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Institutions of higher education have rapidly expanded and, hence, diversified their social functions. Stratification of these institutions into elite universities, mass universities and community colleges replicates the class stratification in the work force. The existence of higher education as a filtering device for a stratified economy is increasingly obvious, but the realization is not without structural and ideological contradictions. The relationships within this expansion and the resulting problems for the mass of college students and the most powerful college students suggests a difficult future for higher education in general.

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The Increasing Stratification of Higher Education: Ideology and Consequence

As higher education has expanded and diversified, it has become a hierarchial system of institutions. It is stratified into at least three distinct levels: The elite university (including the prestigious state universities such as Michigan or Berkeley), the mass university, and the community colleges. The elite institutions are on the top of the hierarchy in resources and esteem, the mass institutions serve the bulk of the college constituents, and the community colleges focus on vocational and limited educational goals for traditionally non-college bound groups.[1] The structures of these institutions, the clientele they serve and the consequences of an education in one or the other are vastly different. The goals of 'open' higher education which came from the pressures of previously excluded groups during the 1960's were more access to better jobs and larger shares of the social wealth, but there is little evidence that these goals have been achieved. The economic institutions are not capable of absorbing an ever increasing number of college educated labor.

The expansion of access to higher education has resulted in an increasing stratification of function among the educational institutions. In the fashion that the development of public education historically adjusted to the demands of different social classes, the institutions of higher education have evolved to serve the needs of different social classes.[2]

Ivy League and prestigious state universities produce students to fill the upper echelons of business, professions, and academe. The vast majority of mass

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[1]There are colleges and universities that do not fit neatly into this schematic, i.e., small private Black colleges, Catholic colleges and other small non-elite colleges. They occupy a special status most often fulfilling the functions of state universities for their clientele most of whom have a similar class background.

[2]Michael Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy and Schools,* (N.Y.: Praeger, 1971). Katz documents the growth of public secondary education. The data on the expansion of higher education is equally compelling: "In 1869-1870 resident degree enrolments of both graduates and undergraduates totaled 52,300, or about 1 percent of the total population aged 18-24. By the 1919-1920 school year enrolments had risen to 597,000 or about 5 percent of the population. And by the fall of 1968 enrolments had reached 6.7 *million,* or almost 30 *percent* of the population." Office of Education, *Digest of Educational Statistics* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 8. See also Seymour E. Harris, *A Statistical Portrait of Higher Education: A Report for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education* (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1972). On p. 17 Harris says that in 1965 higher education enrolment data indicate that *41 percent* of the relevant age group were in college. Statistical trends are on pp. 247-248.

university students enter white collar bureaucratic and middle-level management positions, and the growing number of community college students swell the ranks of skilled and technical labor in industry.[3] This pattern of sorting for future employment begins in elementary school with the unequal geographical arrangements that segregate the wealthy from the middle class from the working class from the poor.[4] It is fostered by I.Q. tests that separate social classes, races and ethnic groups on the basis of 'natural' intelligence.[5] Achievement, including test scores, tends to go up as income goes up, and achievement in public school is an important criterion for college selection.[6] Occasionally, a 'brilliant' non-elite student bypasses the normal sorting process to be accepted at Harvard, but for the masses of high-school students this is impossible, hence, irrelevant.

Within colleges students are further stratified by social class through systems of tracking. Fred Pinkus reports that the community college students that come from families with income of less than $6,000 account for only 14 percent of all students transferring to four-year institutions, whereas students from families with incomes of more than $10,000 account for 36 percent of all transfer students.[7] Samuel Bowles cites supporting data from a recent study of one of the more equalitarian systems, California, to illustrate this stratified system.

> Over 18 percent of the students at the University of California in the mid 1960's came from families earning $20,000 or more, while less than 7 percent of the community colleges came from such families. (Less than 4 percent of the children not attending higher education came from such families.) Similarly, while only 12.5 percent of the students attending the university of California came from families earning less than $6,000, 24 percent of the students attending community colleges and 32 percent of the children not enrolled in higher education came from such families.[8]

These facts beg an analysis on two levels: 1. The structural relationship of higher education to the economy. 2. The ideology that regulates the demand and need for higher education. The structural and ideological aspects of higher education are not simply dialectically related, but within and between these levels are complex contradictions and convergences. This being the case, the

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[3]Howard P. Tuckman, *The Economics of the Rich,* (N.Y.: Randam House, 1973), p. 185, Randall Collins, "Functional and Conflict Theories of Educational Stratification," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 36, No. 6, (December 1971), p. 5; Ivar Berg, *Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 85-104, 143-176; Samuel Bowles, "An Integration of Higher Education into the Wage Labor System," unpublished manuscript, Harvard University and the University of Massachusetts (Nov. 1972).

[4]Christopher Jencks, *Inequality*, (N.Y.: Basic Books, 1972); Gabriel Kolko, *Wealth and Power in America*, (N.Y.: Praeger, 1962); Kenneth Prewitt and Alan Stone, *The Ruling Elites*, (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1973).

[5]Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, "I.Q. and the U.S. Class Structure," *Social Policy*, Vol. 3, Nos. 4 and 5, (Nov.-Dec., 1972 and Jan.-Feb., 1973).

[6]*Ibid.* Also, Patricia Cayo Sexton, *Education and Income*, (N.Y.: Viking Press, 1961), pp. 56-82.

[7]Fred Pinkus, "Tracking in Community Colleges," *The Insurgent Sociologist*, Vol. 4, No. 3, (Spring, 1974).

[8]Bowles, "An Integration of Higher Education into the Wage Labor System." See also W. L. Hansen and Burton Weisbrod, *Benefits, Costs and Finance of Public Higher Education*, (Chicago, 1969), p. 68. Similar studies of Florida confirm this pattern (D. Windham, *Education, Equality, and Income Redistribution: A study of Public Higher Education,* Lexington, Mass.: 1970), as does a nationwide Census survey showing that college students from families earning less than $5,000 a year are over twice as likely to be enrolled in two year (as opposed to four-year)colleges, compared to students from familities earning $15,000 and over. See Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 183, May 22, 1969. See also American Council on Education, *National Norms for Entering College Freshman*, Fall 1970 (Washington, 1970).

focus here is these relationships as they effect, first, the masses of college students and, second, the most powerful of college students.

The Expansion of Higher Education

The demand for college credentials in the work force and for the individual's self-esteem has paralleled the expansion of higher education. The major consequences of the escalation of credentials are: an over-educated, over-qualified labor force with a decreasing supply of suitable jobs, increasing job dissatisfaction, defeated expectations, alienation and contradiction producing discrepancies between the American dream and reality.[9] A tightening of the economy and the greater availability of college educated workers has led to distinctions of value between types of degrees. In competition for the scarce professional and executive positions a degree from an elite institution is considerably more valuable.[10] Employers can have their pick among hundreds of college educated applicants and they develop discriminating mechanisms to sort out the 'best' candidates. This, in turn, increases competition for access to elite institutions and access to graduate schools and lends itself to cutthroat individualism.

In order to accommodate the demand for college education, mass institutions have developed enormous bureaucracies reproducing factory-like conditions of existence and processing thousands of students equipped with papers to be exchanged in the market place for jobs. College degrees are stamps of an individual's saleability, and employers buy them as they do any other commodity, the highest quality and quantity for the lowest price. Industries, corporations and state and federal bureaucracies increasingly select applicants on the quantity of their education regardless of the actual job requirements.[11] Many jobs, in fact, do not utilize knowledge learned in college; the individual learns what s/he needs to know through on-the-job training.[12]

Despite the consequences, the growing complexity of the economy necessitates college trained managers, specialists and technicians. The institutions of higher education have become the training and recruiting grounds for industry, but the cost in time and money of this additional educational credential is borne by the student and her/his family.[13] Industry and government assume less of the

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[9]James O'Toole, "The Reserve Army of the Unemployed I and II," *Change*, May and June, 1975.

[10]Several studies support the conclusion that persons educated at elite institutions are over-represented on the top of business, political and economic careers. Kenneth Prewitt and Alan Stone, op. cit.; Gabriel Kolko, op. cit.; William Domhoff, *Who Rules America?*, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.; Prentice-Hall, 1967); ————————, *The Higher Circles*, (N.Y.: Random House, 1970); *David Horowitz*, "Billion Dollar Brains: How Wealth Puts Knowledge in its Pocket," *Ramparts*, (May, 1969). A recent example is President Nixon's second cabinet. Four of eleven men were from Harvard (3) and Cornell (1). Kissinger and Roy Ash, both close to Nixon, were Harvard men. In fact, Harvard graduates appear in cabinet positions with remarkable frequency: 4 out of 10 members of Kennedy's cabinet were Harvard men, not including Kennedy himself; Eisenhower had four also and Theodore Roosevelt had five. Besides government, Ivy League graduates frequently appear in Wall Street executive and legal positions, in top banking positions and at the head of the largest industries.

[11]Berg notes that data indicate that "there is a 'surplus' of college graduates who presumably 'drift down' to fill the deficit at the next lower level . . ." p. 58. In terms of jobs available Folger and Nam report "there will be about 3.1 million more high school graduates, in 1975 if the distribution remains the same as 1960, 850,000 more persons with some college education and 3.3 million more college graduates than will be required . . . " John K. Folger and Charles B. Nam, *Education of the American Population*, 1960 Census Monograph (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 169.

[12]Berg found that educational achievement was most often *inversely* correlated with worker performance and satisfaction, pp. 86-120.

[13]Both the decreasing support of higher education from government and business and the increasing costs of education to students and families are noted in a recent issue of a major business magazine. "The Coming Shakeout in Higher Education," *Forbes*, September 15, 1974, pp. 37-52.

responsibility for the educational demands they are placing on the work force with the reduction of aid to higher education. Ignoring the collective need for educated labor has created a sacrificial struggle for the ordinary student who assumes her/his place in the labor force as a reward.[14] Additionally, the non-rational spiraling of the demand for mass higher education from both employers and students has other unintended consequences.

Although college educated persons may earn more over a lifetime than non-college educated persons, the significance of these earnings is decreased by an over-production of degrees and applicants for similar jobs. Unemployment and under-employment are serious concerns for college graduates. The more persons possessing the degree, the less market value the degree will have and the less value it will have in terms of status and prestige to compensate for its lost monetary value. Additionally, census data does not demonstrate whether or not these income differentials would exist if social class and family background of graduates were controlled.[15]

As more graduates appear, job requirements will be pushed even higher and employers will become more selective in their hiring. Graduate degrees may become necessary for jobs that require little formal education to perform. Harris notes that graduate enrolment between 1960 and 1970 rose 1.7 times as much as undergraduate enrolment in four year institutions of higher education. "Graduate enrolment rose from 356,000 in 1960 to an estimated 946,000 in 1970 and is projected by the Office of Education to rise to 1,640,000 by 1979."[16] Upping the ante for jobs will increase the struggling within institutions for honors, grades, recommendations and faculty recognition. Competition for academic rewards and classroom performance is an expected result. On many campuses the pressure for top grades has created 'grade inflation', a recognition from faculty that every grade is related to the student's possibilities for the future in a tightening market.

The individual result of a college degree may be disappointing, but without large enrolments the survival of mass institutions and non-elite private colleges is threatened. Masses of students are needed to keep the mass institutions alive; faculties need enrolments to maintain their own jobs; administrators need growth to justify their continued existence to the legislatures or other funders; campus workers need the institution as the provider of their continued employment.[17] Industry and government continue to encourage youth to go to college to keep them out of a sagging labor market and/or off the welfare roles. Minority groups of all races and creeds profess that a college education is the only vehicle of advancement for their group. Indeed, many groups are better off than they were before they had access to higher education, yet the net result

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[14]Andre Gorz, "Capitalist Relations of Production and the Socially Necessary Labor Force," in Arthur Lothstein, ed., *All We Are Saying . . .* , (N.Y.: Putnam, 1970), pp. 156-77.

[15]Census of the Population: 1970, General Population Characteristics, Final Report, DC (1)-1B, U.S. Bureau of the Census Summary, 1973. Newman et al., *Report on Higher Education*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, 1971).

[16]Harris, p. 13. If one looks at the percentage of college students entering the professional schools and then the percentage graduating and practicing a profession, and at the enormous cost in time and money, plus the essential prerequisites in undergraduate education, one can see why so few students who want to enter the professions are actually able. In 1961 Harris reports only 19 percent of the college graduates in one sample intended to go to graduate or professional schools. Only 3 percent expected to go into medicine and 4 percent into law, J. A. Davis, *Undergraduate Career Decisions: Correlates of Occupational Choice*, (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1965), pp. 210-212 as reported in Harris, p. 101.

[17]Paul Lauter, "Retrenchment: What the Managers Are Doing," presented at a convention of the Modern Languages Association, (December, 1974).

for students as a group is disastrous. The very minorities who have recently gained entrance to educational institutions will be the first pushed out when the institutions shift gears to prepare for leaner times.[18] Just as the masses of students are dependent on the state of the market for the expansion of educational opportunity so are the educational institutions dependent on the state of the market to service them.

The Ideological Context of Higher Education

Mass schooling in preparation for work implies that the school is analogous to the workplace, factory or office. Administrators are managers as agents of the state or other funders; faculty are the workers that process students (raw material) into marketable commodities.[19] In mass institutions of higher education students go through a class based socialization process that creates the same conditions for conflict that are created in the workplace.

> The arena of the class struggle has been extended to include the schools and colleges: The classroom, as well as the factory floor and the office, may now be the stage on which the contradictions of corporate capitalist economy are acted out.[20]

Much has been done to spell out the contradictions in the factory and in the office, but the contradictions in the classroom have yet to be spelled out or, perhaps understood.

The expansion of higher education is instrumental in the "proletariatization" of the middle classes. The contradictions of this process have only begun to become explicit.[21] High school students are channeled through community colleges and mass universities toward 'better' careers than their fathers. However, they enter the labor market as a mass of white collar workers with little job security, high unemployment and the same routinization of tasks that the blue-collar worker experiences in the factory. Only one in five college graduates actually enters a job that s/he has been specifically prepared for in college.[22] Often the low level white collar worker is worse off than his/her factory counterpart. S/he may make less money and have little control over working hours and conditions, both of which are somewhat regulated by unions in industry. Many college educated youths are moving into the industrial labor force directly for lack of other job possibilities. At the same time college graduates find

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[18]Jomills H. Braddock II, "Colonialism, Education, and Black Americans," presented at the Annual Research Institute of the District of Columbia Sociological Society, (March, 1975).

[19]It is a question as to what actually is the product of mass institutions. Some lean toward the idea that knowledge produced by faculty is the legitimate product of universities. Others see the graduate as the product. Given the changes in the purposes and functions of mass higher education and its use as a funnel for the labor market only the latter position makes sense today. This means that the student has no subjective status whatsoever; s/he is the raw material to be formed into a marketable commodity. For a different perspective of students as a class see Irving Louis Horowitz and William H. Friedland, *The Knowledge Factory*, (Chacigo: Aldine Publishing Co., 1970).

[20]Samuel Bowles, "An Integration of Higher Education into the Wage Labor System," p. 3.

[21]Sandra J. Coyner and Martin Oppenheimer, "Scholars and White Collars: A Social History of the Great Debate," prepared for the American Sociological Association meetings, (September, 1976).

[22]An article in the Washington Post November 19, 1974 headed "New Study Says Jobs Don't Match Training" reports, "The study was based on interviews with 2,270 graduates of 50 randomly picked schools in four metropolitan areas. It focused on training programs for six major occupations. In three classed as professional or technical — accountant, computer programmer and electronic technician — only about one in every five graduates found suitable jobs."

themselves over-educated for the industrial jobs available and in tight competition for positions requiring a degree.[23]

Whether most college graduates enter the market as blue or white collar workers is increasingly irrelevant to their status and security. Each type of work, once differentiated by prestige, is essentially the same process for the employee. Both the white collar and blue collar worker are working for a wage, and as economic markets tighten, inflation and depression cycles progress, and the value of money declines, that wage is increasingly a consumer-subsistence wage. Most four year college graduates are no better off in terms of control of their work, accumulation of assets by saving or the ability to invest for profit than unionized blue collar workers. The educational difference has little, if any, objective social or individual value. Illusions of status differences persist only in the public consciousness. The unionization of previously 'professional' groups is evidence of the breakdown of this illusory difference for college educated workers already possessing their education. However, mass higher education continues to support the illusion of social differences between low level managers, service workers and industrial workers and puts off the inevitable confrontation between possibilities and realities by stressing and rewarding middle class identification, values and behaviour.

Besides keeping increasing numbers of youth out of the labor force for four years, higher education does teach certain character skills that mold the individual personality and socialize students for their appropriate place in society. Verbal ability, personality refinement, image management, all non-cognitive skills, are as much a part of the college learning process as information exchange. Ivar Berg describes this in relation to the socialization of middle class values.

> The issue here is decidedly important in light of the considerable growth in middle level jobs in our economy, jobs that seem to require several elements of what sociologist Erving Goffman terms 'the presentation of self in everyday life'. Insurance adjusters, to take one example, must present themselves in their workaday lives as middle-class *archetypes*, a requirement that, willy nilly, tends to be confounded with concepts of general educational development. The *gloss* is an important product of the educational process in America. (emphasis mine)[24]

A sophisticated "gloss" is readily observable in elite students, but "gloss" has a different meaning for the middle class student and may not be an important factor in vocational higher education. *Where* one goes to college is important in developing the "gloss" that facilitates access to graduate education and to social contacts that foster occupational success. In turn, class and family background are related to where one goes to college.

The prevailing notion of 'equality of educational opportunity' is supposed to channel the brightest, most deserving students into the 'best' educational institutions. This is at best a well-meant ideal and at worst a consciously promoted ideology.[25] The state provides institutions of higher education for its residents at minimal fees and entrance requirements; it does not guarantee that students will succeed in their education or economic goals. Given the initial start, merit is supposed to determine who makes it and who does not. Merit is not in

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[23]In a popular article in *The New Republic*, June 24, 1972, Gerald Grant suggests we ask the question "what the consequences of an over credentialed society might be, and whether we want a system that too infrequently identifies real skills and talents and oo often labels as failures those who don't have some kind of credential," p. 16. By the time he asked the question it was too late, the trend having been established long ago.

[24]Berg, p. 57.

[25]David Cohen and Martin Lazerson, "Education and the Corporate Order," *Socialist Revolution*, (March, 1972). James Coleman, *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966).

practice a passion for ideas or the quality of insight; rather, it is the successful navigation through the bureaucracy, strategic alliances with professors and sympathetic secretaries, and mastering the methods of obtaining good grades with as little work as possible. Merit in mass institutions is heuristically defined as 'learning the rules of the game'.

The political importance of 'equality of educational opportunity' is that it allows individuals rather than the society to be responsible for their failing to succeed within the educational hierarchy. Low income and low achievement high school students are encouraged to select themselves out of the competition for higher education by scaling down their aspirations to junior colleges or vocational schools. Within colleges disadvantaged students are "cooled out" on the basis of merit, thus, limiting their aspirations and social confidence.[26] The 'undesirable' student's perceptions of the situation are brought into line with institutional and economic needs while at the same time the illusion of 'educational equality' is preserved. Many students come to believe in the definition of themselves that fits the social definition of their abilities.[27]

For students processed through the college prep curriculums and the elite institutions, 'equality of educational opportunity' is a useful explanative for their success. Since the general belief is that success is predicted on merit these students are assumed to be the best and the brightest. It is, one presumes, a coincidence that they also happen to have other social and economic commonalities. 'Equality of educational opportunity' acts as the rhetorical variant of educational Darwinism: the fittest survive and the unfit sink to the bottom, the lowest track in the community colleges, terminal vocational programs.[28]

While students are in mass institutions for two to four years they are learning skills and behavior traits that they will need to adapt to the work force and the culture in general. Berg in his study of the relationship of educational credentials to job requirements found that college graduates were sought for their personality traits more often than their skills.

> To a man, the respondents assured us that diplomas and degrees were a good thing, that they were used as screening devices by which undesirable employment applicants could be identified, and that the credentials sought were indicators of personal commitment to "good middle-class values" industriousness, and seriousness of purpose, as well as salutary personal habits and styles.[29]

Social dependency is fostered by the hierarchy of authority and the complexity of the bureaucracy in mass universities. Separation from control over school work and teachers helps prepare the student for a hierarchy of command and authority in work life and conditions the student to accept it. The structure and process of middle-level occupations and 'middle level' culture are replicated through the instruction in the mass university classrooms.[30]

Classes for the Masses

The experience of the student within the mass institutions pointedly reveals the contradiction between ideology and reality. Structural and bureaucratic necessities filter students into high-rise dormitories and mass introductory courses. They enroll and register large numbers of students with little faculty contact.

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[26]Burton Clark, "The 'Cooling Out' Function in Higher Education," *American Journal of Sociology, 65*, No. 6 (May, 1960). ———————, *The Open Door College: A Case Study*, (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1960).

[27]William Ryan, *Blaming the Victim*, (N.Y.: Random House, 1971).

[28]Pinkus, op. cit. See also J. Karabel, "Community Colleges and Social Stratification," *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (November, 1972).

[29]Berg, p. 78.

[30]H. C. Greisman, "Marketing the Millenium: Ideology, Mass Culture, and Industrial Society," *Politics and Society*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Winter, 1974).

The sheer size of these institutions, from 20,000 to 50,000 students, limits processing them in any other manner. At the outset, students must learn to follow rules, fill out forms and get around unguided in a crowded and anomic environment. Each student is one of many thousand striving to master the necessary survival skills. In order to remain and adjust they must accept competition for attention and resources and depersonalization of themselves and others. Concretely, they have little control over this process. They are subject to the authority of teachers and assistants who rarely know them individually and, in fact, could not possibly know them each individually. Aggressive students battle their condition in concerted efforts to get to know their teachers. Some clever students use the anonimity to their advantage in attempting to 'beat the system'. The students who are less tough-minded soon realize that rule following and persistence are necessary to get the courses or teachers they want from the assembly line. Registration can be a nightmare of closing options and Kafkaesque trips around an unfamiliar large campus for advice.

For most students school work is motivated by grades, either the threat of bad grades or the reward of good grades.[31] Students rationally 'work' for grades, rarely does the old rhetoric of 'knowledge for knowledge's sake' have any meaning for the mass university student. Since the teacher distributes the grades the student will likely try to find out what the teacher thinks or wants and reproduce that. They have little input into their own grading procedures or criteria for grading, nor do they have input into the structuring of curriculums or courses. Even if they did, their models for behavior would be their present and previous experiences in school. Many faculty who have tried to innovate or humanize their classrooms have seen students simply replicate the institutional criteria for courses or grading when given this freedom. An innovative faculty member puts the students in a contradictory situation in which in one class they are told to talk, think critically and participate, then they are sent on to their other classes in which they are punished for doing so. In large classes faculty feedback on classroom work is rare. A faith in the objectivity of faculty judgement is necessary, but often confusing to students when grades or tests results don't match their efforts. In response to this, students become less interested in the process of education and more interested in survival within the institution. Following the rules, the gimmicks and the successful deceptions pays off.

Paradoxically, most students in mass institutions see their going to college as a privilege. They don't object to paying for their education, although many question the worth of their degree once in the labor market. The fact that this objection is voiced more frequently indicates that the general consciousness about the value of mass education is persisting on borrowed time. Changes in attitudes toward mass higher education lag behind the reality of its worth in the market place *and* its intrinsic worth to the individual.

In response, the argument is often advanced that college is 'a growing-up experience', thus, its value is in the social life it gives the young adult, i.e. fraternities, clubs, athletics, etc. However the routines of student life demystify this perception of mass institutions. Most students at mass institutions have situations, marriage and work, that prevent full-time attention to school work. Their leisure time becomes absorbed by college studies. When children and commuting are added to the equation the drain on the students' mental energy is extensive. The on campus students' everyday life is characterized by following directions, discipline and the acceptance of authority. There are so many students

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[31]Howard Becker, Blanche Geer and Everitt Hughes, *Making the Grade*, (N.Y.: Wiley, 1968).

each assumes the others have lots of friends and activities while most wander around lonely and isolated for long periods of time. The behavioral characteristics that further mass university success, particularly obedience and the ability to follow, are not geared toward enhancing the students 'self-actualizing' potential, but are the traits needed for them to become the future working majority. On the other hand, the characteristics of advanced schooling change dramatically when one moves from mass to elite institutions.

A Privilege, Not a Right:

> The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it.[32]

A minority of students do benefit directly from higher education. In spite of the fact that most of these individuals would be secure and comfortable regardless of their college education, the social certification and 'finishing' of upper-class youth at elite institutions is essential to replicate their parent's lifestyle. Whereas a college degree held by a minority of the population once separated the leaders of society from the masses, today an *elite* degree separates the leaders from the masses.

Besides the reproduction of itself, and the dissemination of class values and norms, the privileged institutions have a function that is unnecessary in other parts of the educational hierarchy. As a vestige of the past they produce the 'cultivated man'. As future rulers, public servants, and managers, the privileged students learn rules of behavior control and human management. They are expected to be *active* in the creation, management, and direction of the dominant institutions and values in society. In doing so successfully they protect the established norms and institutions and their own privilege.[33]

The privileged classes have and maintain a common psychological and intellectual identification. Ivy League institutions are self-consciously monitored and controlled through recruitment. Access to these institutions is restricted.[34] In 1969 the Yale *Faculty Handbook* reports that 13 percent of all applicants actually entered Yale university. In that same year only 21.7 percent of those whose applications were considered were accepted. These institutions routinely examine criteria above and beyond test scores and high school grades. Parent's income, private school attendance, alumni status in family, race and sex are normally considered in the selective admissions to the Ivy League universities.[35] The well-known Eastern preparatory schools are "feeders" into the Ivy League; often over one-half of the freshmen in the most elite schools come from prep schools.[36] Despite advertising schemes to make the Ivy League appear as the

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[32]Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, (N.Y.: International Publishers), p. 39.

[33]The definition of elite used here is the minority in society which through various means, directly or indirectly, rules the community. Raymond Aron, "Social Structure and the Ruling Class," in Lewis Coser, ed., *Political Sociology*, (N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 61.

[34]William Domnoff, "State and Ruling Class in Corporate America," *The Insurgent Sociologist*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Spring, 1974), pp. 3-17.

[35]Sharon S. Mayes, *Educating the Elite*, unpublished dissertation, Yale University, 1974.

[36]This is critically related to expense. The 1974 tuition breakdown for the Ivy League is: Yale $3,650, Brown $3,530, Princeton $3,500, Dartmouth $3.470, Cornell $3,430, Harvard $3,400, Columbia $3,370, Penn. $3,365. To educate one child it would cost approximately $25,000+ for the next four years assuming costs remain the same. Many non-prep school students come from special public feeder schools that cater to wealthy neighborhoods like Walt Whitman in Bethesda, Md. or Bronx Science in New York City which services the intellectual elite.

bastions for the 'meritocracy' the 'old Buddy' system informally dominates institutional policy.

Once part of the chosen few the students care, feeding, and success are laboriously attended to by the institution. Unlike the high drop-out and flunk-out rates in public colleges, the overwhelming majority of those who enter Ivy League colleges receive their degrees: In 1969 this was true of *92 percent* of those who entered Yale University. Yet, not every incoming student has been part of a preparatory process, nor comes from an upper-class family. These students have varying degrees of adjustment problems in the Ivy League. Some believe their admission was a freak accident, a bad joke, or a mistake. Some spend their first year in isolation for fear of doing or saying the wrong thing at the wrong time.[37]

Competition among elite students is vital in so far as it is a necessary and strategic value in the world they are destined to enter. In elite competition one wants to win but not to appear as if one wanted to win. Surrounded by those they imagine to be "superstars," insecurities and anxieties about success are rampant in the ivy covered dormitories. The insecure student who is upwardly mobile by virtue of a privileged education may carry the banner for the elite defending its legitimacy to the social class s/he is leaving behind.

In contrast to the mass university, resources in the expensive institutions are plentiful and designed for comfort. Ivy League students live in small colleges within the university. Life-long identifications with their colleges are developed that provide an enduring 'touch of class.' Within these colleges almost all the normal centralized university facilities are provided — a common dining hall, athletic facilities, musical and dramatic clubs and resident fellows from every level of the faculty. Colleges develop their own "image," such as the artsy college, the political college, the jock college. The accommodations, the food and the service are luxurious compared to the mass university. At Harvard, for instance, new accommodations equaling the old ones were estimated to cost $30,000 *per student.*[38] Ivy Deans, employed as trouble-shooters for their students, arbitrate grades, excuse them from work and regulate problems with the faculty. In this cozy environment the students' mental and physical abilities are fostered with the care given to growing rare and expensive plants.

The 'brilliant' Ivy League student is above concern for grades, at least in appearance, if not in fact. On the other hand, these students have a history of getting good grades and have established patterns of high achievement and reward. They have been taught the skills of test-taking in secondary schools which systematically groom them for their college entrance exams. In 1970, the national average SAT scores were 443 on the verbal and 481 on the math and at the most competitive elite colleges, mean scores ran close to 700. In the fall of 1973 Hotchkiss prep school, a feeder school to the Ivy League, sent 30 percent of the graduating seniors to either Harvard, Yale or Princeton, 40 percent attended other Ivy League colleges, and 49 percent attended "the most competitive" colleges.[39]

Certain behaviors are indicative of social standing among the elite students. Manners and social obligations are very important. The ability to choose friends from one's own social class is reassuring to those who can communicate social messages to each other, both inside and outside the institutions. The quiet,

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[37]Mayes, op. cit., Chapter 5.

[38]Christopher Jencks and David Riesman, "Patterns of Residential Education: A Class Study of Harvard," in Nevit Sanford, *The American College*, (N.Y.: Wiley, 1962), p. 732.

[39]*Hotchkiss Alumni Magazine* (Spring, 1974), p. 9-11.

confident and secretive demeanor of the upper class student is infuriating to non-elite students, but the contacts made with these students are recognized as invaluable for learning how to manage one's image in the elite fashion. A typical student comment:

> Well, it's not so much being socially acceptable — although an old name doesn't hurt anybody. But for a lot of people it might be like the editors of the News because they're go-getters and the other people want to be their friends so that they can be around when they get there. Maybe I'm taking a very cold-blooded attitude toward it, but I don't think it's wrong for me to want to know people with interesting reputations.[40]

Elite students in many ways have the best of both worlds. They do enter desirable careers with lucrative salaries and they are educated in a structure that facilitates personal development. Yet, they too are victims of the general pressures to compete successfully. The arena in which they compete is undeniably tough. The student protests in the elite institutions in the sixties were correctly interpreted as rebellions against this competitive, success-crazed ethic. Many leaders of these protests were by no accident elite students. They turned their critical facilities on the established institutions. However, the initial student issues were not threatening to elite class interests. Protests focused on civil rights and anti-war activities and elite students, as most others, wanted to avoid the draft. As the goals of the student movement became increasingly opposed to elite class interests, the leadership split up and the movement splintered. 'Radical' consciousness among the elite students was a manifestation of their ability to lead a national movement when it called for leadership and to mobilize resources, especially national media coverage, to their own activities. Their institutions weathered the storm quite well.

In the future elite institutions and their students may not wear so well. These institutions are reverberating from fiscal crises. They use up tremendous amounts of private money and produce more 'leaders' than the society can or should absorb. Additionally, they foster a 'classism' that is foreign to democratic principles and puts the economic, social and political elite in direct contradiction to that which they ardently defend. Their philosophical objections to change are thin masks for the protection of their vested interests in controlling the most desirable careers in government, industry and the professions.

There are literally too many talented youth in the United States to reward them all with an equal education at Harvard without major changes in the relationship of education to the economy. The increasing competition for elite schooling can only produce future disillusionment and anger with respect to the preferred status an elite degree confers. Democratization in higher education has not occurred in elite institutions; it has occurred in mass institutions and filtered *down* the stratification scale. Just as the American Medical Association realizes that open admissions to medical school would destroy their monopoly on a crucial service and reduce their income and prestige to ordinary proportions so does the elite educational institution maintain scarcity to protect its monopoly on the production of leaders.

Eliminating the elite institutions by making them public and redistributing their endowments throughout the states would require that the federal government regulate all higher education equitably, a proposition of enormous complexity that few would support. The real problem, the hierarchical society into which the universities feed students would not be solved. Individuals would still enter careers based on social class, income, race, sex and other non-educational

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[40]Janet Lever and Pepper Schwartz, *Women at Yale*, (N.Y.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971), p. 72.

factors. Although the redistribution of resources is a fundamental solution to stratification in higher education, it would not change the situation unless it occurred in conjuction with a redistribution of economic and political resources.

Likewise, reforming mass institutions to incorporate the positive aspects of elite institutions, such as the creation of small colleges within universities with resident faculty advisors, the decentralization of food, athletic and other services, the readily available faculty contact in everyday settings and the like, would require massive planning and budgetary commitments that neither the states nor the federal government will provide. Funds for education are scarce and public funds for a non-alienating, free and adequate college education are non-existent. The elite institutions would hardly be willing to redistribute their own resources to provide a better educational environment for all students. Even if mass institutions remodeled, it would only make college a better experience in personal development, a desirable goal in itself, but it would not solve the over-production of educated workers for relatively few jobs. In fact, it might exascerbate the problems of over-qualification, over-education, defeated expectations and so on. Once, again, we are left with the fact that changes in higher education on the mass or elite level can only be effective concurrently with economic and political change.

RESUME

Les établissements de l'enseignement supérieur ont pris une extension considérable et rapide et, par conséquent, ils ont diversifié leurs fonctions sociales. La stratification de les masses, lissements en universités pour l'élite, universités pour les masses, et collèges reproduit la stratification dans les classes ouvrières. L'existence de l'enseignement supérieur comme une sorte de filtre pour une économie stratifiée est de plus en plus évidente mais cette réalisation n'est pas sans contradictions structurales et idéologiques. Les rapports à l'intérieur de cette extension et les problèmes qui en résultent pour la masse des étudiants dans les collèges et pour ceux d'entre eux qui sont les plus puissants suggèrent un avenir difficile pour l'enseignement supérieur en général.