

Booklist/Oct. 15,  
2002 (pp. 443-444)

Page 1 of 2  
09/10/2002

\* **Higher Education in the United States: An Encyclopedia.** 2v. Ed. by James J. F. Forest and Kevin Kinser. 2002. 831p. appendixes. bibliogs. illus. index. ABC-CLIO, \$185 (1-57607-248-7). 378.73.

With the recent changes in U.S. higher education, a new encyclopedia is welcome. These volumes provide articles on higher-education history (particularly since 1945) and trends, contributed by almost 200 university scholars and other experts in the field. Authors were suggested by the editors' advisory board and by colleagues in the Association for the Study of Higher Education and the American Educational Research Association.

Alphabetically arranged, the articles range in length from a page to more than a dozen pages (e.g., *History of higher education in the United States*). Most entries are several pages long; a few black-and-white photographs provide visual relief from the text. In general, articles include an overview of the topic, historical or social context, and current issues. The historical perspective usually extends back at least to the beginning of the twentieth century, and in most cases treatment of current issues is very up-to-date. However, the article on academic freedom shies from some current concerns, such as intellectual property. The number of contributors results in some unevenness, as in the articles that address topics such as *Affirmative action*, *Asian Americans in higher education*, *Multiculturalism*, and *Native American studies*, some of which tend to advocate for a particular view rather than present a balanced picture. In some cases, large overlaps occur.

Writing is usually straightforward; happily, "educationese" seems to have been avoided. Cross-references help the reader find more information on related topics. This feature is particularly useful because some article headings, such as *Theories of research in higher education*, are not obvious choices. Appendixes provide a survey of "Important Books about Higher Education" and a chronology of important events. These are followed by an extensive bibliography and a detailed index.

Generally, this set provides a useful introduction to the world of higher education. Indeed, beginning faculty would do well to delve into this reference book to help them

navigate higher-education waters. College students will also derive a clearer picture of the “underbelly” of institutions of higher education and their driving forces. Recommended for public and academic libraries.