

## Editor's Introduction

On a February day 50 years ago, four African-American freshmen from the segregated North Carolina Agriculture and Technology (A&T) College entered the Greensboro Woolworth's department store and sat down at the Whites-only lunch counter. Fellow North Carolina A&T students joined them by the next day, and their numbers soon grew with the participation of White women from the local women's college. Protesters from campuses across the South followed their lead and descended on segregated establishments from Atlanta to Nashville. In April of 1960 on the campus of Shaw University, Ella Baker began a series of student meetings to organize this growing movement, which would bring to life the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The 300 student attendees at this SNCC conference—mostly heralded from Southern Black colleges—with Morehouse and Fisk students recognized by their peers as the student leaders—as well as students from predominantly White campuses who had begun to migrate South to join the cause. In time, SNCC would draw students and faculty from campuses across the country and play a major role in the sit-ins, freedom rides, and marches for civil rights. The forces of social change were also stirring students to action at the University of Michigan with the founding of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). SDS and other “New-Left” organizations would reshape political life in America, placing college and university communities at the epicenter of the fight for social change (Patterson, 1996).

I recall these milestones in the history of American higher education as I reflect on the diversity of manuscripts that we have received and published in seven volumes of *Higher Education in Review*. It is always difficult for editors to synthesize the disparate scholarship that falls under the general disciplinary umbrella of “higher education.” I believe, however, the college and university students who fought for civil rights and those who penned the Port Huron Statement have left an important imprint in the minds of the graduate students who research and write about American higher education. The Michigan graduate students argued in the Port Huron Statement that if organized around “social relevance, the accessibility to knowledge, and internal openness . . . the university [could be] a potential base and agency in a movement of social change” (Students for a Democratic Society, 1962/2003, p. 468). This ideal remains present in much of our higher education scholarship, even if it is masked by our overspecialization and methodological, philosophical, and disciplinary boundaries.

The scholarship that we receive at *Higher Education in Review* address numerous topics. Emerging scholars of higher education seek to improve the management and operation of institutions and affect public policy to improve institutional and student outcomes. They ask, can we improve student access through changes in financial aid or enhance the college experience to spur student development and increase persistence? Or, can colleges and universities become places that embrace and support diversity in all its forms, and provide an education that prepares leaders for the daunting challenges facing a globalized world? In each one of these specific questions, however, remains the obscured yet interconnected power of the whole. It is an ideal that colleges and universities should be accessible, be relevant, be open, and be sites of individual opportunity and social change. It is a legacy we inherited from generations of students, faculty, and administrators who recognized that colleges and universities are places to produce the intellectual foundations and social movements that change our society for the better.

I would place the four articles that comprise this volume of *Higher Education Review* as important contributions to this continuing effort to move American higher education toward these highest of ideals. These articles were selected from the largest number of submissions that this journal has ever received. Selected from programs across the country, the authors exemplify the breadth of research approaches used by scholars to address warranted inquiries of higher education institutions, public policies, and students.

In the opening article, “Defining and Achieving Success: Perspectives from Students at Catholic Women’s Colleges,” Kathryn A. E. Enke and Rebecca Ropers-Huilman argue that if colleges seek to produce “successful” women graduates, they must consider how the women themselves define success. In a provocative article, the authors interview 26 women to fully explore how these students conceptualize success. The authors indentify five thematic areas in which the women define success and suggest that colleges and universities could better serve these students by responding to women’s own sense of what it means to be successful.

In “The Effect of Prices on Postsecondary Access: An Update to Heller,” Jiyun Kim contributes an overdue update to Don Heller’s extensive review of students’ response to changes in college prices. The author concludes from her literature review that college price and financial aid are predictive of the college enrollment decisions of students from different socioeconomic and racial backgrounds. Given decreasing state

appropriations and rising college prices, this article is a timely contribution.

In “Coveting More Than Thy Neighbor: Beyond Geographically Proximate Explanations of Postsecondary Policy Diffusion,” Brian Sponsler discusses how scholars have embraced, with little empirical verification, the theory that geographically proximate states adopt similar policy innovations. The author offers a more comprehensive menu of policy adoption explanations, an important advance in knowledge that can guide scholars in future analyses of state policy on higher education.

In our final article, “Complicating ‘Just Do It’: Leaders’ Frameworks for Analyzing Higher Education for the Public Good,” Penny A. Pasque and Lesley A. Rex explore how higher education leaders conceptualize the relationship between higher education and society. The authors use an innovative methodology and research design to explicate how issues of race, gender, ethnicity, and power differentials undergird how higher education leaders frame and discuss higher education for the public good. The article concludes with an analytical framework designed to support efforts to sustain change for educational equity and social justice.

I would also like to recognize our own history at *Higher Education in Review* and the many emerging and now settled scholars that sustained this enterprise over the past seven years. The journal has remained true to its mission of both advancing knowledge and providing a formative educational experience for authors, editorial board members, and reviewers. We remain proud to provide this opportunity for aspiring higher education scholars to gain experience in academic publishing and to make our own small contribution to the scholarly discourse. On behalf of the entire organization, I want to thank the following Penn State University partners for their continued support of the journal: the Higher Education Program, the Center for the Study of Higher Education, the Education Policy Studies Program, and the University Programming and Activities Committee. I also thank our external reviewers who include some of the most prominent scholars of higher education, and through whose participation we are able to publish the highest quality of student scholarship.

In conclusion, I wish to thank our editorial board and staff for the countless hours contributed to the production of this volume. The enhanced size and new look of volume seven is the product of the efforts of our Associate Editor of Operations and Editor-Elect for volume eight Peter Moran, who successfully secured increased financial resources for the journal. Managing Editor Wil Del Pilar and Layout Editor Beth

Randolph contributed their time and expertise in working with authors and producing final layout prints. I want to recognize the superb efforts of our technical editing staff of Claire Gilbert, Dan Merson, Rodney Hughes, and the excellent work of our marketing, Web development, and symposium team, David Knight, Ezekiel Kimbell, and Kadian McIntosh. Finally, I wish to thank Associate Editor Sarah Fuller, a co-conspirator with me on *Higher Education in Review* for the last three years, whose expertise in academic publishing and scholarly insights has made this volume possible.

Nathan M. Sorber, Editor



## References

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- Students for a Democratic Society. (1962/2003). The Port Huron statement. In T. P. McCarthy & J. McMillian (Eds.) *The Radical Reader* (pp. 463-467). New York: The New Press.

