

need to develop new strategies along these transitions. This is not an easy task, however, especially when 'the genre largely remains unspoken and unquestioned' (132).

A focus on undergraduate education follows, appropriately, in the next chapter (Chapter 8), which reports on an empirical study in which first year undergraduates' views on argumentation are elicited through interviews by other students. This work is summarised through case studies that offer a snapshot of how students see argumentation in a medical course, in mathematics, psychology, politics, literature study, nursing, and chemistry. One view emerging from these student interviews is that argumentation is typically not addressed or made explicit by lecturers.

Chapter 9 is devoted to written argumentation, looking at students' essays and reports in different disciplines, as well as lecturer feedback to student assignments. The chapter also provides a thought-provoking commentary on the essay, discussing both its advantages and alternatives to it.

In Chapter 10, Andrews turns to feedback from lecturers, and particularly how lecturers 'negotiate and establish the parameters of argumentation in their disciplines through feedback' (169). The real examples of feedback at undergraduate level (e.g., on a coursework assignment) and at postgraduate level (e.g., pre viva voce examination reports), including a brief look at alternative forms of argumentation, will all be particularly useful for encouraging lecturers to reflect on their own practice.

Methodological issues in researching argumentation (importantly, an interdisciplinary enterprise) are discussed in Chapter 11. The author first looks at what counts as evidence in education research, and offers a useful provisional list of questions to ask regarding evidence in this particular field. He then briefly examines methodological approaches to investigating argumentation; in doing this, he usefully reminds us that paradigm wars are futile and misguided.

The concluding chapter of the book draws together key issues and implications for research, policy and practice. Andrews is concerned with what areas need to be researched, but also with ways for lecturers to address cross-cultural issues in argumentation (such as, for example, common assumptions about students outside Anglophone countries and their understanding of or ability to be critical). Looking at the context of higher education in England in particular, he once again problematises the invisibility and/or marginalisation of argumentation in that tradition: not being made an explicit part of the undergraduate or postgraduate experience (i.e., without explicit instruction, and without a connection between students' oral and written forms of argument); and being undermined by an emphasis on the substance of the discipline or subject, or an assumption that argumentation will 'inhere in the very nature of the discipline' (197). In the last part of this chapter, Andrews considers examples of four dissertations (in order to discuss the critical dimension) and the dissertation in the digital age.

Argumentation in higher education is a thought-provoking text and it will be a valuable addition to the library of university teachers in any discipline.

Lia Litosseliti
City University London, UK
l.litosseliti@city.ac.uk
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Governing universities globally: organisations, regulation and rankings, by Roger King, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 256 pp., £65 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-84720-739-5

I confess I embarked on this review with some scepticism: globalisation has become rather an easy concept as a change agent in higher education and the banking crisis has demonstrated

how, when the dust has eventually settled, we are driven back to the grim local task of sorting out the consequences. However King's argument that higher education systems are experiencing a world-wide convergence, and universities themselves are engaged in a 'pan-national isomorphism' (3) is ultimately very convincing. He sees the forces of globalisation operating through ranking processes (Shanghai Jiao Tong and Times Higher Education QS World University), the influence of international organisations (OECD, UNESCO, and the European Union), through the private sector providers (university consortia, distance learning and the for profit international universities) and through networks of government officials and transnational cooperation. If one thinks back to the forces which might have influenced higher education in the 1980s, one is struck by the isolation of national systems from one another, the Commonwealth and the US spheres of influence apart. The respectful dialogue between the UK and US systems that took place in the 1960s and 1970s has been replaced by a much more diverse set of interlocking international influences deriving from a plethora of exchanges, official, networked and informal, and from the rapid communication of national policy initiatives to and between policy makers in other parts of the world. No better example of this can be found in the fact that 45 nations regard themselves as associated with the Bologna Process although there are only 27 countries in the EU. Why should countries with such distinctive and well developed higher education systems as Russia and Australia care about a process which is EU focussed?

What is impressive about King's approach is the wide use of sources to support his argument. In the first chapter he draws attention to the startling growth in cross border education, the establishment of three pre-eminent international for profit providers, Apollo (now established in the UK with its take over of BPP), Laureate, and Kaplan, who have all enjoyed rising share prices and an enormous expansion in student numbers. If one adds to this the growth in fee paying international students to public universities and the need for these universities to devise international strategies, the global character of higher education begins to take shape. King quotes data that 20% of the world's scientific papers are co-authored internationally and that international research collaborations have grown by 50% in the UK in the last decade as indicating that globalisation is as much a research phenomenon as student number driven. He argues that these developments promote 'soft' regulation, in the form of advice and recommendations from international authorities 'as part of the acceleration of epistemic regulatory influence on national policy makers' (77).

In later chapters he examines the extent to which economic models, ideas about public choice and the value of markets, and the pervasive adoption of new public management theories have spread internationally as standard public policy approaches to managing public higher education systems. These are allied to the influence of the US doctoral university sector in driving national higher education systems down the path of institutional differentiation with 'world class' universities at the top of the system. Quoting widely from the phenomenological sociologists he argues that there are world-wide convergencies in forms of university organisation, curricula and the rise of academic disciplines which contribute to 'the global framing of the modern university'. He goes on to quote literature on the reliance of the regulatory state on "'flat", horizontal and overlapping sites of networked governance' (75), on the growth of transnational governance through organisations like OECD which both serves as an international forum for policy-makers and publishes data by which performance of higher education systems can be compared, which all lead to a form of voluntary global coordination. The roles of the EU through the Bologna Process and of OECD are explored in detail.

The second part of the book deals primarily with the influence that international and national league tables have on the organisation of national higher education systems. He draws

extensively on established authorities in this field, Marginson, Hazelkorn and his own colleagues at the Centre for Higher Education Research and Innovation (CHERI) to show how international rankings are being used to determine institutional strategies and in some systems actual funding allocations. Perhaps significantly, in the light of the above, he has been able to incorporate many of the findings of the recent OECD/IMHE conference on university rankings and their consequences. The impact of such rankings on the search for the elusive 'world class' set of institutions can be seen in the UK higher education framework document (DBIS 2009), in the German 'Excellence Initiative' and in the concern in many countries that they are missing something by not being there. At a local level the siren voice of 'world class-ness' can be judged by the statement of a middle ranking (in UK league tables) university to its alumni under the heading 'World leading university':

The University of... as been ranked as a world top 200 university in the 2009 Times higher Education QS World University rankings [a deeply suspect ranking because 40% of its ranking depends on a reputational assessment based on a low return rate] once again. Being ranked in the top 200 of 9000 universities places the University of... in the world's top 2.5% of higher education institutions.

King's thesis can, of course, be taken too far. Universities that are actually 'world class' – let's call them Oxford and Cambridge – are not likely to be influenced by globalised regulation, 'soft' or otherwise, or even by rankings (except to crow over one another), nor are the academics whose books and articles have propelled their universities to the top of the league tables. Institutional isomorphism may be international but is also intensely local with universities adopting one another's structures quite unthinkingly because their's has not delivered a high performance. Governments asking a group of businessmen (the Independent Review of fee levels) to look at academic standards in universities are more likely to be reacting to populist criticisms in a Select Committee report than the carefully modulated views of an OECD Thematic Review. There remains plenty of space for local initiative, good and bad.

Nevertheless *Governing Universities Globally* demonstrates a range of pressures, normative internationalisation, powerful networked concepts and 'soft' regulation which do more to shape our higher education system than the professionals who work in the system realise. So this is a timely book. King does not venture a view as to whether the 'hidden persuaders' that he has uncovered are a good or bad influence on higher education. Are we better hoping our rulers are picking up ideas from an OECD conference than their own backbenchers? We may not always like operating within frameworks that owe their coherence to discourses in Paris or Bologna but may they not be a little more educated than the crudity of a budgetary system that produces the ELQ disaster or the shock waves that accompanied the intervention by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Laura Spence affair? We should be grateful to Professor King for showing us that there is so powerful an alternative source of policy drivers for the higher education system than simply being left to our own devices.

Reference

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Michael Shattock
 Institute of Education, University of London, UK
 m.shattock@ioe.ac.uk
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