Management”) to the useful and insightful (Claire Swann’s “Admissions Officer: A Profession and a Career”, Joyce Smith’s “Recruitment: Student Outreach Strategies” and Joe F. Head’s “Collegiate Telecounseling and Recruitment Videos”) to the brilliant (Stanley E. Henderson’s “A Historical View of an Admissions Dilemma: Seeking Quantity or Quality in the Student Body”).

As a barometer of the increasing maturity of college admissions as an intricate profession with bifurcated duties and responsibilities, Swann and Henderson’s handbook is a valuable addition to the emerging professional literature. As such, it is especially valuable as a tool for helping new admissions practitioners understand they have joined a profession – one with both an accepted body of good (and useful) practices and one with a clearly delineated and viable career path. More importantly, however, the handbook in toto and several of its essays in particular should be must reading for college and university presidents and faculty. For colleges and universities both small and large, both elite and pedestrian, both public and private, it is becoming increasingly clear that admissions and enrollment management are the keys to institutional survival and prosperity. Presidents and faculty, however, have only sometimes grasped that that is a shared responsibility between admissions and the larger campus community. Reading Swann and Henderson’s handbook will both disabuse them of that misperception and give them a first insight into how it should be done.

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The author presents a historical perspective of the evolution of Brazil’s public education system in the context of its political economy. Given the title of the book, one might have expected an emphasis on the strengths rather than the weaknesses of the education system. The main theme of the book, however, is about the politicization of the country’s education system. It is made up of seven chapters. Chapter two gives an overview of the economic (one of the ten largest economies in the world) and political (alternation of military and civilian government and political (alternation of military and civilian governance) characteristics of Brazil. It presents a statistical documentation of its income, population, urbanization, and labor market conditions as well as accounts for its public revenues and expenditures. The remaining chapters capitalize on the “backwardness” of the education system under different political leadership. The discussion focuses on three specific issues: 1) the distribution of authority and resources, 2) the relationships between the public and private schools, and 3) the inequalities of educational opportunities by region, race, gender, and class.

The book presents an internally consistent view of the author’s findings that are based on interviews with administrators and policy makers conducted between 1986 and 1990. Judging by the elaborate listing of notes at the end of each chapter (for a total of almost 600), it appears that the author must have turned every leaf in Brazil to grasp the intricacies of the system. He exposes the inefficiency of Brazilian public education as complicated by the “special” role accorded to private schools within the system. He patiently reiterates, over and over again, the inept political meddling in the education system. The message comes across loud and clear reflecting a very high level of frustration with the status quo. After six decades of policy debate over education reform, Brazil is still a laggard behind many Latin American countries. The education crisis in Brazil takes on several dimensions. First, Brazilian governments have not accorded top priority to education, despite upholding the promise of achieving universal primary education and eradicating illiteracy. Second, the education administration at all levels is highly dependent on the political system. Instruction and learning become, therefore, secondary in importance. Third, the proliferation of controlling agencies (including funding) has resulted in the creation of a complex web of multiple autonomous systems leading to accountability and duplication problems. Fourth, education segregation is maintained by a dualistic setting of high-cost, high-quality private schools for the elite and middle class kids and low-cost and low-quality public schools for the remaining children.

The evaluation identifies both input and output measures. Under-investment in education has been the norm with a disproportionate share allocated to higher education. Basic education has been neglected. Teachers in public schools receive low pay and poor training. Enrollments (reported by states) have expanded over time with slower growth in the very recent years. A high dropout rate (close to 50%) at the primary level is quite common. The quality of the Brazilian schools is basically very low.

Perhaps, the best part of the book is offered in chapter 4 (Public Purpose and Private Interest) which portrays the true dynamics of the Brazilian education system. Advancing private interests over the public good (Clientelismo) is pervasive. Public resources for edu-
cation are, accordingly, diverted toward political gains. Political manipulation, including public jobs to supporters (Empreguismo), scholarship distribution, federal resource transfer to state and municipalities, and student assistance programs, imposes costly trade-offs on the country’s development. By the same token, financial subsidies to private schools and “free” public universities cause both inefficiencies and inequities. The well-documented section on inequalities gives the reader a better perspective on the major hurdles facing the Brazilian people. Political survival cannot continue to take precedence over the national agenda of human development.

Although the book does not address where the country will be headed over the next century, it leaves the reader convinced that, under the circumstances, Brazil will never be able to join the ranks of the developed world. The education system cannot foster independence and accountability unless it portrays those characteristics itself. Financing reform is crucial to both the internal and external efficiency of the education system. The author, however, advocates a pure political solution: more democratic governance as opposed to education reform. Yet, it often takes an educated citizenry to nurture democracy!

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This multi-author piece addresses, through a series of eight essays, many of the problems faced by the academic community worldwide in the 1990s and into the next century. However, it is not likely to be particularly useful as a resource for those strictly conducting theoretical and empirical research in the field of education economics. It is, though, likely to appeal to the academic interests of researchers in the areas of educational management and to administrators in higher education. For the rest of us, the volume does at least provide a few insights into the new directions that many business administration colleges are now taking in the United States. Presently, the College of Business at my university is attempting to revise the way it recognizes and rewards teaching, research, and service. Additionally, we have recently undergone a revamping of our organiza-
tional structure, resulting in new and combined departments within our College, a topic of one of the essays contained in this volume. Below, I will detail a few of the essays which present many of the elements that are the main focus of the entire volume.

The first essay of the volume deals with these issues, as many others do. One slight limitation of this essay along with others in this volume, at least for American readers, is an emphasis on case studies from European countries, particularly the Scandinavian countries. In large part though, the lack of “local knowledge” does not impose prohibitive costs to understanding the ideas within the text. Välimaa, Aittola and Konttinen detail, in the first essay, the impact of a quality assessment study performed in the early 1990s at Jyväskylä University in Finland. These authors note that the assessment touched on familiar themes: (1) the scope of the university’s mission statement, (2) the internationalization of the curriculum, (3) the restructuring of the administrative hierarchy, (4) the redefining of quality in teaching and research, and (5) the need to address low retention rates, to name a few. The quality assessment focused heavily on teaching and learning, and the University responded by electing a department “or teaching group as the top teaching group of the year … the University has [also] organized a ‘marketplace’ for higher education pedagogy improvement at the university’s main library, containing a computer connection to global networks, research reports on learning … and a collection of journals (p. 17).” My College has responded similarly in the past few years by establishing a teaching/learning enhancement committee which has created a similar “marketplace” within our building. Many of these ideas and others contained in this essay are a direct outgrowth of the “new” definitions of teaching, research and service as “scholarship” that have come from Scholarship Assessed (1997), by Glasick, Huber and Mearoff. Additionally, the evaluating peer group at Jyväskylä noted the “need to create an effective mission statement” for the university, the need to pay attention to the university’s role in the region it serves, the need to stimulate out-of-class interaction with faculty and students, and the need for faculty to create different tools for self-evaluation. All of these, as I noted above, are familiar themes. Methods chosen by Jyväskylä to address these concerns included the development of a new university mission slogan—“Culture, Quality, Accountability;” the development of new study programs, the use of the student union in choosing teacher of the year nominees (fostering out-of-class interaction), and the use of semi-structured open-ended student evaluations of teaching by several departments on an experimental basis. All of us in academics, and particularly those in administration, are grappling with these and other issues. This essay offers some useful avenues to pursue in research, especially for those in educational management and related fields.