

1-1-1996

## Editor's Comments

RS

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### Recommended Citation

S, R (1996) "Editor's Comments," *Grand Valley Review*: Vol. 15: Iss. 1, Article 2.

Available at: <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/gvr/vol15/iss1/2>

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## Editor's Comments

In winter, 1996, seven faculty members (all chairs of academic departments), an academic dean, some other administrators, and some staff members—sixteen participants in all—were invited to participate in an "Academic Leadership Roundtable." Sponsored by the Provost's Office and organized by Bart Merkle, Associate Provost and Dean of Students, and Diana Pace, Director of Counseling, the program consisted of Thursday night meetings throughout the semester. Each session (after the first) began with talks by representatives of the various functions of the University in order to provide for the participants—most of them fairly new at Grand Valley—the opportunity to learn about the issues and challenges in higher education. The discussions that followed allowed them to examine the beliefs and values that guide this institution. At the introductory session, Adrian Tinsley, former Dean of William James College (of Grand Valley State Colleges—see the fall, 1995 issue of the *Grand Valley Review*) and now President of Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts, spoke of several challenges in higher education, posed by such changes in the nation as a more conservative political and social climate and the rapid expansion of technology. We are pleased to begin this issue with an adaptation of that talk.

There follow four responses to it. The first, by President Lubbers, is a personal account of how challenges at Grand Valley have been and continue to be opportunities to make an institution that is increasingly responsive to the needs of the community it serves. The next three essays are by participants in the Roundtable. Hari Singh gives an economist's views of how the growing cost of higher education may alter the perceived functions of universities, particularly as a purveyor of general education. Robert Hendersen sees a threat to faculty control of curricula because of governmental and administrative desires to be fiscally conservative. And Cynthia Mader discovers that job satisfaction at Grand Valley has been a key to its success.

To end this section, Mary Seeger notes the challenges in higher education that women have faced and continue to face; and David Seibold, one of the founding members of Grand Forum, describes that new program's value to the tri-county community.

A break in the discussion of academic issues and challenges is provided by a new associate at Grand Valley, Michelle De Rose, whose poems are apropos of Western Michigan and the fall season.

At the beginning of fall term this year, the GVSU Faculty Teaching and Learning Center sponsored its second annual Conference on Teaching and Learning. The keynote address, "Encouraging the Campus Focus on Learning and Teaching," was given by Joan North, past senior consultant to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, and presently Dean of the College of Professional Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. We are pleased to include an adaptation of her talk in this issue.

The next five essays focus on teaching and learning in multicultural education. Mark Luttenton tells of his taking biology students to Belize to experience learning as the joy of discovery. Edward Cole argues for the retention of the Russian Studies Program, considered by some to be no longer of compelling attention since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Herbert Bellrichard-Perkins adds some new insights into the importance of continuing to explore and discuss multicultural education. Wendy Wenner and Curt Jones used their sabbaticals to find ways to help Grand Valley teacher candidates prepare for student teaching in the inner city schools and here tell us of their results. And Margarita Krakusin explains how one faculty member combines the teaching of Spanish with service to Hispanic-American communities.

Teresa Castelão-Lawless's review of a new book in the history of science ends our fall, 1996 issue. We hope that you have found it to be thought provoking and invite you to respond to any of the ideas presented herein.

—R. S.

## Call For Papers

Because of requests to make our next issue (spring, 1997) a vehicle for transmitting exchanges on several timely subjects, we will not focus, as we have been doing recently, on a single topic. The School of Public Administration has asked us to devote a section of the forthcoming issue to public service, partly in recognition of National Public Service Week in May. The General Education Committee has asked that we reopen the discussion in print of general education at Grand Valley, the topic of our special issue in winter, 1994. Another request has been to follow the suggestion made by Dean Joan North in her essay, printed in the current issue, to tell stories about teaching. And still another request has been to have faculty members in various disciplines review, for a non-specialist audience, books that have been especially important in their disciplines over the last five or ten years. We invite you to contribute to the spring issue in any of these ways or in some other way; we also very much welcome poetry, fiction, personal essays, and art. Send both hard copy and a diskette (preferably in Word) to the Editor, 166 Lake Huron Hall. Deadline is January 16, 1997.