

## BOOKS

### THE LABOUR MARKET FOR EDUCATED PERSONS

Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, *College Graduates and Jobs: Adjusting to a New Labor Market Situation*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1973. Pp. ix, 242. \$4.50.

Margaret S. Gordon, ed., *Higher Education and the Labor Market*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1974. Pp. xix, 630. \$17.50.

Edward Harvey, *Educational Systems and the Labour Market*. Don Mills, Ont.: Longman Canada, Ltd., 1974. Pp. 223. \$6.50.

Gareth Williams, Tessa Blackstone, and David Metcalf, *The Academic Labour Market: Economic and Social Aspects of a Profession*. Amsterdam, London, and New York: Elsevier Scientific Publishing Co., 1974. Pp. XVI, 566. Dfl. 50.

There are more persons on the intellectual labor market than society as it is today requires for carrying out its intellectual work.

— Karl Mannheim

At a time of a worsening labor market for educated persons, more and more books are dealing with it. The works under review examine the labor market in Britain, Canada, and the United States. The Carnegie Commission study is partly based upon its own surveys, but it also relies heavily upon other data. Gordon's book was sponsored by the Carnegie Commission. Harvey's work is largely based upon surveys in 1960, 1964, and 1968 of over 4,000 graduates with B.A. or B.Sc. degrees from four Ontario universities — Toronto, Queen's, McMaster, and Waterloo. It has thus an Ontario slant, but the generalizability of his findings is nonetheless high. Williams *et al.* book is based upon a 1969 survey of some 3,000 university professors and interviews with about half of them in 1970, as well as surveys of advertised university positions in the academic years 1968/69 and 1970/71.

All the surveys are technically quite sophisticated. The reproduction of the results is unfortunately marred by some graphs lacking the zero point, omission of some tables in the Williams *et al.* book, and also the omission of the survey questionnaire in Harvey's book. All books contain quite a number of typographical errors.

The focus is on the relationship between higher education and the labor market, although the Williams *et al.* book has also sections on such matters as the political views and the promotion of academics. In all three countries there was a rapid expansion of post-secondary education in the 1960's in terms of student enrolments and academic staff. During this time there was also a substantial economic expansion. The graduates could be relatively easily absorbed by the economy.

In the 1970's the linkages between the educational system and the labor market are becoming more problematic. Upward mobility has decreased. There is a growing number of employees who have more education than is necessary to perform their jobs well. David E. Kaun's essay in Gordon's book reveals that already in 1960 there were in the United States 23% of university

graduates involved in work clearly not requiring a university degree. V. Lane Rawlins and Lloyd Ulman in their essay have also concluded that there is an excess of educational preparation on the part of many employees. They have labeled this "market credentialism" (p. 224).

Harvey's findings are also disturbing. There has been a significant increase in the number of undergraduates entering graduate education because they found no suitable employment. The percentage of graduates who have experienced unemployment has doubled. Among women graduates general job dissatisfaction has increased. For both men and women there is increasing discontent with the salaries that they receive. The labor market value of university degrees has clearly declined.

Employers are taking advantage of the surplus of highly educated persons to upgrade the educational composition of their personnel by hiring persons with advanced degrees. Even in the 1950's in the United States about 40% of the increase in the employment of male university graduates was due to educational upgrading. In 1971 the United States Supreme Court in *Griggs et al. v. Duke Power Company* called for the "elimination of artificial, arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to employment that . . . cannot be shown to be related to job performance," but it is doubtful that it will have a significant effect.

Lester C. Thurow has questioned the facile generalizations about the economic benefits of education. A more rapid growth of education has not led to a commensurate growth of the economy. "Increasing the supply of college workers leads to lower average incomes for both college workers and high school workers" (p. 407). It also results in university graduates accepting what were once regarded as the best jobs for high school graduates.

Walter Fogel and Daniel F. B. Mitchell have examined whether or not higher education decision making is related to the labor market by looking at the situation in California. They have concluded that there is no organized and ongoing research into manpower needs. The distribution of students in the various disciplines has largely resulted from the student demand for places. Changes in student applications do on the whole reflect changes in the relative benefits of occupations in the labor market, but imperfectly and lag several years.

They could have stressed the point that there is a significant proportion which is not influenced by labor market considerations in their choice of fields of study. Williams *et al.* have, however, noted this. More broadly, Gordon in her essay has maintained that in the 1930's student enrolments declined primarily because many could not afford to study rather than because the labor market for graduates was poor. On the other hand, some high school graduates for this very reason went to university.

The occupations worst affected are elementary, secondary, and university teaching. For the former in the United States the demand for new teachers began to drop in 1963, but it was not until 1972 that some of the largest teacher education institutions began to take steps to reduce enrolments. Allan M. Cartter has amply demonstrated the present and growing surplus of persons on the academic labor market. What makes it particularly depressing is that occupational alternatives for many academics are slight. Williams *et al.* found that those in the humanities are the most pessimistic about alternative occu-

pational opportunities and rightly so. Overall less than half agreed that there is ease of movement to alternative occupations.

For the undergraduate students there is at least the possibility of changing fields of study. There has occurred in the United States a shift away from the traditional arts disciplines to vocational programs of all types, especially law, medicine, and the paramedical professions. The Carnegie Commission's statement that in recent years a "significant number of young people have been turning away from conventional career aspirations" (p. 21) is not, however, substantiated with any significant data. While there are some, their numbers are too small to make an important impact upon the chances of the remaining ones who, as Gordon has rightly noted, "will be interested in pursuing careers and will aspire to jobs that will be challenging and interesting. If there is widespread failure to achieve these goals, the consequences for social morale and social stability may be serious" (p. 30).

It is becoming increasingly evident that there will soon be no more shortages of highly educated persons in any field. Even if it had not been for the economic recession, there still would have been a surplus. The recession accelerated the coming trend. Even if there is a decline in the total university enrolment, the stock of educated persons (the total number of degree holders) will not be much affected by economic recessions or depressions, as Douglas L. Adkins has demonstrated.

The situation is beginning to resemble that of the 1930's. Unfortunately, none of the books deals with the interwar period in any detail. The most dramatic consequences of the considerable imbalance in the labor market occurred in Central and Eastern Europe, especially in Germany. Frieda Wunderlich writing about the situation in Germany in the early 1930's noted that many university graduates found their careers blocked and many also lost their positions. "The future seemed utterly hopeless. The student found himself a part of an army of 140,000, most of whom had been sent to the universities to mark time. One of our scholars has called the universities waiting rooms for the jobless youth" (Frieda Wunderlich, "New Aspects of Unemployment in Germany," *Social Research*, Vol. One, No. 1, February, 1934, p. 109).

Student resentment against the system increased. As Wunderlich has stated: "All elements of the system seemed to merit destruction — republic, peace, democracy. Youth was anxious for a new faith, for new activity, for new vitality. The old ideals of peace, equality, and justice has lost their value." (*Ibid.*, pp. 109-10). Many joined the Communists and the National Socialists.

While such a development is not inevitable, the situation is certainly grave. The stock of educated persons is unprecedentedly large and still growing at a time when demand is falling. It is a global problem. What are some of the possible solutions? The Carnegie Commission and Harvey have advocated better student counselling and placement services. The government and the professional associations should give high priority to more adequate data gathering and analysis. There should also be a reduction in the number of the doctoral degree granting institutions and the prevention of the spread of new doctoral programs to institutions that do not have them now. Law and medical schools should guard against surpluses. For the Ph.D.'s manpower planning related to supply is needed.

The authors have not, however, really come to grips with the possible immediate and long range solutions. Nothing has been said about what to do with the unemployed and underemployed persons. Just as population cannot increase indefinitely in finite space, there are also limits to how many persons can receive higher education and still expect to be accommodated by the labor market. What is this proportion? This is an empirical question, but it has a highly normative basis, for it raises such basic questions as, what is university education all about and for whom? It can be predicted that questions of this sort will be increasingly debated. Perhaps the greatest value of these works is that they have provided valuable data for this debate.

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### CANADIAN WRITINGS ON EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

International development has claimed universal focus since the onset of the First Development Decade. With the Second Development Decade well on its way attention is more than ever focused on the entire development effort as an endeavour consistent with the concept of the "educative society". Education as a component of development underlies the defined and emerging social and economic needs of a nation through formal, nonformal and informal educational activities. Accordingly, the increasing amount of literature deals with several aspects of education and development.

It is significant to note that official Canadian participation in international development assistance, which is often dated from the start of the Colombo Plan, began with a focus on educational assistance. The bilateral educational assistance program along with the efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has grown considerably since then but this has not been accompanied by a parallel interest on research in education and development. It must be pointed out, however, that this essay deals primarily with literature written in English and it is realized that considerable work is being done in French, especially since Canada's association with French speaking ex-colonies is widening and several universities and organizations conduct their affairs in French.

On the whole, Canadian publications on the role of education in development are fairly recent and a review of relevant literature exposes a variety of sources. First, books — unfortunately, Canadian scholarly volumes focusing on education and development are extremely sparse. Second, journal articles — there are several Canadian journals which publish articles on this topic. Among them *Convergence*, *Canadian and International Education*, *Continuous Learning*, *Interchange*, and *McGill Journal of Education* contain such articles more often. *Newstatements*, published for Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO), *Informadev* by the Canadian Council of International Cooperation (CCIC), and *Echange Canada Exchange* by the Canadian Bureau of International Education, which carried writings on education and development have now ceased publication. This essay focuses on Canadian journals only and many excellent articles have been passed over having been printed in foreign journals and as such difficult to identify as Canadian. Third, reports by governmental and non-governmental organizations. The Canadian