Historical Labor Market Influences: Elite PhDs

in the Humanities at Comprehensive

Universities (1972-1982)

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INTRODUCTION

The economic downturn that began in the United States in 2008 has influenced American higher and postsecondary education in similar ways to the retrenchment in the early 1970s. Focusing specifically on college and university faculty, rapidly emerging institutional budget constraints have expedited long-term declines in the number of full-time, tenure track faculty positions available in many academic disciplines, especially the humanities (Jaschik, 2009b). These academic labor market difficulties have been exacerbated by humanities graduate degree production that "has recently returned to levels similar to those reached in the heyday of the late 1960s" (Grafton & Townsend, 2008) and portends an oversupply of qualified applicants for faculty positions, replicating the situation faced almost 40 years ago.

The increase in the number of PhDs granted beginning in the late 1950s as a result of the Sputnik effect paralleled the greater expectations of hiring institutions. Within that time frame, the fluctuations of the academic labor market and student enrollments had major impacts on employment opportunities available to faculty aspirants and the resulting quality of faculty worklife. According to Blackburn and Lawrence (1995), it is important to identify and analyze faculty cohorts that may have experienced similar development and socialization due to critical periods and events.

Hughes (1958) highlighted the importance of studying less prestigious segments of professions in order to understand them more fully, and Becher (1987) asserted that studying the cultures of faculty worklife in non-elite institutions can yield perspectives that are very different from elite cultures. More recently, Rhoades (2007) identified the paucity of research on "faculty in the largely unstudied middle sectors of public comprehensive colleges and universities…" (p. 124), and described Finnegan's research as one notable exception. This includes her case study

(1993) at two comprehensive universities that identified three distinct faculty cohorts of the postwar era. The first cohort was labeled the "Boomers" after the so-called "higher education boom" of the late 1950s and the 1960s, which brought unprecedented numbers of new students and faculty to academe.

The second of these cohorts faced a radically different scenario when the academic labor market crashed in the early 1970s. Finnegan deemed the 1972-1982 liberal arts faculty in this hiring cohort fortunate because they were able to secure full-time, tenure-track positions during a very tight labor market. She dubbed them "Brahmins," since "many were hired for their eminent credentials with the organizational intention of raising institutional prestige" (p. 624). The third cohort was the "Proteans," who were hired after 1982 when the labor market for faculty improved somewhat. Even so, many of this group took temporary teaching positions and other postdoctoral positions in order to improve their chances for academic employment.

This qualitative study examined the career socialization of 19 humanities and social sciences faculty who were trained at prestigious research or elite universities before entering a tight academic labor market as newly-minted PhDs in the period from 1972-1982. The credentials and experiences of the participants in this study fit within the Brahmin cohort as identified by Finnegan (1993), and they took faculty appointments at Comprehensive institutions whose academic milieus were distinctly different from that of their doctoral degree-granting institutions. They are now senior faculty in the humanities (or related social sciences), which was the broad field most deeply affected by the hiring recession in higher education during the 1970s. The timing of the economic downturn in the 1970s actually worked to the advantage of Comprehensive institutions, a type of postsecondary institution which was experiencing growth

in an otherwise slow economy. Thus, public four-year institutions with strong teaching missions could capitalize on a buyer's market for humanities PhDs from top research universities.

Once hired as junior faculty in a somewhat unfamiliar academic work environment, the respondents faced a challenging period of adjustment. Some had anticipated only a brief stint at their hiring institution before moving on, but for one reason or another, most stayed for the next two or even three decades. Years later, they continue to serve within the Comprehensive institutions. One interview participant observed, "Within 10 years, the end of a brief golden age will be upon us when these people retire." Thus, the study cohort has earned the honorific title, the "Golden Generation."

One primary research question guided this study: How did the academic labor market affect the Golden Generation's (new PhDs in humanities who graduated from prestigious research universities and were subsequently hired by Master's I public institutions during a tight academic labor market between 1972-1982) initial job searches and subsequent hiring processes in Master's I public institutions?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in three areas of literature: faculty labor markets, faculty socialization, and faculty career stages.

Academic labor markets

Caplow and McGee's (1958) groundbreaking study of the academic labor market was set in the context of an array of serious issues after World War II, when the country struggled with achieving a balance between national security and individual rights, and faculty were scrutinized over issues such as academic freedom, political views and expression on campus, loyalty oaths, communism and subversive activities (Lazarsfeld & Thielens, 1958). They investigated the

vacancy and replacement process involving 237 liberal arts faculty positions in 9 major

universities during 1954-1956, and included academic disciplines such as anthropology,

archeology, English, foreign languages, history, philosophy, and political science. Their

investigation provided insights into the myriad complexities of influences on faculty departure,

recruitment, candidate evaluation, and academic governance. Many academic labor markets

exist, and each appears distinct because of such features as academic discipline, the relative

prestige of institutions, religion, race and ethnicity, and geographic region (Light, Marsden &

Corl, 1973). Markets vary also by time period, depending on critical events and conditions

(Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995).

      Imbalances can occur in supply and demand at any given time, causing market upswings

or downturns. This situation is generally due to the lengthy lead-time to prepare for the

academic profession, which according to Bowen and Schuster (1987) was roughly 10 years in

1981. Cartter (1976) was the first to publicize the circumstance by which doctoral students

anticipated a strong future demand in their subject fields, only to see the market evaporate upon

completion of the long-awaited PhD. Freeman (1976) referred to this phenomenon as a "cobweb

cycle," a type of recursive adjustment that occurs when a shortage (or a surplus) turns into a

surplus (or shortage) over a period of time, based on publicized projections. Unfortunately, such

forecasts have varying degrees of accuracy, depending on the academic discipline and sub-

disciplines. When individuals act on a real or perceived shortage in large enough numbers, the

job market is tipped out of balance by an oversupply of manpower, say government analysts

(Jones, 2003).

      The Brahmin cohort experienced such a situation in the early 1970s, due partly to the fact

that in the humanities, many undergraduate students began turning away from the traditional

liberal arts to a more vocational orientation, thereby reducing demand (Altbach, 1995; Bowen &

Schuster, 1987). At this time, many who had committed to a long period of graduate study found

themselves in an academic pipeline leading nowhere. More often, newly minted doctorates

faced daunting competition for tenure-track positions in elite colleges and universities. The

situation became particularly acute in the arts and humanities, with candidates left to consider

less desirable alternatives. The job market in the humanities has remained depressed for three

decades (Cohen, 2000; Weisbuch, 2000) despite Bowen and Sosa's (1989) optimistic projections

to the contrary. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences' Humanities Indicators Project

collected and analyzed data from existing sources to compile a prototype set of 74 indicators of

statistical data about the humanities in the United States. Results from the initial version

indicated that the biggest decrease in the percentage of full-time faculty positions in the

humanities took place between the late 1980s and the early 1990s (Howard, 2009).

More recently, the decline in history faculty positions may be 15 percent or higher

according to the American Historical Association, while the Modern Language Association

(MLA) reported 22 percent declines in English language and literature faculty positions, and 20

percent declines in foreign language positions (Jaschik, 2009a). Using its Job Information List

as a data source, the MLA predicted an approximately 37% decrease in English and Foreign

Language faculty position announcements in December, 2009 (Miller, 2010). Conn (2010)

asserted that this decline will continue to be influenced by long-term trends, and attributed at

least some of it to the shift from tenured and tenure-track faculty positions to nontenurable,

contingent positions.

Faculty socialization

The theory of organizational and faculty socialization attempts to explain the process of learning appropriate professional behaviors at transitional career periods, and commonly refers to a new member of an organization who must learn all "the ropes" of the job and the expectations of them in the new position (Tierney, 1997). Tierney and Bensimon (1996) defined socialization as "a ritualized process that involves the transmission of the organizational culture." Much of the theoretical base underlying the analysis of organizational socialization has been derived from Van Mannen and Schein's (1979) six tactics for newcomer adjustment, which have been tested and revised by higher education researchers (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). The Van Mannen and Schein theory derives from the simple premise that "what people learn about the work roles in their organizations is often a direct result of how they learn it" (1979, p. 209). A parallel set of six polar dimensions by Tierney and Rhoads (1994) expanded on the Van Mannen and Schein model specifically applied to faculty. These (with Van Mannen and Schein originals in parentheses) are:

1. Group vs. singular *(Collective vs. individual)*
2. Isolated from organizational members vs. interwoven with organizational members (*Formal vs. informal*)
3. Unclear and ambiguous vs. ordered steps (*Sequential vs. random*)
4. Specific timetable vs. no timetable (*Fixed vs. variable*)
5. Lead by role models vs. no role models *(Serial vs. disjunctive)*
6. Affirming vs. transforming individual characteristics (*investiture vs. divestiture*)

Corcoran and Clark (1984) conceptualized a broader three-stage socialization model from graduate school through professional career. Baldwin (1990) proposed a sequential model of the faculty career consisting of four stages, serving as a frame of reference for understanding the needs of the professoriate throughout various career transitions. Gumport's (2000) research compared doctoral student socialization processes at the highest and lowest ends of the prestige

continuum of elite research universities, and one study participant described doctoral students at a high prestige research university as "…These [students] are special and they know they're special" (pg. 6). According to Blackburn and Lawrence (1995), "Socialization theory predicts that faculty educated and trained in graduate departments where research is the dominant value will be more prolific scholars than will those who attend institutions less committed to the research role" (p. 37). This holds true for faculty employed in departments similar to their graduate school departments, which valued research over teaching and instilled the importance of publication. However, less is known about the socialization of faculty initially trained in research-oriented institutions and subsequently employed in teaching-oriented institutions.

Faculty career stages

Anticipatory socialization and doctoral education phases. With the increasing implementation of institutionalized programs to involve undergraduate students in faculty research, it is becoming less clear what constitutes the initial career stage for faculty. Although older studies tended to assume that the career begins upon entry into a tenure track position, more recent research has supported the earlier beginnings known collectively as anticipatory socialization (Fairweather & Rhoads, 1995; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996) involving undergraduate disciplinary and vocational choice phases followed by the doctoral education phase.

The transition from graduate student to new faculty has attracted considerable attention from researchers over the years. Perhaps nowhere has this phase elicited more discussion than in the humanities disciplines. Due to an oversupply of candidates in the academic labor market over the past three decades and mismatches between specializations of new PhDs and requirements of available faculty positions, recent graduates in the humanities have faced

unfavorable odds in the quest for full time tenure-track positions. The literature has addressed the advantages and disadvantages of job seekers' so-called "holding pattern" (Nerad & Cerny, 1999) of extended marginal employment as teachers in academe. Another salient issue at this juncture is person-institution fit, where the congruence between a faculty candidate's socialization and the culture and mission of the institution normally spells a promising future. An alternate view is that for aspirants from historically underrepresented groups, a good fit is less likely, and that the socialization should be bidirectional in order to promote greater diversity within the institution (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996).

The Early Career (including pursuit of tenure) is the most documented stage in the literature. One such study is the Heeding New Voices study (Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000), which followed new faculty over the first years of an academic appointment to determine the sources that sustain and constrain their professional development. Recommendations for best practices focused on improving review and tenure processes, encouraging positive relations with colleagues and students, and easing stresses of time and balance. Similarly, results of a recent survey of more than 8,300 doctoral students at nine University of California campuses (Mason, Goulden, & Frasch, 2009) indicated that tenure-track faculty positions in research-oriented universities were viewed as less desirable for work-life balance than similar positions at teaching-oriented universities. The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education survey of tenure-track faculty at more than 80 four-year colleges and universities focuses on tenure processes, worklife, institutional policies, campus culture, and satisfaction. The overall results of that survey showed that junior faculty reported the greatest satisfaction with the institutional environment for teaching and the least satisfaction with the institutional environment for research (COACHE, 2007). Other research has shown that the Early Career

stage may be especially difficult for women faculty and faculty of color, whose expectations of

mentoring and collegiality from senior faculty may fail to result in successful navigation of the

social and political maze of the institution (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996).

Middle to later career. The stage covering the middle to later career normally extends

for the longest time period (two or three decades in many cases), yet it has received relatively

scant research attention until recently. The Chronicle of Higher Education's Great Colleges to

Work For survey of 15,000 respondents at 89 institutions found that mid-career faculty were

"somewhat dispirited," and were "more likely than anyone else on their campuses to harbor

negative feelings about their jobs, career advancement, and the fairness of the workplace"

(Selingo, 2008). Conversely, Spalter-Roth and VanVooren's (2008) 10-year longitudinal study

of mid-career academic sociologists' views of work and family activities found that more than

70% of respondents were very satisfied with their careers and family situations. Results of the

Modern Language Association survey of associate professors (MLA, 2009) showed a significant

difference between women and men in the number of years at the associate professor rank before

promotion to professor, taking women 1 to 3.5 years longer than men.

Senior faculty stage. The 1980s and early 1990s produced a spate of studies on senior

faculty, arising from a critical period in budget cutbacks, hiring slowdowns, decreased job

mobility, and widespread economic constraints in higher education (Baldwin, 1985). At that

time, the concept of faculty vitality evolved as a means of identifying strategies to increase the

morale and productivity of senior faculty (Baldwin, 1985; Bowen & Schuster, 1987; Boyer,

1990).

Despite the adequate volume of studies on the socialization and worklife of faculty at

distinct stages and phases, there is a void in the literature for models that conceptualize the

academic career as interconnected stages with complex transitions. This has been particularly

true in regards to the careers of humanities faculty in comprehensive universities.

Methods

This qualitative study investigated the career perceptions and experiences of nineteen

tenured senior faculty (14 men, 5 women) in six Humanities disciplines (English, Rhetoric and

Writing, History, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Religion) and two humanities-related social

sciences (Cultural Anthropology and Political Science). The participants were employed at

nineteen different Master's colleges and universities across the United States, and the broad

range of disciplines among the study participants ensured an array of different perspectives to

better understand faculty socialization, career attitudes, and role orientations (See Table 1 for

distribution of participants' disciplinary affiliations).

Table 1. *Distribution of Study Cohort's Disciplines within the Humanities (N=19)*

Respondent's Academic Discipline	Number	Percentage
Cultural Anthropology	1	5%
English and Rhetoric	6	31%
History	7	37%
Modern Languages	2	11%
Philosophy/Religion	2	11%
Political Science	1	5%
TOTALS	19	100%

Selection of questionnaire respondents

The study received endorsement from the American Historical Association that ensured

its legitimacy and increased the total number of participants. Invitations to participate in the

study were posted to several national and international humanities and education electronic mail

lists, and respondents were solicited to recommend colleagues who met the qualifications for study participation.

Participants were selected according to the following criteria used in Finnegan's (1992) study: graduate institution and year of PhD, hiring cohort, type of hiring institution, and academic discipline. The year of first hire into academe set the cut-off for the cohort Finnegan referred to as the "Brahmins." Hired between 1972 and 1982, they constitute the smallest of the current cohorts due to the paucity of hiring in recessionary times. Further, the respondents to this study were selected from among the "Brahmin cohort" who graduated from PhD programs in major Research I universities and other highly prestigious graduate programs. Using the 2000 edition of the Carnegie Classification system as a reference, these informants were then hired by public Master's colleges and universities during a tight academic labor market and currently held tenured faculty status. For the purposes of the study, no distinctions were made between Master's I and Master's II institutions.

Data sources

Data for the study was collected from three sources to effectively triangulate results over the faculty career span. These included a current curriculum vitae for each respondent, a 5-item demographic survey, and a 10-item in-depth, open-ended, self-administered questionnaire regarding respondents' attitudes and perceptions at four points of comparison: graduate school, job search and hiring, early career, and later career. The questionnaires were based on a "limited career span" approach that was adapted from the life history approach described by Marshall and Rossman (1995) as "helpful in defining problems and in studying aspects of certain professions, …valuable in studying cultural changes that have occurred over time and in gaining an inside view of a culture." The self-administered questionnaire focused on three main areas: a)

influences on career choice and expectations as a doctoral student; b) perceptions and

consequences of a limited academic job market, and c) adjustment to the culture and mission of a

different institutional type during the beginning of the academic career.

The substitution of written responses from participants for oral responses from face-to-

face interviews produced several methodological advantages with this faculty cohort. First, as

senior faculty in the humanities with numerous publications, these respondents were all seasoned

writers, and this was indicated by the lengthy answers provided by some participants. Second,

the self-administered nature of the questionnaire provided participants with time to reflect on the

questions and their responses and edit the responses before returning them. Third, certain topics

emerged as priorities for individual respondents, and this was evidenced by what they chose to

discuss and what they chose to omit. As a result, we assumed that each respondent accurately

portrayed the issues they deemed significant in their faculty worklives, and any omissions were

intentional.

Data Analysis

Constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was completed on the self-

administered questionnaire data, and Tesch's (1990) eight step qualitative process was used to

manually code the data based on the characteristics of two constructs of Blackburn and

Lawrence's (1995) theoretical framework of faculty careers: self-knowledge variables and social

knowledge variables. This approach generated additional dimensions of each construct for

analysis and identified perceptions of a limited academic job market, influences on career

adjustment, and on the pursuit of tenure and promotion.

The demographic survey data was analyzed quantitatively to produce descriptive

statistics on demographic characteristics of the participants. The current curriculum vitae were

analyzed to ascertain pertinent background information such as academic pedigree, career

trajectory, records of teaching, research, and service, honors and awards, and academic

specializations to establish additional qualitative context for the participants.

Results and Conclusions

The study results are presented based on two dimensions of the individual characteristics

component of Blackburn and Lawrence's (1995) theoretical framework of faculty careers: self-

knowledge and social knowledge variables.

Social Knowledge Variables

Blackburn and Lawrence's (1995) concepts of faculty self-knowledge and social

knowledge addressed the academic work environment, and in this study, these variables referred

to participant views of labor market conditions. Surprisingly, thirteen of the nineteen study

participants (68%) reported receiving only one employment offer, and one cogently described

her perceptions:

> "The [academic labor] market bottomed out and the outlook was bleak. Some
>
> [student colleagues] abandoned, while others took nonacademic jobs. [I] recognized the
>
> competition, but had no clear sense of how to deal with it. The faculty in the department
>
> were totally unprepared to help with the job search. I would have preferred a different
>
> place [employing institution] – this one was depressing."

This comment raises important questions about the faculty member's morale and vitality

both entering the new faculty position, and maintaining the commitment to performing the

responsibilities of the position to meet annual expectations over the course of the tenure-track

period. Echoing the significantly changing nature of the academic labor market, one respondent

documented his perceptions of the changes during 6 years spent in a doctoral program:

"The outlook for [humanities faculty] jobs was excellent before I entered graduate

school, but it was dismal just 6 years later."

A third participant shared a similar view of the academic labor market:

"There were few [tenure-track faculty] jobs available, and PhD production had hit

its peak just as the economy collapsed. I jumped at the offer [I received]."

Another respondent acknowledged receiving some help from the faculty advisor, but indicated

the high level of distress related to being in this situation:

"The competition for jobs was fairly heavy, but there were jobs [available] in

1976. My advisor was good about writing [recommendation] letters but did not actively

pursue jobs for students. I was desperate for a job. There was a job. I needed it. It was

the only offer I received."

Two study participants identified the multiple personal and professional pressures that

forced them to lower their initial job expectations in order to meet family responsibilities during

the grim labor market conditions. First, one respondent wrote:

"I was teaching full-time in a non-tenure track job when I finished my Ph.D. in

1980. I knew the brutal competitiveness of the market from several years of job

searching. My first child was born that year, and I needed a full-time job. I accepted a

[first] job at a small liberal arts college because it was the only academic job I was

offered."

A second respondent provided a similar rationale:

"I had a wife and children to support. I took visiting [faculty] positions, but I was

anxious about the likelihood of a secure position. I was on the verge of giving up my

dream of an academic career. The job market was horribly overcrowded, and I received

only one job offer."

These comments address one focus of this study: the perceptions, experiences, and adjustment

strategies used by humanities faculty who were socialized at, and graduated from, prestigious

research universities and were subsequently hired by much different types of institutions with

different expectations for responsibilities. As a result, the exemplary comments identified as

matching Blackburn and Lawrence's (1995) concept of faculty social knowledge addressed

issues such as morale, vitality, role commitment, awareness of increased stress as influences on

faculty worklife in general, and on the employment search process during a period of

retrenchment in particular.

Self-knowledge Variables

In this study, Blackburn and Lawrence's (1995) concept of faculty self-knowledge was

applied to the data on participant preferences, dispositions, and reactions to the employment

search and hiring processes. Of the 19 study respondents, 14 obtained full-time faculty positions

at Master's I institutions within one year of degree completion, 1 within two years of degree

completion, and 4 secured full-time faculty positions before degree completion (See Table 2 for

annual distribution of appointments).

Wilson (1942) discussed the concept of prestige hierarchies on both the departmental and

institutional levels, and Hearn (2007) identified that within research universities, departmental

prestige contributes to institutional prestige and vice versa. In the context of the desirability of

faculty affiliation with this prestige, three quotes in this category illustrate the prestige hierarchy

discrepancies between the study participants' desired and actual employing institutions. First,

one respondent's outlook on these discrepancies remained unchanged and he recalled the

disadvantages of a significantly less prestigious hiring institution's location:

> "I think a major factor in my selection was that I was a person who could be
>
> comfortable in a rural school, because during the interview, the point was frequently
>
> made this was not in a large city with the amenities that go with it. I would have
>
> certainly preferred an offer from just about anyplace else. I wanted a research-oriented
>
> land grant or private college, which this school clearly was not."

Second, in some cases the institutions changed; mission creep in the participants' employing

institutions over time resulted in changes in Carnegie Classification and campus culture from

teaching-oriented to research-oriented institutions. These changes offset the absence of some of

the benefits of faculty careers at more prestigious institutions, and another respondent summed it

up this way:

> "I was from a different part of the country. As a consequence, I felt quite
>
> alienated from the community and institution… At first, I got out of town as often and as
>
> quickly as possible to do what I really wanted to do. The rest of the year I endured,
>
> believing falsely that my sojourn would be of short duration. Ultimately, the institution
>
> moved closer to my values that I to its. As the institution began to recruit faculty
>
> nationally, I ceased being a minority -- eventually."

Third, in other cases it was the faculty who changed. Some study participants changed their

professional priorities during the employment search and, as a result, increased the 'goodness of

fit' between their professional goals and interests and those of their employing institutions. One

participant described it this way:

"[The job] was located near family, and the courses I would have taught were

appropriate to my personal interests and abilities, both then [at the beginning of the

faculty career] and now [at the end of the faculty career]. Looking back, I would NOT

have preferred a different type of institution."

Another respondent identified some advantages of adjusting their professional priorities, but was

less sanguine about changing them:

"It was not a good [labor] market, and I took the best offer after 4 years of paying

off debts. I sought a [faculty position at a] teaching [-oriented] institution, with proximity

to family and a reasonable cost of living. However, I sacrificed my research agenda."

A participant who obtained a faculty position at a Master's I/Comprehensive university during

the second year after receiving the PhD noted:

"I had a realistic view [of the academic labor market conditions], but I felt I was

hopeful based on my PhD credentials, and I was willing to go anywhere. But, the hiring

institution was not prestigious."

For the faculty who changed their priorities, the dispositions component of the faculty self-

knowledge construct becomes important. Did these faculty communicate their disappointment

with the positions they took, or possible low regard for their employing institutions to other

faculty, academic leaders, or students in their courses? Or did they reconcile the prestige

discrepancies over time?

In contrast, some study participants whose academic specialties were in demand reported

more positive experiences in the midst of a bad employment climate. One respondent explained,

> "[The job market was] promising for some. I was sought after due to [having a]
>
> prestigious degree in a new discipline. When I was ABD, I was offered two jobs, [but]
>
> turned them down to finish my degree. But I did not get a job close to home."

A female respondent with a desirable specialization wrote:

> "[The job market was] extremely tight – fierce. I wanted a research or private
>
> institution, which this school clearly was not. My special field was more in demand than
>
> some."

The exemplary comments identified as matching Blackburn and Lawrence's (1995) concept of

faculty self-knowledge addressed issues such as changing professional priorities, dispositions

that may or may not have been congruent with their employing institutions, and rational

reactions to different organizational realities.

Upon completion of doctoral coursework during the hiring recession of 1972-1982, the

respondents assessed their opportunities in the academic labor market, and the transition from

research-oriented doctoral candidate to academic job candidate was fraught with uncertainty and

apprehension. This exercise in social knowledge proved to be a depressing task for many, and

their virtually unanimous view was that the competition for full-time tenure-track faculty

positions in the Humanities at top-tier institutions would be intense. Most respondents felt

fortunate to receive one employment offer, even if it was from an unfamiliar teaching-oriented

public Master's I/Comprehensive university.

Conclusions

Distinct parallels exist between the current national economic downturn's effects on

faculty labor market conditions and the retrenchment that affected faculty of the Golden

Generation during 1972-1982. The discrepancies between future faculty preparation and

unanticipated career options in the 1970s had long-lasting repercussions for the study

participants, and underscores the differences between their PhD-granting elite research

universities and their employing Master's I/Comprehensive universities. Concerns about the

discrepancies between faculty supply and demand in the humanities today have been more

frequent and more urgent, and will continue to be so. This is a direct result of a wide range of

technology-based communication channels, epitomized by Croxall's (2010) blog post about

being unable to afford to attend the MLA conference to present his paper on the dismal economic

status of being a contingent faculty member in the humanities. However, humanities-focused

discussions of reforming graduate education, identifying alternate career paths, decreasing

institutional reliance on contingent faculty, and reducing the annual number of PhDs produced in

the discipline are beyond the scope of this discussion.

The results of this study offer retrospective qualitative insights into the longitudinal

experiences of a faculty hiring cohort that has already experienced the effects of a downturn, and

who transitioned from research universities to Master's I/Comprehensive universities. As Nerad,

Aanerud, and Cerny (2004) suggested, "career path analysis and retrospective analysis can be

employed effectively to benefit current and future student education" (p. 151). Teaching

Assistant (TA) training programs and junior faculty development initiatives such as the

Preparing Future Faculty program have incorporated content and activities to strengthen future

faculty instructional skills, provided academic career guidance, and exposed participants to the

entire range of Carnegie Classification institutional types as possible employment destinations

(Pruitt-Logan & Gaff, 2004). The specific issues and characteristics conceptualized by

Blackburn and Lawrence's (1995) concepts of faculty self-knowledge and social knowledge that

emerged in the study provide useful starting points for additional instruction and socialization for

doctoral students who plan to prepare for faculty positions in the future.

As the desirability of faculty work at prestigious research universities increases, many

future faculty will encounter limited employment opportunities at this institutional type. The

study results can also serve as a guide for academic leaders in hiring institutions to design new

faculty development programs and strategies to ensure that research-oriented candidates make

smooth transitions into, and appropriate contributions to, institutions and faculty positions that

require a different balance of research and teaching. In doing so, comprehensive universities and

other teaching-oriented institutions can develop ways to protect their most important asset – the

faculty.

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Table 2.

Trajectory of Conferral of Ph.D. vis-à-vis Hiring Date as Full-Time Faculty at Master's I Institution (by number of study respondents, (n = 19)

Year Ph.D. Conferred	Total Number Respondents	Faculty Position Within 1 Year of Ph.D.	Faculty Position Within 2 Years of Ph.D.	Faculty Position Before Ph.D.
1970-1971	2	2	--	--
1972-1973	3	2	1	--
1974-1975	3	3	--	--
1976-1977	4	2	--	2
1977-1978	2	2	--	--
1978-1979	3	2	--	1
1980-1982	2	1	--	1