

## The Way It Was: the University of Iowa, 1964-1989

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structors as Berryman, West, and Justice, for the Workshop experience, and for Iowa City. "That was a golden time, wasn't it?" Dana recalls Robert Lowell saying when, twenty years after shared Workshop days, he chanced to meet his former poetry instructor in London (158).

Dana's book gives most of its attention to the Workshop in its early days, particularly the 1950s and '60s when the program was housed in honorably shabby temporary barracks along the Iowa River. The 23 essays in *The Eleventh Draft*, written by former students and teachers in the Workshop and edited by Frank Conroy, the current director, have a broader base. Many of the writers are familiar with the Workshop in more recent times, and their concern is less with the Workshop itself than the writing life. In one of the best pieces, "What I Learned at the Iowa Writers' Workshop," Ethan Canin notes that little of what he learned there was learned from teachers and classes; in fact, Canin says he wrote nothing his first year-and-a-half in Iowa City. What he did learn came in the final half-year from the furious labor needed to produce stories for his M.F.A. thesis: the hard truth that writing is "this most difficult life" (28). That seemingly obvious but not immediately apparent insight is echoed in Conroy's brief introductory remarks when he sums up what he has learned in twelve years as Workshop director, namely, that "writing is a test of character as well as a test of talent, and talent is more common than character" (xiii). Therein is another hard truth.

*The Way It Was: The University of Iowa, 1964-1989*, by D. C. Spriestersbach. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999. xv, 264 pp. Illustrations, appendixes, index. \$27.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY AMY SUE BIX, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

In the decades after World War II, America's Cold War defense needs combined with an active scientific, medical, and social agenda to transform the nation's universities. The opportunity to tap an unprecedented flood of federal funding changed the University of Iowa, as it did others, from an institution financed primarily by tuition and state appropriations, into one driven by a continuous quest for outside grants. Increasingly, a university's status would be defined not in terms of undergraduate teaching, but by a focus on research, graduate training, and success in competing for funds.

One man instrumental in helping the University of Iowa negotiate this transition was Duane Spriestersbach, who served from 1965 to 1989 as dean of the Graduate College and vice-president for educational

development and research (plus seven months as interim president). This book represents his assessment of those 24 years, "an institutional and a personal history" of the University of Iowa (xi).

In the first six chapters, Spriestersbach offers year-by-year accounts of his experience in helping attract the funding essential to expand the university into an elite institution pursuing cutting-edge work, especially in science and medicine. His appendixes offer data underlining the remarkable evolution: between 1964 and 1989, the university's faculty more than doubled, and total student population and graduate enrollment almost doubled. Gifts, grants, and contracts grew from \$11 million in 1963-64 to \$140 million in 1988-89 (mostly from the Public Health Service, NASA, and the Office of Education). Corporate support expanded from \$188,000 in 1963-64 to almost \$13 million in 1988-89; foundation money rose from \$507,000 to \$5.6 million.

Remaining chapters concentrate on other aspects of the university's history, including the development of modern campus computerization and controversial plans to develop a prestigious laser-science center. Readers present in Iowa City or around other campuses during the sixties and seventies may be particularly interested in chapter eight, covering the Vietnam era. Spriestersbach begins with a chronological review of events reported in the *Daily Iowan*: teach-ins, sit-ins, rallies, marches, vigils, anti-ROTC protests. Episodes of vandalism infuriated locals and led to confrontations with police, even as more peaceful expressions of antiwar sentiment drew thousands of supporters. Spriestersbach gives extra dimension to his reflections by quoting from interviews he conducted with fellow faculty and administrators. One staffer remembers putting her shoulder against the door of Old Capitol to prevent students pushing in; another reveals that the university replaced vulnerable ground-floor windows with Plexiglass. Accounts show emotions still running high: one administrator recalls watching his son being arrested; a retired policeman insists that outside agitators incited violent acts. Adding a humorous note, a former vice-president for finance describes how he mingled with crowds to monitor tensions, passing for a student himself in beard and scruffy dress. Capping this insider's view, Spriestersbach concludes that the University of Iowa "ended up stronger when the unrest was finally over. It knew itself better and understood its core values better; it acknowledged, sometimes grudgingly to be sure, a new and appropriate respect of its students. Perhaps most important, the university . . . lived up to its founding premises of open inquiry and dedication to learning, in spite of fear and dissent" (208).

Spriestersbach concludes by relating his philosophy of university management, which starts, "Don't accept a position unless you believe in its mission and that of the institution of which it is a part" (237). Spriestersbach's memoirs make evident his deep belief in the University of Iowa, and readers who also care about education will appreciate his dedication.

*Public History: Essays from the Field*, edited by James B. Gardner and Peter S. LaPaglia. Public History Series. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 1999. xv, 422 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$48.50 cloth, \$39.50 paper.

REVIEWED BY JAMES E. MCMILLAN, CENTRAL COLLEGE

This latest volume in Krieger's Public History Series reflects the considerable changes and advances in the field since the publication of Barbara Howe and Emory Kemp's *Public History: An Introduction* in 1986. Indeed, a quick scanning of the contents of James Gardner and Peter LaPaglia's *Public History: Essays from the Field* indicates how far public history has gone beyond the four traditional areas of archives, editing, preservation, and museums. These are covered sufficiently, but new additions include record management, historical consultants and consulting businesses, film and media, and policy advisement among others.

All of the essays are new in content and authorship, but several address recurring themes in public history: the age-old battle with academic historians and the continuing question of employment opportunity in just that area. Since the employment crisis of the 1970s opened the door to public history, 35 percent of new Ph.D.s as of 1993 have found jobs outside of academe (up from 10 percent in 1977). Still, as past National Council on Public History president Patricia Mooney-Melvin emphasizes, historians as a whole have been reticent to embrace new applied history directions. The national audience for history has thus been static—if not in numbers, in understanding—and in the process, the entire history profession, audience and practitioner, has been marginalized. This identity crisis of history in the United States is the overriding question confronting the profession: whether to emphasize research and writing, to teach in an academic setting, or to move toward increasing the general public's awareness of the vicissitudes of the nation's past.

The section, "Varieties of Public Historians," reveals changes in the field since its beginnings in the 1970s and formalization in the 1980s.

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