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BOOK REVIEW

Williams, Noel, *How to Get a 2:1 in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies*, Sage, London, 2004, ISBN 0 7619 4912 7, 230pp.,

Despite never quite explaining what a 2:1 in Media, Communication and Cultural Studies actually is, its obvious this textbook is geared toward the business end of education. Williams' rebuffs critics of his relatively 'instrumental' approach to study by claiming to be about the 'making' of the student and that the title is "just a way to sell the book" (2). Well, after that, he had my attention. It's never too early for students to learn about the growing shift toward an entrepreneurial approach to education.

That said, Williams' does teach that the responsibility of learning falls to both the university *and* the student, encouraging the student to be challenged by their courses and to draw on his grammatical and structural sections as primers to solidify the student's work so that the content can be bold and creative. Through his 'what makes a good communicator', 'what makes a good learner' and 'what gets good marks' sections, Williams' sets out the requirements for attaining top marks. Unfortunately, these sections account for two-thirds of the book, so the actual topical content (what you might actually learn studying Media, Communication and Cultural Studies) is quite diminutive.

Through two chapters, 'fifty key ideas' and 'forty key thinkers', Williams introduces the undergraduate student to the traditional name-checks but in trying to cover three relatively wide disciplines at once, there are a lot of notable exclusions and most of them are from the cultural studies field. Surely, the communications bias of both the 'thinkers' and 'ideas' sections stems from Williams' own position as head of Art, Design, Communications and Media at Sheffield Hallam

University but in attempting to cover so much ground, the text's relevance to all three fields is little questionable.

However, criticism aside, *How to Get a 2:1* would be a useful addition to a first year reading list, especially for its focus on structure, grammar and improved learning skills, because despite Williams' aspiration to insight curiosity in the reader, this is ultimately a guide for "making better students, better learners and...better communicators" (2). And that seems like a fairly reasonable aim.

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