



## The Enduring Effects of Education by *Herbert H. Hyman, Charles R. Wright, and John Shelton Reed*. *Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975. 313 pp. \$5.95 (paper)*

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Jacques Barzun's *The American University* (1968), misunderstands Clark Kerr's *The Uses of the University* (1966), and simplistically dismisses Cardinal Newman's idea of a university with this dictum: "what Newman offered was a cloistered university giving the appearance of being the moral counterpoint to a degraded world." All of this (however poorly developed) is unnecessary and not related to Berube's thesis.

What Berube is proposing is to be understood by his sixth chapter: "National Policy and the Crisis in Education." It is a trenchant statement, provocative and worthy of serious attention, for Berube's scenario of reform derives from it:

In sum, the crisis in higher education was the result of three main forces: the devolution of mass education into credentialism, a faltering economy, and strategies to reduce inequality based on conservative social science that discounted the mobility of higher education. Only the latter two are susceptible to public policy.

Bolstering a flagging economy requires national policy incentives on the broadest front. Not least of these would be full employment strategies and some form of income redistribution. The trend for nearly fifty years has been for the federal government to assume more responsibility for social policy. Undoubtedly, the cause of the poor has to be advanced on a larger social front as well as by educational strategies to provide equality of opportunity for everyone. In this respect, public policy can greatly influence the educational condition (pp. 121-22).

The answers to the many questions posed lie in Berube's proposal that the federal government should create a system of federal urban grant universities similar to those created by the Morrill Act for agriculture in the last century: urban-grant university—the pertinent universities the cities need, emphasizing urban studies. It is not a new idea (as Berube acknowledges in noting the work in the 1950s of Paul Ysvilaker and the Ford Foundation), yet it is an important proposal which has not been given the attention it deserves. It may be true that "the creation of the federal urban-grant university appears to be the best means of realizing the potential of the

urban university to meet the diverse needs of a nation of cities." Nobody really knows, and Berube's book is a reminder of an important concept that should be tested.

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**The Enduring Effects of Education** by Herbert H. Hyman, Charles R. Wright, and John Shelton Reed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975. 313 pp. \$5.95 (paper).

Using the files of the Gallup Poll, the National Opinion Research Center, and the Survey Research Center, the authors have analyzed fifty-four surveys conducted during 1949-71 to determine the effects of education on adults ranging in age from twenty-five to seventy-two. The authors' secondary analyses take into account age and educational differences, but "all the generalizations refer only to the white population—a limitation, to be sure, but eliminating once and for all the danger that any of the comparisons reflect 'racial' differences rather than age or educational differences."

In general, the findings reveal that the better educated have a broader and deeper knowledge of bookish facts and of many aspects of the contemporary world. This is not surprising; however, what does this tell us about the quality of the various surveys? The items that were constructed were for the most part simply basic information items. Of course, one has to examine the levels of items in order to approximate the educational level in which a person would be taught facts about literature, politics, and art. The higher the educational level of a person, the more academic type of item is used to determine the person's knowledge of bookish facts. Yet the data of this study also show that the more educated person is capable of learning about every day facts, whether they are about the latest films or the proper use of tools.

The notion of receptivity to learning in adult life, i.e., post-school learning, is of central concern to this study. The findings indicate that the differences in educational strata continue into old age. That is to say, the lesser educated person may gain in factual knowledge, but he will never reach the level of factual knowledge of a better educated person. The authors claim that

the better educated person—that is, the person with more formal schooling—is more likely to keep up with the media outpouring and to engage in some sort of continuing education activity.

The implications of this study are far-reaching. The method of analysis attempts to show that the enduring effects of education are evident. The impact of educational training is a factor that extends into old age. This refutes claims that the aged are incapable of increasing their knowledge and more importantly their lack of receptivity to learning. In addition, the study shows that recent graduates are not relying on the media to gain knowledge of current events, nor are they gaining information by simply traveling to distant lands. What emerges, then, is that the present system of education at upper levels is preparing people who are, for the most part, willing to continue their interest in the world by various means.

However, this study is only a beginning. Little has been done to examine the enduring effects of education. The authors believe that the power of education does have a marked effect on people. Yet the authors also point out that differences among the young and old, rich and poor, Catholics and Protestants, and males and females, for example, show that there are different concerns about the degrees of knowledge. These differences must be analyzed by educators and sociologists.

Finally, what has been done with the study or what will be done with the study remains to be evaluated with a critical eye. It seems that those in the business of education are more concerned with basic skill training and career placement. This is a generality, of course, but can future generations survive under such a narrow educational program? Will future generations want to continue learning once they have left school? Current post-school programs are engaging a torrid race for adult learners. Anything from pop psychology to productive use of leisure time is being offered to entice adults to continue learning. It is ironic that some adults have to return to a university or college to discuss literature, music, or art. Perhaps this tells us something about our culture.

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**The Quest for Excellence: The Neo-Conservative Critique of Educational Mediocrity** by Norman R. Phillips. New York: Philosophical Library, 1978. 179 pp. \$8.50.

The failures of American education are a favorite subject for scholar and dilettante. A plethora of publications document our growing illiteracy, declining academic standards, and deteriorating social order. The drive for educational accountability has accelerated the critics' charges. *The Quest for Excellence* may sound like one in the long line of diatribes that restate the obvious. This time a pleasant surprise awaits the reader. The book proves to be a stimulating excursion into the educational philosophy of the neo-conservatives.

To Norman Phillips, who authored this study, there is no mystery underlying the erosion of academic standards. The progressivist and naturalistic philosophies have dominated our scene for too long. The viable alternatives to our failing schools lie in the thinking of T. S. Eliot, Russell Kirk, Irving Babbitt, G. H. Bantock, and Bernard Iddings Bell. Their views on the goals of education and its methods augur an era of schooling that would put an end to the educational "Armageddon." Phillips examines the views of the foregoing in relation to the philosophic concepts of hierarchy, natural law, and human nature. He pulls their ideas together to develop a cohesive neo-conservative philosophy that bears far-reaching implications for educational practice.

What are the philosophic underpinnings of the neo-conservative position? The author traces their conservatism to their belief in an axiology of hierarchial values which first shows up in Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*. Stated bluntly, man is seen as an imperfect being who is part of a universal hierarchy.

He is imperfect in that he does not fully actualize the potentialities of all living things. Parallel to this structure is a hierarchy of values. Those men who are exemplars of higher values (wisdom being the highest for many thinkers) are superior to those whose behavior typifies lowly values. Implied in this schema is a structured universe based on order and function. The happiness of man ensues from performing well the function which has been ordered for him in the scale of "Nature." Further, natural law is not based on man's intuitive sense of obligation or his desire for self-interest. Rather, man's duties