

setting and goes on to discuss the changes in the philosophy governing development and use of the collection under its early librarians, Joseph Quincy Adams and Louis B. Wright. He reminds us that "specialized research libraries exert a shaping influence on scholarly research through policies that decide not only what is worth collecting but also what constitutes a complete and coherent body of materials." In the end, however, although "libraries can lock their doors, or . . . restrict access to their resources . . . libraries as organized collections of books and other artifacts cannot directly control what their clients will produce."

While Bristol examines the philosophical background and cultural context of private collecting in the nineteenth century, James Gibson provides a detailed and readable account of one Shakespeare collector, Horace Howard Furness. The son of a prominent Abolitionist Unitarian minister, and himself a student of law, Furness came from a genteel and cultured, though not scholarly, background. He was thus typical of many "gentleman scholars" of the period, though what began for him as a kind of hobby grew into a lifelong obsession that would have been the death of many university men. His initial dabbling with the Bard at meetings of the Shakespeare Society of Philadelphia (all males, mainly of the legal persuasion) led to his first venture at editing a Shakespearean text (*Romeo and Juliet*, 1871) and eventually to his establishment of the first fifteen volumes of the monumental variorum Shakespeare.

In a period in which Henry Clay Folger was just beginning his collection, no American library had the resources to support such a scholarly undertaking as the variorum. Furness accordingly set out to form his own collection. His first attempt, a bid to purchase "the Shakespearean portion of the library of Thomas Pennant Barton," failed when a decision was reached not to split the collection but to sell the whole to the Boston Public Library. Furness received help in his endeavor, however, from the British Shakespeare scholar and bibliographer, J. O. Halliwell-Phillips, who not only provided Furness

with materials from his own collection, but also recommended the London book-dealer, Alfred Russell Smith. Through Smith, Furness purchased many of his treasures, including the First, Third, and Fourth Folios from the Corser Library sale in 1871; he also obtained the 1611 *Hamlet* and three Pavier Quartos, "which had belonged to the Shakespearean editor Edward Capell." By the mid-1870s he had over 2,000 volumes, and "his collection of German and French editions of Shakespeare . . . [was] judged to be the most complete in the United States."

Along with the history of these nineteenth-century Shakespearean collections and of the social relationships among scholars and bibliophiles in this period, librarians will find much to profit from in Bristol's description of the changing cultural climate that has given rise to the various movements in Shakespeare criticism down to our day.—Georgianna Ziegler, *University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*.

Kimball, Roger. *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted Our Higher Education*. New York: Harper & Row, 1990. 204p. \$18.95 (ISBN 0-06-016190). LC 89-45049.

American educational institutions have come under much scrutiny in recent years, often in the form of trenchant criticism of aims and objectives, as well as of methods. While much attention has been focused on elementary and secondary education, higher education has certainly not been spared. Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* set the tone for an ongoing controversy, of which academic librarians need to be aware.

Roger Kimball, managing editor of *The New Criterion*, attempts here to ride this recent wave of criticism. Kimball is especially critical of "recent developments in the academic study of the humanities," especially deconstruction, feminist studies, and other movements to undermine the traditional canon of liberal studies. He regales us with illustrations of the obscurity or just plain silliness of many of the latest modes of criticism, especially literary criticism, but his indictment goes

deeper. These recent fancies are, in his words, "ideologically motivated assaults on the intellectual and moral substance of our culture."

Kimball's thesis is that the student rebels of the 1960s have taken over our system of higher education (or at least "our best colleges and universities"), and they are now subverting it from within, as professors. Attacks on the canon, deconstruction, semiology, and poststructuralism are all parts of a political assault on the humanities *in toto*. Even the recent Supreme Court decision forcing the University of Pennsylvania to open its employment files to federal courts in tenure cases is part of the movement. The reader can see where Mr. Kimball stands on the political spectrum when he considers even the Supreme Court "tenured radicals."

Much of the book consists of what Kimball calls "reports from the front," or accounts of symposia or conferences where the radicals whom Kimball considers the stars of contemporary academia have met to discuss the current "crisis" in the humanities. He dwells especially on the deconstructionists and their deliberate obscurity, although it is difficult to see how the irrelevant vagaries he describes carry any consistent political message.

Kimball's fundamental disagreement with the varied assortment of educators he criticizes is about the very *nature* of the humanities. He consistently urges that the humanities curriculum must include "the best that has been thought and read." The tenured radicals, he says, are opposed to this notion. But he misses their point that the issue is really, "What *is* the best? Who decides?" For Kimball it is the traditional canon of Western civilization, which he admits "can be seen to be exclusive or elitist. But in another sense, it is deeply democratic for it locates authority not in any class or race or sex, but in a tradition before which all are equal." He seems to think this canon dropped from the heavens, or sprang fully clothed from some universal mind.

The recent revelations about Paul de Man's wartime journalism provide Kimball with irrefutable proof that deconstruc-

tion is perverted doctrine. De Man is criticized as anti-Semitic for having written that Western literature would not suffer if we removed the contributions of its Jewish writers. Yet, how many Jewish writers would we find in Kimball's traditional canon? Precious few, once we move beyond the Bible. So the young de Man and Kimball are essentially in agreement about "the best that has been thought and read." It does not include Jews, or blacks, or Asians, or many women of any race.

While Kimball makes some valid criticism of the current trends in critical theory, these points would be better made elsewhere. The book often strays too far from its main thesis, giving the impression that the thesis itself was an afterthought, inserted to set the book apart from others of its genre. The thesis is nowhere proven and amounts to nothing more than an oversimplification of a complex problem. The recent elimination of the Western Civilization requirement at Stanford is offered as proof of the politicization of the curriculum. Yet, we are soon told that this requirement had been established only in 1980. Hallowed tradition! Kimball gets closer to the real problems when he quotes Hannah Arendt on the crisis of authority in modern education, and he himself makes the observation that she was writing in 1958!

The problems of higher education, then, have deeper and more complex roots than Kimball would have us believe. And the origins and nature of the humanities curriculum are not so apolitical. For a better treatment of this topic, see Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities*. Kimball exaggerates when he portrays current intellectual fads as dangerous political dogma, and their provocative adherents as the "establishment" of American higher education. While the Western civilization canon is being questioned, it is still taught almost everywhere. Does anyone read Milton other than on a college campus? Kimball writes well (unlike his academic targets), and is very entertaining, but his book will not stand as a major contribution to the current debate.—William S. Monroe, *New York University Libraries*.