Introduction

A Quiet Revolution

The education revolution is as important as the industrial and democratic revolutions have been.

TALCOTT PARSONS, *The System of Modern Societies*, 1971

Education systems themselves are ideologies. They rationalize in modern terms and remove from sacred and primordial explanations of the nature and organization of personnel and knowledge in modern society.

JOHN MEYER, *American Journal of Sociology*, 1977

A REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION has thoroughly transformed human society over just a century and a half. Along with a few other major global phenomena, such as large-scale capitalism and representative democracy, schooling whole populations for ever more years changes both individuals and the institutions at the core of society. Intensifying right up to today, what is called the "education revolution" is a cultural phenomenon more than a material or political one, although it has major material and political consequences.

At the heart of the education revolution are two intertwined, powerful social forces, one obvious but often misinterpreted, and the other underappreciated. The first one is that formal education has historically progressed from a privilege for the few to a mandatory essential for everyone. Widespread schooling, or "mass schooling" as it is now known, has spread to all populations in the world, and the standard of educational attainment spirals upward with each new generation. This relentless and ubiquitous expansion of formal education is witnessed most recently in the waves of youth entering universities and other higher education institutions, in residence and online, to earn a dizzyingly wide array of degrees, often going into considerable debt and postponing adult life to do so. It is a stunning

development when over the span of about 150 years the world changed from being populated by mostly unschooled illiterates to having an estimated 80 percent of all adults schooled at least to the point that they can write and read a short statement about their life—this is a new global condition thought improbable as recently as fifty years ago (UNESCO 2002).

Accompanying this great inclusion of the world's population into formal education is the creation of an extensive and robust culture of education that has come to influence all facets of life. This second powerful force justifies and intensifies the now widely held belief that formal education is the best way to develop all humans and their capacities; an idea that surpasses centuries-old notions unrelated to education about how to raise children, make productive employees, and create effective citizens. This powerful cultural influence is what sociologist of education John Meyer insightfully recognized (in the epigraph) as education's *ideology*. For example, as a consequence of the education culture, formal education continues to expand at both ends of the life-course, with considerable public sentiment that it is the "right thing to do." Over just a few decades, the American kindergarten has become significantly more academically oriented, while the worldwide campaign for mass pre-K schooling has gained strength. Adult education and the idea of "life-long learning" make going to school normative well into adulthood, and hence currently one third of the entire U.S. labor force is required annually to enroll in continuing education as a condition for employment (e.g., Jacobs and Stoner-Eby 1998).

From early childhood up through graduate training and adult education, extensive access to schooling in postindustrial society, sustained by deeply held ideas and values, imbues society with a culture of education. Well beyond merely training individuals for jobs, the education revolution has produced a world where education is an independent social institution that shapes significant parts of *all other* core institutions in society. Major transformations of social institutions at the hands of education abound, many of which will be explored here. For instance, the education revolution is transforming the nature of the workplace and work itself into an image of itself. It is also narrowing and intensifying the societal value of certain types of cognitive skills while displacing other human talents. An educated polity transforms the terms of political mobilization and civic

behavior, while an educated laity changes the dimensions of religion, including essential images of God. And the growing and influential global network of large formal organizations, for-profit and otherwise, is a direct consequence of the increased organizational capacities and sentiments of educated populations. Some of these changes are thought of as positive and others as negative, but all are substantial sociological transformations.

Equally transforming is the impact of the education revolution on individuals. To a degree unknown in past societies, outcomes of formal education in the form of achievement and earned degrees have come to both subjectively and objectively define individual success and failure. Increasingly, individuals with a less-than-average education see themselves as failures—less than fully actualized persons—and assume that only more educational attainment will make them successful. At the same time, for a growing number of jobs, occupational credentials are structured by the terms and meanings of formal education to the point that education dominates the very essence of individual social mobility in postindustrial society. And beginning just a few decades ago, among cohorts of young adults, academic attainment now diminishes or even eradicates any impact of their parents' social status on their own future standing.

Yet for all of the societal influence wielded by mass education, the education revolution is a distinctly "quiet revolution" underappreciated in many ways. In other words, compared to other massive social forces, the societal effects of the education revolution have received very little intellectual attention. As a routine subject of daily life, education is certainly discussed everywhere, just as the study of its parts, such as teaching, curriculum, and learning, is a large intellectual enterprise. But rarely is the education revolution thought of as a founding force behind the historical transformation from traditional society to modernity and on to the postindustrial society. Instead, intellectual prominence is given to other major social forces shaping human society: industrial production, technology, science and medicine, capitalism, the rise of the nation-state and democratic politics, large-scale warfare, decline of religious authority, the culture of individualism, changes in the nature of the family, and the rise of rationalized bureaucracies. These, and not the spread of formal education throughout the world's population, have won the lion's share of study.

When mass education is considered as a major social force, it is frequently thought of as some sort of collective mistake, too much "unneeded" education resulting in educational credential inflation. From this perspective the education revolution is readily dismissed sociologically as a relatively trivial event or, worse, as troubling educational inflation that wastes peoples' time and energies. For example, in the late 1960s the notion of overeducation became a topic of intense concern—it was assumed that too many children were receiving too much education and would become frustrated and alienated when they could not find suitable jobs for their eventual education credential, while jobs requiring little skill would increasingly go to those with more education than needed. Economists, professional educators, sociologists, and other experts all proclaimed that the education revolution was a threatening and growing social problem.

Yet these negative consequences never came to pass. And as described later, there was no revolt against expanding education among the world's populations. Indeed, people from all cultural heritages and national governments of all stripes have embraced the idea of formal education as both a personal and a common good. Since the overeducation debate forty years ago, the presumed inflationary educational bubble has failed to burst; rather, the rise of a sturdy culture of education has changed ideas about society. Economies and society in general did not remain fixed as education expanded; instead, they themselves were changed by this phenomenon. As argued here, education and society have developed a unique cultural affinity with each other, a mutual and dynamic accommodation. Symbiosis, not inflation, is the best way to consider the effects of the education revolution. But symbiosis implies that education, as a social institution, is far more robust and sociologically independent than is usually assumed, a realization that gets lost in the persistent dialogue about education's supposed failure.

Hence is the interesting paradox about the usual image of schooling's role in society. On one hand, many powers are attributed to formal education—teaching children to read, to understand mathematics and science, to practice and enjoy the arts, to memorize the historical development of a nation, and now even to know about the development of human society across time and place—which are all routinely thought of as what schools do to transform children into functioning adults. These are indeed part of

the bigger story here. On the other hand, schooling and university training are frequently portrayed as failing modern society in fundamental ways. It is this paradox that leaves the education revolution underappreciated.

Why does this paradox exist? First, most people do not recognize the full scope through which mass schooling transforms society. Formal education has become so common, so ubiquitous that it is often simply assumed to be a natural outcome of a complex, technological, global society. Also, many people, even professional educators and scholars of education, become overly fixated on specific aspects of the system at the exclusion of perceiving its formidable total impact—they lose the forest for the trees. And observers of education often do not consider the substantial qualitative ways schooling has changed over recent history, which serve to intensify the broad effects of education examined here. Lastly, and perhaps the most problematic, most intellectual accounts take a limited view of schools, colleges, and universities by seeing them as little more than "helping" institutions that only socialize and train (some say oppress) our children to join society.

Whether or not formal education should be even more effective at what it does is a major topic of debate, but it is a debate rarely informed by a full sociological accounting of the institution itself and its complete impact on society. Therefore calls for better education are of secondary concern here. The focus of this book is on the larger picture, regardless of supposed shortcomings and limitations: to what degree does this revolutionary practice of formally educating everyone in society change society itself? Contrary to the well-worn cries of failure, it can be argued that as a social institution, schooling—from kindergarten through the upper reaches of higher education—continues to be one of the major success stories of the times. It profoundly transforms who we are, what we can do, and what we believe to be true.

THE UNDERAPPRECIATED EDUCATED MODERN INDIVIDUAL

What has all of this new education done *to* individuals? Education does many things *for* the individual, such as training, credentials, and social status, but how profoundly it changes a person is a crucial question for assessing the total impact of the education revolution. Because today

even a high school dropout has received, historically speaking, an extensive education, it is hard to judge how much people are transformed by formal education. Most people today are so surrounded by the effects of education that it can appear as if there are no effects at all. But this is fundamentally not true.

Social scientists were on to part of the answer about fifty years ago as the education revolution was creating mass schooling in many nations for the first time. But unfortunately, the results of this research, and evidentially the question itself, were dropped, further eluding an appreciation of the education revolution in intellectual thought about the development of modern and postindustrial societies. The major consequence from this intellectual negligence is illustrated in a prominent investigation of what makes individuals modern; the study all but ignored exceptionally rich evidence for a broad societal consequence of many children attending school.

In the late 1960s, researchers at Harvard University collected extensive information about young men living in what were then six developing countries where, at this time, education and economic development were even lower than in most developing nations today. For the times, these cross-cultural data were innovative and rare; included were basic demographic information and a survey measuring the men's attitudes, values, and beliefs (Inkeles and Smith 1974). The data showed that in each nation a small minority of men exhibited, in addition to the functional skills of literacy and numeracy, distinctly modern attitudes and preferences, such as openness to new experience, independence from traditional authority, belief in the efficacy of science and modern medicine, abandonment of fatalism, interest in the rational planning of their lives, and strong interest in civic affairs and national and international events. These all characterize how education as an institution has transformed postindustrial society, which is described in the chapters to come.

When the data were analyzed to see which young men held modern attitudes, values, and beliefs, the researchers found that hands down, educational attainment was the best predictor of individual modernity. Exposure to formal education, even just primary schooling, was 50 percent more powerful as a predictor than the influence of working in what the researchers assumed to be the strongly transforming industrial job (versus

farming) (Inkeles 1996). Yet in the researchers' discussion of the findings it is perplexing to read how they talk themselves out of their own results, retreating instead to a clear bias for the influence of industrialization over that of mass education. The fact that young men with more formal education were significantly more likely to embrace modernity was dismissed by the strange argument that since schooling had "full time control over the pupil's formal learning, [why] does it not perform [as an effect] a lot *better* than it does relative to the factory?" (Inkeles 1969, 139). So although the education effect is the largest one in these data, because it is not even larger, one should then ignore it? Further too, factory work is controlling over long hours, so that faithfully following where the findings lead, the implication is the exact opposite: Why does not industrialized work produce individual modernity to the same degree as mass education? But this question is never taken up, and the senior investigator for the project all but admits that they plan to marginalize the education effects, as he boldly states: "the slogan for our project became, 'The factory can be a school—a school for modernization.'" (139). Perhaps, but why ignore the obvious and stronger influence of real schools on psychological modernization?

Becoming Modern, the title of the study's main book, became a widely read classic in sociology, engendering much debate about the impact of industrialization from both the supportive technical-functionalist argument and from Marxian critique; but the overwhelming evidence for the education effect remained buried throughout. This investigation and others, based on some of the most scientifically sophisticated observations of the distinctly new world emerging at the middle of the last century, pushed aside, ignored, and underestimated the sweeping impacts of a worldwide education revolution.

The intent here is not to criticize just one book or a few sociologists—and to be fair, it should be noted that Alex Inkeles later acknowledged the causal importance of schooling for fostering modern attitudes (Inkeles 1974, 1996). The larger point is that in the midst of the rising schooled society worldwide, the mentality within sociology and related intellectual fields was to study the political and economic implications of postindustrial society instead of recognizing that the education revolution was also a significant and sociologically new part of this society. Even in the face of considerable

empirical evidence that education was transforming society, the view of the emerging postindustrial society was described from the rearview mirror perspective of the structure of nineteenth-century Western society, well before education was to emerge as a mass institution. This was a particularly ironic oversight given that this generation of intellectuals missed a major transforming educational process occurring right under their noses in the expanding secondary schools from whence they had come and the increasingly vigorous and expanding universities where so many of them professed for a living. In many ways this mentality continues today. So with the results of nearly four decades of research on education and a new theoretical perspective, it is time to resurrect from the intellectual junk pile the prematurely discarded education revolution and hypothesize that it has had a significant independent influence on postindustrial society.

ASSESSING A QUIET REVOLUTION

As already noted, the vast majority of scholarship on education and society assumes that education blindly follows changes in society, that it just prepares individuals for predetermined social roles, jobs, and experiences. This common view of education is as a secondary institution, a derivative of other institutions, that acts in support of other supposedly more dominant institutions such as the economy and the state. Developed here is an alternative argument: The education revolution has independently transformed postindustrial culture into a *schooled society*. The schooled society is a wholly new social order where dimensions of education reach into and define nearly every facet of human life; in short, education has become a central, primary institution. In a number of nations an advanced version of the schooled society is already fully evident, and throughout the rest of the world the same trend is occurring and the education revolution will likely intensify everywhere into the future.

In the late 1960s, as the prominent social theorist Talcott Parsons pointed out (in the epigraph), some intellectuals foreshadowed the idea of a schooled society as they observed the takeoff of mass higher education in developed nations, as well as the rise of "big science" and the "knowledge conglomerate" across the world's research universities. Mass education was predicted then to become a central institution in postindustrial society. And although

some early speculations on the consequences of this change proved to be overblown (e.g., a fully rationalized, technological, narrow expert society), the overall idea was prophetic. Yet for the most part, the thesis that the education revolution was a leading force of advanced modernity was dropped over the ensuing decades in the rush to embrace a limited argument that education is merely the handmaiden of capitalist society or is the "natural" outcome of a technological society, and in either case has little independent sociological impact of its own. Now, though, there is enough empirical evidence to judge whether the education revolution deserves a place in the discourse about major independent events shaping human society. Research alone, however, is not sufficient to accomplish this task. Armed with an innovative theoretical perspective known as "neo-institutionalism," a new perspective on education and its role in society is possible.

The usual, or what will be referred to here as the "traditional," way people think about the role of formal education in society is that schooling chiefly plays a helping role in creating social and economic complexity; hence the notion of education as mostly a *reproducer* of society.[1] As shown in Figure I.1, the main arrow of influence runs from society to schooling: education only functions to train and credential people to "fit into society."

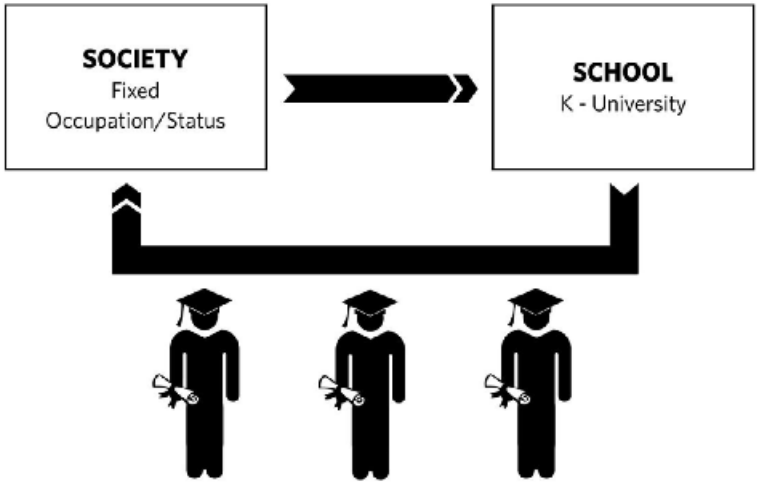

FIGURE I.1 *Traditional perspective on the relationship between education and society.*

Also it is assumed that social and economic positions allocated to adults on the basis of educational credentials are more or less fixed by the society at large, that is, by other social institutions, not education. In this picture, schooling serves the larger needs of society by educating people to take positions in society; hence schooling reproduces society in the next generation.

Among intellectuals the primary reason the traditional perspective remains so popular is because two major, albeit contrasting, arguments about the function of education in society rely on the assumption that education follows the contours of society. Human capital theory assumes that education mostly imparts work skills determined by the economy; while Marxist theory assumes that education mostly indoctrinates workers to the conditions of capitalist production and its social-class inequalities. But while there is no doubt that formal education involves training for the labor market and is increasingly the arena in which social status is determined, these theories minimize what education has become and overlook its full impact on society. If ones steps back from the traditional perspective and considers how common formal schooling through adulthood has become and how dominating a part of nearly everyone's life it is, a second and broader image of schooling emerges.

In contrast, neo-institutional theory hypothesizes that education has grown to such proportions that it has become a separate and enduring social institution; thus the education revolution *socially constructs* significant portions of the culture of modern society, rather than merely reproducing it. Not only are people trained and credentialed through schooling, but the institution itself changes other social institutions and the entire culture of society. As shown in Figure I.2, in what will be referred to here as the "schooled society" perspective, the main arrow of influence flows from education to society, and carries along with it a host of new ideas and new human capabilities, as well as changing and expanding social and economic positions.

Neo-institutional theory does not assume that the people who populate education, from students to teachers to administrators, explicitly intend to create all of this social change. Just as with the transformational influence of intensifying, large-scale capitalism on economies, or the influence of representative democracy on polities, education as an institution pri-

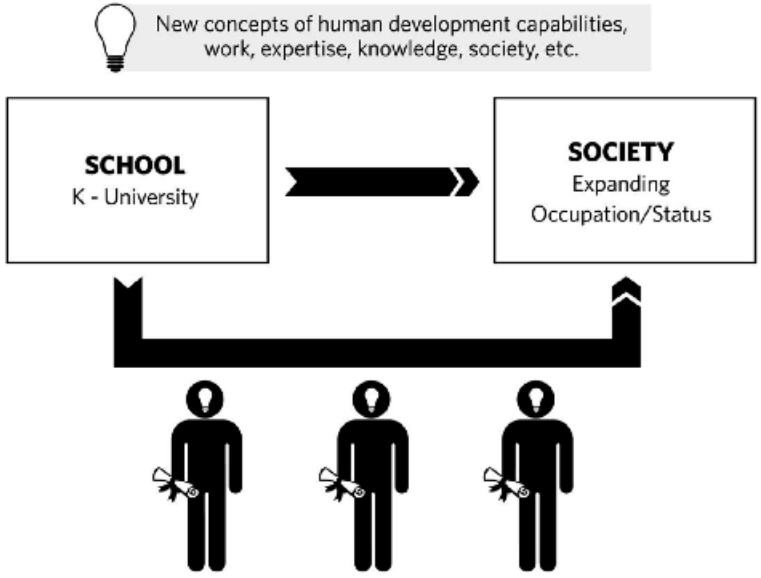

FIGURE I.2 *Schooled society (neo-institutional) perspective on the relationship between education and society.*

marily focuses on the matter within its own institutional domain, namely, education (Luhmann 2013). But with the education revolution, this relatively new anthropological activity of formally educating the majority of a population has major ripple effects on important aspects of society. In the parlance of neo-institutionalism, the real essence of the education revolution is that formal education has steadily become more *institutionalized*, creating the condition by which it has considerable influence on the social construction of society.

Much sociological theory rests on the notion of an institution accompanied by the process of institutionalization.[2] Institutions are the building blocks of human society at any time or place. Animated through individuals, a social institution is conceptual and cognitive, not physical (although it has many physical consequences); it is powerful in its control of human behavior through the production of shared meaning in all realms of human existence (e.g., Berger and Luckmann 1966). In a sense, institutions are clusters of cultural meaning and values concerning how to think, feel, emote, and act in the everyday world. Individuals and collectives, whether formal

organizations or informal groups of humans, experience reality through their cultural meanings (e.g., DiMaggio 1997). From this perspective, education is an institution in the same way modern medicine and the family are social institutions: sets of cognitive maps for how to behave, feel, and think in particular sectors of life.

As a theory, neo-institutionalism is essentially a new way to look at the older concept of social institution by placing far greater theoretical emphasis on institutions' production of widely shared cultural meanings instead of as only consisting of highly prescribed and structured social roles and norms, which was the basis of the original institutionalism (Meyer and Jepperson 2000).[3] Institutions construct and channel culture as everyday knowledge made up of conceptions or models of the everyday world, also referred to as scripts, scenarios, and schemata, which people use to form a collective sense of reality (Eslinger 1998). As the fundamental product of institutions, culture is made up of these cognitive models by which people derive meaningful action, motivations, and emotions (Meyer and Jepperson 2000). From neo-institutional theory the very essence of social change is institutional change: greater or lesser institutionalization of a particular set of cultural meanings equals greater or lesser impact on perceived reality (e.g., Berger, Berger, and Kellner 1974). And, as has occurred over the course of the education revolution so far, the process of greater institutionalization means simply an intensification of the meaning of actions, motivations, and emotions around a particular sector of life by a particular institution.

To recognize formal education as a primary institution is like focusing and refocusing on the blended images of an Escher drawing, where birds turn into fish in contrasting relief. What at first appears as a common image contains a surprising counterimage that is revealed only through a new perspective. The trick to appreciating the schooled society model of education's societal role is not to think of schooling's impact as limited to its immediate influence on individuals, but to refocus on how the institution of education constructs influential ideas, social statuses, and new human capacities, and then on how these become a significant reality in postindustrial society.

Institutions can differ in their impact on cultural meaning over time and place, and several important geohistorical trends behind the origin of

the education revolution are explored in later chapters. Yet even though formal education organizations may adapt differently from nation to nation, or even from region to region within nations, at a deeper level the global expression of education is strongly affixed to the same everyday ideas about what the institution is, and how it should operate. So as the process of institutionalization advances, though individual schools and universities are influenced by their local, regional, and national context, the basic ideas behind schooling are now defined in the same way globally and have been intensifying in a common direction over recent history (Baker and LeTendre 2005). Consequently, the organizations of national school systems are now also influenced by supranational forces that are beyond the control of national policy-makers, politicians, and educators. This is not to say that some world governing body, or even a powerful multinational agency, overtly forces nations to think and act similarly when it comes to schooling; rather, that the globalized institutionalization process is more encompassing. Education as a primary, culture-constructing institution joins just a few other similarly robust institutions responsible for producing worldwide society through a set of "legitimating ideas [that] are often much more than values and norms resting in sentiments: they are accounts of how the reified parts of the social world fit together and function and have a cognitive status" (Meyer 1981: 897).

Indeed, this is exactly the advantage of the neo-institutional theory as a way to think about how education as an institution constructs society. From legitimating ideas and meanings occurring within schools and universities and in the everyday actions of students, teachers, professors, scholars, administrators, and policy-makers, widespread cultural understandings flow out to other institutions, particularly now that just about everyone in fully schooled societies is heavily exposed to these similar understandings. The education revolution has resulted in an acceptance of an amazingly rich and far-reaching set of ideas that, beyond just educating individuals, shape the culture of society. All of this has come about in a soft, almost imperceptible, taken-for-granted way, which when examined with the right focus shows the institution of education in postindustrial society to be a dominating force.

EXAMINING THE DIMENSION AND ORIGIN OF THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION

The five following chapters comprise the first part of the book, examining the symbiotic demographic and cultural forces of the education revolution and their origins. Chapter 1 chronicles the degree to which formal education engulfs the time and energies of individuals and full populations alike; plus it considers how this change has come about over a remarkably short historical time. This chapter also introduces the notion of the institution's cultural impact by describing some of the core ideas that the institution of education promotes: universalism of educational merit; educational development of individuals as a collective good; academic achievement as supreme achievement; belief in academically derived knowledge; and cognition as master human capability. Chapter 2 then considers how these components combine to form powerful cultural assumptions that are at the heart of the schooled society and that help to explain its wider impact. Three examples of widely held assumptions are examined: one, that what can be called "academic intelligence" is the superior human capability; two, that formal education is a human right; and last, that formal education is the most legitimate and socially just way to organize social mobility and differential occupational positions in postindustrial society.

A significant amount of research initially investigated the education revolution through analysis of growing primary and secondary school enrollments over the past century and a half (e.g., Fuller and Rubinson 1992). While being an obvious and productive approach, the impression remains that the education revolution came out of midair with few cultural ties to prior developments, thus trivializing to a degree the study of the independent influence of an expanding education sector on society. Recent scholarship suggests, however, that the origins of the education revolution were shaped over the long historical development of the Western university. Therefore, based on this research, the last three chapters of this part place the university, with its extraordinary institutional charters, at the center of the creation and deepening of the culture of education within the schooled society. This argument and its causal agent give the education revolution a clear social history, a feature lacking in earlier accounts of the origins of the phenomenon.

The argument across Chapters 3–5 focuses on the long historical development of the university's complex charter to produce knowledge, create associated degrees, and then train and certify individuals in the control, further production, and use of this knowledge across society. In this way *the university becomes a central cultural institution of modern society* out of which many of the cultural values of the education revolution were hatched, legitimated, and disseminated. Further, it will be shown that these functions interact with one another in a dynamic fashion, supercharging the primacy of universalized knowledge and academic degrees awarded in mass numbers, thus producing a self-reinforcing dynamic. The result of this dynamic charter is the creation of reigning meanings in society, reinforced by the now legions of university-trained and degree-certified experts who make up so much of contemporary society, and who in turn perpetuate the legitimacy of university-generated knowledge. Also it will be argued that the expensive knowledge conglomerate found in a growing set of super-research universities worldwide is neither a fluke of history nor some rare event. Instead, it comes right out of the success of the schooled society with its wide belief in education. It is a predicable outcome of the trends of the education revolution, whose ideas were initiated during the rise of the Western university centuries ago.

SOCIETAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION

If this account of the education revolution's origins and its ability to make new culture is of theoretical value, there should be evidence of significant influence of the education culture on other major social institutions in contemporary society. The six chapters of the second part of the book explore this thesis for selected institutions. Until John Meyer's (1977) reframing of the essential relationship between education and society along these lines, few considered this prediction. And since the traditional perspective has been, and still is, the most popular one among intellectuals, exploring the effects of education on other institutions has not been an explicit research agenda. So these chapters explore uncharted territory. While there is some useful research deriving explicitly from the schooled society perspective, one has to rely on marshalling relevant evidence from other

research agendas, even though these are often theoretically ambiguous or agnostic in their assumptions about the relationship between education and postindustrial society. One also has to confront the residue of decades of traditional theorizing about education and society; many myths, half-truths, and overlooked paradoxes have worked their way into a number of otherwise useful research literatures and need to be weeded out. For each chapter's selected social institution, then, in addition to examining how the education revolution has changed the institution, the discussion critiques past theory and research and mixes in new interpretations of existing empirical findings. A fuller test of the educational transformation of social institutions awaits, but each chapter provides a beginning. While there are many possible institutions to examine, the most challenging to the argument are major social institutions that have in their own right considerable "institutional power" within the culture.[4]

At the core of the traditional perspective on education is that the economy, as an institution, significantly dictates the form and nature of formal education. So to begin, the first two chapters of this part turn this well-worn argument around and describe the educational transformation of work in advanced capitalist economies, including the structuring of jobs, occupational credentials, and profitable skills. Chapter 6 attempts to put to rest the twin ideas that education either merely follows the demands of jobs or is an out-of-control process expanding education into a pandemic of overeducation. Then, exploring a considerable amount of recent research on labor economics, firms and organizations, and neo-institutional analyses of education, this chapter finds that the education revolution is changing the qualities, the ideas, and expectations about work, workers, and workplaces; this is seen in rising cognitive complexity of jobs, managerial requirements, and professionalization, particularly in the growing sector of employment within large organizations.

Just as the education revolution transforms work, it transforms the nature of the connection between educational degrees and occupational placement. While education has been tied to access to occupations for some time, the pace of educational expansion and its cultural impact have vastly increased the strength and salience of the connection. Chapter 7 examines first how the growing intensity of the schooled society

increases the phenomenon of educational credentialing for occupations and deepens the meaning and value of educational degrees in the economy. The dominance of educational credentialing for occupations is a central consequence of the education revolution, both in terms of the educational requirements themselves and in supporting a pervasive logic by which educational credentialing becomes evermore legitimate, pushing aside older, non-educational forms of credentialing. An integration of multiple sets of new findings about education, occupations, and work shows that the common negative notion of runaway educational credentialism, or degree inflation, does not fit empirical trends in the schooled society. Second, as a function of widely held beliefs about education in postindustrial society, the chapter describes and illustrates, with empirical observations and analyses, four institutional processes by which educational credentialing continues to be deeply integrated into the occupational structure.

Chapter 8 puts forth the argument that the knowledge society is fundamentally predicated on the schooled society. This chapter examines how the education revolution has changed the nature of knowledge, and truth claims by which new knowledge is validated, and in turn exponentially increases the worldwide production of authoritative knowledge. This foundation for the knowledge society, spread throughout populations by schooling from the earliest years into adulthood, consists of the growth and intensity of science, rationalized inquiry, theory, and empirical methods, all influenced and reinforced by an overarching cognitization of academic intelligence considered to apply to all humans in all of their endeavors. The educationally produced culture of cognition, scientization, and universal nature of knowledge have also led to the death of long-celebrated classicism as well as the old assumed need for vocationalism as guiding principles of formal education before the maturing of the education revolution.

Economies and knowledge production are obvious choices to explore the impact of the education revolution, but to demonstrate its institutional reach, three final chapters examine areas of life not often considered heavily influenced by education. Chapter 9 examines the impact of the education revolution on the self through its construction of personal and public identities of success and failure, as illustrated through the much

noted and discussed mass phenomenon of the school dropout (and now the college dropout) and the growing use of an educational process (i.e., the GED) as a way back into the schooled society. The school dropout phenomenon is neither trivial nor media-created; it demonstrates the depths to which the education culture extends to individuals' self-image in the schooled society.

Since democracy and civil society are often acknowledged as an institutional pillar of postindustrial society, Chapter 10 explores the role of education in generating mass democracy and its current chaotic political environment. Using recent neo-institutional research, this chapter shows that many of the paradoxes about modern politics in the United States, such as the decline of old party politics, older forms of nationalism, technocratic issue politics, and the alienation of some citizens, are actually the result of expanding higher education and the pervasive culture of the schooled society. It is also argued that the education revolution is responsible for a different, vibrant global civic culture that generates a globalized polity among youth in many nations as overt nationalism recedes among the newly educated.

The last chapter on consequences, Chapter 11, examines how education increases a thriving culture of mass religion worldwide. These are two institutions widely considered to be antithetical to one another. The culture of education has transformed belief and organized religion in ways not predicted just half a century ago. Many social theorists assumed that mass education would make for a more secular, even irreligious, society. But religion continues to flourish. On the basis of new research on education and religion at the individual, congregational, and cultural levels, the chapter argues that while the education revolution has challenged religious authority, it can at times be very symbiotic to organized religion and individual spirituality. Mass education transforms, and even intensifies, religion in its own image more than it causes religion to decline.

In light of all the presented evidence, the Conclusion returns to the main issues addressed above. It assesses how much the idea of a schooled society can explain the phenomena of the education revolution, and their consequences. The conclusion is that this heretofore intellectually quiet revolution should be placed on the short list of prominent transforming

causes of postindustrial society. In failing to consider the consequences of a pervasive culture of education, many social phenomena are misinterpreted. The discussion ends by considering the future of the schooled society and briefly speculating on negative and positive influences of the education revolution.