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WILLIAM C. WRIGHT

Doctoral Dissertations on New Jersey History, 1971-1977

This article brings up to date one that the author wrote and published in this journal in 1973.¹ The prior article contained all doctoral dissertations in New Jersey history written between the years 1896 and 1970. With the additions to the pre-1970 dissertations listed here, a total of 258 dissertations were written between 1896 and 1970. Included here are all doctoral dissertations written on New Jersey history from 1971 to 1977, a total of 128. This seven-year period has seen a veritable explosion of dissertations on the subject of New Jersey history. Of all doctoral dissertations written on New Jersey history, 33.2 per cent were written during this short period.

As in the previous article the author includes dissertations from all academic disciplines, not just those written for a doctorate in history. The list includes only those dissertations that have some content that directly relates to the history of the state or to an individual who lived in New Jersey. The author has attempted to be inclusive and if he has erred it is on the side of including dissertations rather than ex-

cluding them.

The number of universities granting doctoral dissertations in New Jersey history are identical in both time periods, 46 universities for both. The dissertations for the earlier period was dominated by five universities: Columbia University, Rutgers University, Princeton University, New York University and the University of Pennsylvania. Of the 258 doctoral dissertations 167 or 64.7 per cent were granted by these five universities. During the later period, 1971-1977, there was a wider diversification of universities. In comparison, 59.3 per cent of the dissertations for the seven-year period were submitted to nine universities: Rutgers University, New York University, Columbia University, Princeton University, University of Michigan, University of Delaware, University of Pennsylvania and University of Wisconsin. While there were more universities granting the majority of the dissertations, during the period 1971-1977, Rutgers University predominated by granting 28.1 per cent of these.

While it is commonplace to hear that doctoral students cannot find jobs, the number of dissertations per year is not declining. During the decade of the 1960's (1961-1970) there were 113 dissertations or 11.3 per year. During the seven year period 1971 to 1977 there were 128 disser-

1. William C. Wright, "Doctoral Dissertations on New Jersey History, 1896-1970," *New Jersey History*, XCI:4 (Winter, 1973), 221-234.

Mr. Wright is archivist of the State of New Jersey.

- tations or 18.3 per cent. During the last seventeen years 62.4 per cent of all doctoral dissertations on New Jersey history were written.
- Any attempt to categorize the dissertations into subjects is by its very nature subjective; the author found that it was difficult to place some within predetermined categories and others could be placed in more than one category. Nevertheless, during the two periods under study almost 80 per cent of all dissertations fall within five major areas of study. During the years 1896 to 1970 more than one quarter of all dissertations dealt with education in some form. Education was followed by recent political studies or political history in general; colonial and Revolutionary War history; religion; and ethnic, black and urban history. During the period of 1971 to 1977 recent political studies or political history in general was the subject of almost one quarter of the dissertations. This was followed by education, and urban, black and ethnic histories, each of which comprises approximately 20 per cent of the dissertations; and finally Revolutionary War and colonial studies, almost 16 per cent. Religion was the subject of only 6 per cent of the dissertations in this period.
- There remain large areas of New Jersey history for which no dissertations have been written. The history of the nineteenth century and the early-twentieth century have largely been ignored. There are only a few dissertations that deal with specific women or the area of the history of women. Areas of New Jersey history for which there are no or only a few dissertations include: agriculture, business, legal and constitutional history, military, science, medicine, technology and cultural subjects. There are no general economic, social or intellectual studies. The increasing number of dissertations are still being concentrated in the areas of education and political history. The single most studied period is the colonial and Revolutionary War.
- The author hopes to continue to compile the list of dissertations on New Jersey history and if he has missed any that were granted prior to 1977 he would appreciate hearing about these and will include them in the next article.
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