

are generally stronger than roles due to processes of internalization, self-construction and individuation (Giddens, 1991). At its simplest, 'identities organize the meaning, while roles organize the function' (p. 7). But it is perhaps collective rather than individual identity/ies that is/are of greatest interest to Castells in the book, and their use as tools to interrogate issues including the anti-New World Order social movements discussed above.

This is a powerful and insightful book that adds to Castells's reputation as one of the foremost social theorists writing today, and it offers something of interest to specialist and general reader alike.

REFERENCES

- Calhoun, C. 1994: *Social theory and the politics of identity*. Oxford: Blackwell.
 Giddens, A. 1991: *Modernity and self-identity: self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

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GETTING STARTED

Studying at university: how to adapt successfully to college life. G.W. Bernard, 2003. London: Routledge; ISBN 0 415 30312 5 paper, 132 pp. £9.99.

As I started reading *Studying at university*, I wondered whether it could live up to its billing as an 'essential guide for anyone wanting to know how they can make the very best of their university experience'. Further, would I, as a long serving lecturer, make more of my past and present university experience having consulted this 'down-to-earth' guide? Well, the answer was 'yes' on both counts. But to be sure I consulted two potential consumers of this study guide: one my 17-year-old nephew, whom I had recently been helping to complete his UCAS form, and my brother-in-law (his father), who teaches at a large mixed comprehensive in southern England, where he is in charge of advising sixth formers about their UCAS applications. Their verdict was resoundingly positive: the text was deemed very informative and the easy, accessible style was welcomed. Indeed, it will now be recommended reading for all sixth formers and their parents and copies will be added to the school library forthwith. Their one reservation was that at first glance it may look a little dry, but they pointed out that on closer scrutiny it was not.

Nevertheless, when the time comes to update this guide, it would be worth looking at ways of breaking down what might appear, to the less committed reader, to be large chunks of text.

George Bernard's vast experience of researching and teaching history in higher education and also speaking to students about the nerve-racking process of applying to university is put to good use throughout this readable book. In the preface, he clearly sets out his aims, which are to sketch out what modern universities are about and what being a student involves. He sees his audience as being parents, sixth-form teachers and university lecturers – all of whose views have in one way or another been incorporated into this review.

Studying at university is divided into three parts, although the book is also designed to be dipped into as, and when, the need arises. Part I looks at how universities began; I found this whistle-stop tour fascinating but perhaps my nephew was less enamoured by this part. Part II considers what universities are about and in doing so asks why some universities are better than others. The short disquisition about why university league tables are misleading is excellent and in particular the critique of performance indicators is insightful. This book is more than just a commentary on studying at university, for in many ways it is a biography of a history academic, where the particulars of personal experiences are used to illuminate the changing generalities of university life. Part III provides a useful commentary on 'How to make the most of your studies'. Specifically, Bernard writes about 'Getting started' and 'Routines of study' – these should be compulsory reading for all students. The chapters on 'Lectures and lecturers' and 'Classes, seminars and tutorials' were for me timely reminders of what it is like to be a student on the receiving end of all this and it was good to hear Bernard exhorting students to turn up on time. The tips and approaches to study which are offered are useful guides to reassure students about what is expected of them, but he also stresses that the art of learning ultimately rests with the individual student. Hence I shall be sending my review copy post-haste to my nephew, urging him to read the chapters on 'Revising for examinations' and 'Examination technique'.

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PLEASURES AND PAINS

Goya. Robert Hughes, 2003. London: Harvill Press; ISBN 1 843 43054 1, 429 pp., £20.00.