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& Hutchings, Pat. (2008). *The Formation of Scholars; Rethinking
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*The Formation of Scholars, Rethinking Doctoral Education for the
Twenty-First Century*, by George E. Walker (2008), brings the
discussion of doctoral education and the role faculty,
graduate schools, and the students themselves play to the
forefront of the debate about proper educational practice.
The authors discuss the need for sweeping reforms and a
complete rethinking of the Ph.D. education process starting
with the role the graduate students themselves play in this
reform. Walker, vice president for research and dean of
Graduate Schools at Florida International University, urges
graduate educators and students across multiple disciplines
to reflect about what graduate students actually learn and
what the role doctoral education plays in our society. Walker
and his co-authors call for a radical reconceptualization of

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the Ph.D. education process and the movement to more collaborative and individualized education in which graduate students are peers and colleagues instead of marginalized to the fringes of graduate departments.

To understand the reasons for this call to action, one needs to look no further than the staggering number of 375,000 men and women pursuing doctoral degrees in institutions of higher learning in the United States (p. 1). Many of these graduate students will assume leadership position not just within our nation but around the world and their intellectual progeny and decisions will impact the lives of generations to come.

The authors ask some seemingly simple questions, “What will it take to ensure that the United States continues to be, as many have observed, the envy of the world?” and “What will it take to meet the challenges that doctoral education faces today and to make the changes those challenges require? ” (p.2) Though seemingly simple questions the questions become very difficult and complex to answer when viewed through the lens of educational reform, current policy and tradition. The “culture wars” of the 1980s and 1990s has taken a heavy toll on faculty and universities resulting in a system which is ripe for reform (Arenson, 2002).

In seven chapters over 225 pages, the authors lead the reader from the founding of doctoral education in the United States in 1861 to the modern trials and experiences of current doctoral students. The underlying theme throughout each of the chapters is a call to action for the faculty and students to develop a multifaceted, integrated, learning apprenticeship, model of education for the student focusing on the development of relationships and growth in many directions at once (p.94).

The strongest aspect of the book is the ability of the author to define his vision of mentorship, apprenticeship and the requirements of the graduate student. Through serious and thoughtful analysis of the current trends, the reader is given a deep understanding of the problems and potential areas

for improvement in doctoral education. A vision of an ideal doctoral program emerges from the crucible in which the doctoral student moves from the novice on the fringe of the graduate program to a full participant in the graduate department taking part in such actions as, serving on departmental committees, mentoring undergraduate students and playing a formal role in both graduate student admission and faculty hiring (p.134). The book culminates with the suggestion that we continue to ask questions. "Such questions are in part empirical aimed at exploring what works; but, perhaps more importantly, they are normative, raising issues about what could and should be..." (p.158).

To accomplish this, the author draws heavily on his own research through five educational institutes affiliated with the Carnegie foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and, a wealth of peer review literature. The author outlines his arguments in the context of this research and additionally provides individual graduate student and faculty anecdotal evidence to clarify and resolve the sometimes complex cited research.

The Formation of Scholars, Rethinking Doctoral Education for the Twenty-First Century brings to light several current issues in our graduate school system and opens the door for discussion of needed reform in this area of education. The book also attempts and succeeds in providing a clear, conscious vision of the future of graduate education. The book effectively delivers both a practical and theoretical framework to accomplish its goal. The author outlines the steps needed to develop a truly multifaceted, integrated, learning apprenticeship.

Reference

Arenson, K.W. (2002) Columbia Soothes the Dogs of War in Its English Department. *New York Times*, March 17, 2002

About the Reviewer

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