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Stratification in Higher Education: A Comparative Study
(review)

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intense pressure universities feel to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of their student populations while simultaneously meeting their financial obligations. The fear of discrimination lawsuits is matched only by the fear of donations drying up should they cease to honor the tradition of legacy admissions. As Schmidt argues, the resulting secrecy surrounding admissions policies leads working- and middle-class Whites to believe—erroneously—that affirmative action has cost them their spot at an elite institution.

Schmidt attempts to sound the call for a new revolution. While some of his methods weaken the strength of his position, he does make a persuasive argument for the educational advantages bestowed upon White, upper-class children. By leading the reader to the conclusion that American society does not function as a meritocracy, Schmidt challenges the individual and the institution to consider the extent to which each will go to truly equalize educational opportunity.

Yossi Shavit, Richard Arum, and Adam Gamoran (Eds.). *Stratification in Higher Education: A Comparative Study*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007. 483 pp. Cloth: \$65.00. ISBN: 10-0-8047 54624.

REVIEWED BY STEPHEN HEYNEMAN, PROFESSOR, INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY, PEABODY COLLEGE, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

It is common to challenge the assumption that higher education expansion leads to greater equality on the grounds that what really happens is that the underprivileged get tracked into low-status institutions, thus preserving higher-status institutions for the socially privileged. Hence, social differences are allegedly maintained.

It is also common to portray the introduction of tuition as a regressive measure exacerbating differences in educational opportunity between the privileged and the less privileged. Hence, tuition is widely thought to handicap the poor. Though intuitively compelling, the universality of these generalizations has never been tested.

This book is likely to serve as a watershed. It represents the first incorporation of labor market datasets from 15 countries (Israel, Japan, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, Australia, the Czech Republic, and Italy) to test a common set of propositions. U.S. data were drawn from the National Labor Survey (NLS)—72, High School and Beyond (HS & B) and the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS). From each country, the data sets were

roughly parallel. The surveys involved a total of over 420,000 respondents drawn from the five generations since World War II. As far as possible, theories were tested over time within the same country as well as across countries.

It would be tempting to limit the discussion of this book to the compelling overview drafted by the editors. However, the 15 country-specific chapters each contain up-to-date detail on the organizational arrangement, size, regulation, administration, funding, and recent reforms in each country. In addition, each chapter contains a full statistical description of the changes in higher education (a) eligibility, (b) entry, and (c) entry into the elite tier of universities and provides new information on each of these important issues.

It is the overview chapter, however, which elevates this book from being simply interesting to being important. Higher education systems are categorized in several new ways, first by categories of heterogeneity. There are unitary systems (Italy and the Czech Republic) where all higher education institutions are identical in structure and purpose. There are binary systems (Britain, France, Germany, Netherlands, Russia, and Switzerland) where higher education institutions are distinguished by academic and vocational purposes. And there are diversified systems (Taiwan, the United States, Sweden, Korea, Japan, and Israel) where higher education institutions differ dramatically in quality, prestige, and selectivity of both faculty and students.

The study also differentiates higher education systems by the degree of their “privatization.” Privatization is defined as the portion of higher education finance derived from sources other than the government. The study further differentiates countries in their definition of eligibility for higher education, dividing those who attain eligibility with a secondary school certificate based on an examination (Italy, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Russia, and Switzerland) from those that allow eligibility on the basis of having completed a course of study (Sweden, Netherlands, Australia, the United States, the Czech Republic, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan).

The authors note that, over the course of the study period, the rate of eligibility increased from 35 to 80%; attendance at higher education institutions increased from 20 to 40%, and attendance in Tier 1 universities increased by 200%. The first question asked was whether expansion reduces inequality in a linear fashion or whether inequality is reduced only after a point of “saturation”—the point at which all children from advantaged origins have already entered higher education. The authors found that, in five countries, inequality is reduced with expansion; in nine countries inequality does not decline until saturation has occurred,

and, in one, expansion was associated with an increase in inequality. In almost every country, inequality dropped after saturation. They therefore concluded that expansion can attenuate inequality but that its effect is not linear.

Does expansion occur in all higher education systems equally? The answer appears unambiguous: The greatest expansion is associated with differentiated, not binary or unitary, systems. But do differentiated systems divert underprivileged students away from Tier 1 universities? Are the under-privileged “cooled out” in Tier 2 institutions, preserving the more selective institutions for the privileged? Here the answer is, surprisingly, no. The percentage of underprivileged students in Tier 1 institutions is as high in diversified systems as in binary or unified systems. While it is true that social inequality in Tier 1 institutions is greater than in higher education overall (in every country), because diversified systems are associated with greater enrollment levels, less inequality is associated with diversified systems.

Does privatization (a high percentage of financing from other than state sources) handicap the underprivileged? Here again the answer is a surprise. Systems with higher privatization are associated with more lenience in entry requirements and with more structural differentiation. Therefore, more private financing is associated with higher levels of expansion and higher levels of social equity. Privatization expands access and reduces inequality. The control of expansion is associated with a monopoly of state financing and, hence, with greater inequality of access.

The issue of gender equity also figured into the discussion. Across all countries, the male advantage in higher education declines when systems expand. In fact, gender inequity has shifted in favor of women. In the most recent age cohorts, women’s advantage increased by 20%.

The evidence used is not perfect. The findings are not weighted by the size of the higher education populations in different countries, where findings from the United States might be stronger. And in two countries (Australia and Britain) the binary systems were eliminated in the 1990s, raising questions about how to treat data over time from these two countries.

Overall, this book provides strong evidence for supporting the expansion of higher education on the traditional grounds of providing social opportunity. Expanding the “educational pie” is an equalizing force, and neither private financing nor diversity in purpose and quality is inconsistent with inclusion and social equity. This creative and insightful analysis should become standard reading in all programs of higher education concerned with expansion and social equity.

Katherine Grace Hendrix (Ed.). *Neither White Nor Male: Female Faculty of Color. New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, No. 110. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007. 120 pp. Paper: \$29.00. ISBN: 978-0-470-17686-3.

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Over the last 30 years, a respectable body of literature has accumulated detailing the experiences of women faculty of color in predominantly White U.S. institutions. A number of the women have said they felt like “outsiders” because the “old boys’ network” operating in some of these institutions relegated them to the margins on the basis of their ethnic/cultural differences (Collins, 1986).

The new compilation of essays presented in *Neither White Nor Male: Female Faculty of Color* continues this discourse. This collection supports and extends claims about inequitable treatment stemming from race and gender discrimination and the resulting hegemonic practices that have privileged some and marginalized others in the academy. The voices now include an international perspective, and they are steadily mounting.

The introduction by Katherine Grace Hendrix provides the typical information—the need for the volume, what it is about, author specifics, and whose voices are represented. She suggests that the existing literature has not been as inclusive of all women or representative of all disciplines as might be needed to give a broader perspective of the experiences of women faculty of color. Some scholars may take exception to this statement, given that it is often members of a particular ethnic/cultural group who produce scholarship on or about their group to inform the broader community of their experiences. This is, in fact, the purpose of the current volume. The chapter authors use their own experience and the scholarly literature to develop themes of academic life for faculty women of color.

Fang-Yi-Flora Wei (Asian) takes an in-depth look at how new international professors might develop self-efficacy and confidence in their teaching while simultaneously resolving inner fears of being young, inexperienced, and self-conscious about their abilities as nonnative speakers. Chikako Akamatsu McLean (Asian) provides the results of a study conducted to investigate how Asian-born female faculty establish credibility in the classroom. Mary Fong (Chinese American) provides an exposé of her 25-year career trajectory by sharing intimate accounts of the incivility she encountered from students in U.S. classrooms across southern California and the Pacific Northwest. Aparna G. Hebbani (East Indian) compares