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Lifelong learners: a new clientele (review)

Marily Legg
Kansas State University

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Review

Lifelong learners: a new clientele

Dyckman W. Vermilye, Ed. *Lifelong Learners—A New Clientele For Higher Education*. San Francisco, California; Josey—Bass, Inc., Publishers, 1974.

Education is a natural resource, one to be made available to all citizens throughout their lifetime. From this basic premise, this book explores the role higher education can play in lifelong learning. This collection of 25 essays, written by specialists in the area, was drawn from the Twenty-Ninth National Conference on Higher Education, sponsored by the American Association for Higher Education.

In the first section, "The Quiet Revolution," the learning market is analyzed in terms of how higher education can reach and serve it. Social revolution has made the demand for education recurrent and lifelong. By looking at how European educational institutions, business corporations and proprietary schools meet this demand, the flexibility higher education must create to share in this growing learning market is underscored.

After providing a rationale and framework for lifelong learning, the second section, "New Ways to Meet New Needs," focuses on specific programs and strategies that attempt to meet the learning market challenges such as learning contracts, performance-based modules, approaches to extending educational resources and services to non-campus people, and the importation of the Open University. For readers engaged in, starting or debating the possibility of learner-centered innovations, this section is a useful resource.

Disembarking from the practical the third section, "On the Horizon," speculates on further approaches to meeting the learning market challenge. Included are such conceptions as nationwide systems of learning "brokers," "educational passports," regional credentialing through examination institutes, a three-dimensional concept of educating a person and expansion of learning networks.

The final section, "Issues in Academe," deals with internal forces now operating in higher education which affect the effort of meeting the needs of an expanded learning market. For examples, unionization, tenure, affirmative action, and their interaction; the effects of collective bargaining on academic governance; the increasing tenuous relationship between faculty and their jobs; effects of outside financing are all poised as critical action areas. The section ends on the up-beat as a university president who deals with all these forces responds to the question modern administrators often ask, "What is left to govern."

Readers in the fields of adult education and higher education would benefit from *Lifelong Learners—A New Clientele For Higher Education*. Presented is a wide range of topics, ideas, and approaches that are in the main clearly and concisely stated, sometimes in just three or four pages. Authors include the practitioners, the theoreticians, the researchers, the future thinkers and the analyzers and interpreters. Approaches may be reported, concepts related and thoughts and concerns conveyed, but most important of all, the reader's thinking is often stimulated. Sometimes opinions conflict, but amazingly there is a feeling of remarkable compatibility among such diverse authors. William Ferris, associate editor, deserves credit for his brief prefaces before each section which pull together the essays into a related whole. One receives quite an overview of life-long learners in just 169 pages.

Marilyn Legg
Graduate Student,
Adult and Occupational Education
Kansas State University