W. Lau, Editor, pp. 210, GGL Educational Press, Fullerton, CA 1984. \$20.00.

Marva Collins' Way, Marva Collins and Civia Tamarkin. Pp. 228. J.P. Tarcher, Inc. Distr. by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1984. \$6.95.

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Orienting Students to College, M. Lee Upcraft, Editor. Pp. 118. Jossey-Bass, 1984. \$8.95.

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BOOKS