
ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS

Therein lies a clue to OPEC's future, says Mossavar-Rahmani. Small movements in energy use—up or down—have disproportionate effects on OPEC because the cartel, which pumps half of the world's oil, bears the brunt of any change in consumption. When U.S. energy demand drops, for example, imported oil is the first energy source to lose customers. But when consumption rises and usable domestic supplies—oil, natural gas—are exhausted, domestic users must look overseas to meet all their new needs. Thus, world energy consumption increased by 5.2 percent in 1973, the year before the first OPEC "price shock," but OPEC's output grew by 14.4 percent. That, says the author, is the "OPEC multiplier."

Conservation, the development of new oilfields in Mexico, Alaska's Prudhoe Bay, and Western Europe's North Sea, and wider use of coal, natural gas, and other fuels may mute the multiplier's effects. But as the world economy revives, Mossavar-Rahmani says, the United States, Western Europe, and Japan will have to start importing more oil. By 1987, the cartel could be pumping oil at its peak capacity of 31 MBD—and that would put OPEC back in the driver's seat again.

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Going to College May Get Easier

"Higher Education's Future" by Herbert L. Smith, in *American Demographics* (Sept. 1983), P.O. Box 68, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850.

As the tail end of the Baby-Boom generation nears its 30s, U.S. college presidents are bracing themselves for declining enrollments and years of financial belt-tightening. But things may not turn out all that badly, according to Smith, an Indiana University sociologist.

On the face of it, he concedes, the future for American institutions of higher learning looks bleak. Children born in 1957, the peak year of the Baby Boom, are now past their college years. And the pool of potential students will shrink further: Whereas there were some nine million American men aged 18–21 in 1980, there will be only eight million in 1985, and seven million in 1990.

But that is not the whole story, writes Smith. Some countervailing trends suggest a happier scenario. For one thing, more and more women are going to college. Enrollment among women aged 20–21 jumped from only 11 percent in 1959 to 30 percent in 1981.

Moreover, despite rising tuition fees, most parents will find it easier to pay for their children's college education in the future. One reason: Families are getting smaller. The students of the 1970s and early '80s came from families with an average of three children; during the next decade, college-age youngsters will come from families with only two offspring. Also, those children will be spaced further apart than those

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in earlier generations. In the age "cohort" now in its college years, nearly half of all second children were born within two years of the first. Among those born in 1970–74, only a third were. That means fewer younger siblings will be denied college educations because their parents cannot afford to pay for more than a year or so of two costly university tuitions at once.

Although a few economists and other critics have argued that a college education no longer "yields" enough future increased earning power to justify the investment (typically, about \$40,000), Smith doubts that such claims will depress enrollment in the future. Salaries for freshly minted college graduates should rise as their numbers fall. And the existing glut of sheepskin-bearing Baby-Boomers will give future students every incentive to seek *graduate* degrees to get ahead of the pack.

"Only an economist," Smith adds, "could envision an American society in which college-graduate parents tell their children that a college education is 'not worth it.'"

Parent Problem

"Raising Kids" by James Q. Wilson, in *The Atlantic* (Oct. 1983), Box 2547, Boulder, Colo. 80322.

Psychologists perplexed by violent or overly aggressive children have come up with a host of theories to explain their behavior—faulty genes, broken homes, and the Oedipal complex. But more and more evidence points to a simpler view, writes Wilson, a Harvard political scientist: "Incompetent" parents raise bad kids.

The notion that families might be responsible for growing delinquency was unpopular among social scientists during the 1960s, when socioeconomic theories were in vogue. But in 1969, University of Arizona criminologist Travis Hirschi broke ranks when he asked in his *Causes of Delinquency* not why people break the law, but why they obey it. He found that children of all social classes were more law-abiding if they had close family ties.

Therapists working in the field have gone further, Wilson notes. "Behavior modification"—setting up an explicit system of rewards and punishments for problem children in institutions—seems to work well for a time, but once children return home, they tend to revert to their old ways. Gerald R. Patterson of the Oregon Social Learning Center has achieved far more lasting results by teaching parents how to use a mild form of behavior modification at home.

Patterson believes poor child-rearing *skills*, not personality or income, account for most parents' failures to rear children well. Failure occurs when parents' rules are unclear to their children and are enforced erratically. Patterson advocates paying careful attention to the routine but vital interactions in which parents display approval or disapproval by word, tone, gesture, or expression.

Can parents have forgotten such basic tricks of the trade? There is no reason to think so, says Wilson. He speculates that "traditional social