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**Review of *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*. Maggie Berg and Barbara K. Seeber. Reviewed by Daniel Liechty.**

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rural areas did not fare worse than urban ones. In some cases, they actually did better. Nonetheless, the lack of good-paying jobs and opportunities in small towns is undeniable.

Immigration and race are not particularly salient or foregrounded concerns among her informants, but antipathy to Madison and Milwaukee indicates they were looking for someone to blame. In recent years, Donald Trump, Scott Walker, and other Republicans have deployed populist rhetoric against the news media, universities, immigrants, racial minorities, and liberals. By activating a latent 'us versus them' hostility among rural and working class whites, their divisive tactics have paid electoral dividends. Political analysts have debated whether economic troubles or racism and demographic change is more important in explaining the rise of Trump. Of course, the answer is not a simple binary choice, but Cramer's focus on rural resentment adds a new perspective.

*The Politics of Resentment* is an important contribution to the literature on contemporary American politics. Both methodologically and substantively, it breaks new ground. To be sure, Cramer's research was confined to a single, predominantly white American state and the generalizability of her findings is arguably limited. She has provided, however, many ideas worthy of deep consideration, and an innovative methodology for future researchers to pursue.

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Maggie Berg and Barbara K. Seeber, *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*. University of Toronto Press (2017), 115 pages, \$19.95 (paperback).

If I remember correctly, it was in direct reaction to 'fast food' that I first read about a deliberate move toward 'slow' food. As one who easily remembers my grandmother's cooking, which often took hours and hours, as well as the annual Saturday night

barbeque at church camp, the cooking of which started soon after dawn and simmered for most of the day, I needed no convincing that 'slow' cooking was the superior method. What I only recently learned, however, is that this initial action toward slow food preparation was to become the tip of a more general movement based on a philosophy of 'slow' applied in many areas of life. A quick Google search brings up many articles and whole websites dedicated to applying the principles of the 'slow' philosophy not only to cooking, but also to city living, investing, film, gardening, parenting, technology, and many other aspects of our culture and existence. It is really a developing counter-cultural phenomenon, dedicated to the idea of bringing a sense of deliberate mindfulness to whatever activities one pursues, and resisting the external and internal pressures to load one's life with activities, to constantly 'get more done,' and in general to prize efficiency and speed above all else. Needless to say, the academicians who read this journal need no one to convince them that while we were initially attracted to academic life as a 'life of the mind,' what our lives often come down to is an ongoing rat race of increased teaching schedules, committee meetings, fund raisers, grant deadlines, student consultations, compliance paperwork, on and on. We can only thank professors Berg and Seeber, of Queen's University and Brock College respectively, for reminding us again of our initial calling and applying the principles of 'slow' to the academy and to academic life.

An opening chapter on time management begins with the fact, backed up by research findings, that 'lack of time' is one of the chief and abiding complaints of professors and other academics. Yet most of the existing literature on time management for academics at best offer tips on how to push your workload on to others (especially grad students!) or boil down to admonitions to work even harder. Berg and Seeber review this literature, noting that what these time management specialists have in common is that their advice ties in to what Berg and Seeber call 'scheduled time,' the kind of time they suggest only exacerbates the problem of feeling harried, stressed, fragmented and always behind in one's work. Berg and Seeber call for increased 'timeless time' in the academy—time to ponder in a relaxed atmosphere, alone time, time with colleagues in one's field. In terms of suggestions for individuals, they cite research encouraging one

to go offline whenever possible, to guard 'downtime' in one's schedule, and to take regular 'time out' times even in the midst of busyness. However, they also strongly recognize that this is more than an individual problem. It is a problem of the fact that colleges and universities are increasingly run as businesses and governed by principles of business ethics. This needs to be resisted by those in the professorate. Much easier said than done, to be sure, but the hope is that this book may become a catalyst to at least get us thinking about collective resistance. Our job as academicians is to encourage people to think and to engage knowledge critically. The university cannot simply become another institutional cog in the machine of capitalist society—to the extent we allow it to become so, we professors pay a heavy price in terms of the deterioration of our working conditions in the form of loss of 'timeless time.'

The heart of the book looks at research pertaining to conditions of learning and how learning can be encouraged in the classroom according to the principles of 'slow.' One of the chief findings in the research Berg and Seeber highlight is the fact that learning can and should be a pleasurable experience for students and professors alike. If one's experience in the classroom is mainly that of high stress and high pressure, one might do well to think of ways to reorganize one's pedagogical practices. Again, there are political and institutional aspects of the problems faced by professors in their classrooms and with their students—pressures to pack more and more into syllabi, increased class sizes, pressures to move students along toward graduation, to name only a few. However, even given these external factors, here Berg and Seeber do suggest that pedagogical practices can exacerbate or ease the stress of the classroom. There are no magic bullets, to be sure, but a number of the topics covered in this chapter—concerning nervousness, breathing, pacing and so on—are grounded in experience, research and common sense. It could well be the most useful chapter an academic might read this year. Further chapters on research and collegiality also offer very helpful frameworks for reimagining this important aspect of our work and the context in which we complete it.

I admit that when I was sent this book for review, my initial reaction was that this was likely a kind of fluff or fad book,

probably a title suggested by someone with an eye toward marketing trends. Furthermore, reading and reviewing the book was another entry onto a long list of 'things to do' this summer! I am pleased to say, however, that my initial reaction was far off target. The book is well researched, nicely written and speaks to an issue of central importance to those of us pursuing the academic life. While I won't enumerate them here, I can think of at least three distinct ideas or practices I learned from this book that I fully plan to implement into my academic work this very semester. I am a rather old squirrel in the teaching game, so there are not too many books about which I can say something that concrete, and that already speaks strongly for the value of this little volume. At the very least, the book is a timely reminder to professors that we are first and foremost human beings, who have a right to private life, recreation and spiritual development, even as we pursue the 'life of the mind' in our increasingly rushed and mechanized academies.

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